Concord University

Annual University Assessment Report

2018-2019

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University Assessment

Concord University's Assessment of academic achievement is used to make informed curricular and instructional decisions for the purpose of improving student learning. Concord University has an ongoing assessment program that is closely tied to the University's mission and its educational goals.

Concord University believes that assessment is critical to the success of academic programs and student learning. Currently, the Director of University Assessment oversees and organizes assessment activities. A campus-wide University Assessment Committee (UAC) comprised of representatives from administration, academic support units, each academic program, student affairs, and the student government reviews assessment plans/reports and acts as a resource for program assessment. Concord University's assessment process has evolved over the last decade. The University has focused on the development of programmatic and university-wide assessment based on data collection and analysis.

In keeping with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's (WVHEPC) Series 10-Policy Regarding Program Review, Concord University's Board of Governors is responsible for reviewing the viability, adequacy, necessity, and consistency with the University's mission all programs offered by the institution at least once every five years and reporting the results of the program review to the WVHEPC. The WVHEPC is responsible for reviewing the productivity of the University's academic programs for the purpose of continuing or terminating the program. In keeping with

WVHEPC Policy, approximately 20% of the University's programs are reviewed each year.

Each five-year program review includes a self-study that addresses the University's mission, program faculty, the curriculum, resources, student learning outcomes, other learning and service activities, program viability including five-year trend data on majors and graduates, and recommendations for program improvement. As specified by WVHEPC policy, each five-year program review must be reviewed by an evaluator from outside the program or outside the institution, as well as by University administrators, and the institutional governing board. At Concord, the outside evaluation is conducted by the University Assessment Committee, the Provost and President, and the Concord University Board of Governors.

In addition to each five-year program review, each academic program is expected to conduct annual program assessment reviews and submit a report to the University Assessment Committee. These reports use a common template to provide programmatic summary data and analysis for each academic year that is used to inform program faculty and drive indicated changes. The annual University Assessment reports are reviewed by the University Assessment Committee and written feedback/recommendations are provided to program department chairs, deans, and University administrators.

University Learning Goals and Outcomes

Goal #1

Skills: Proficiency in interpreting data, integrating information, formulating ideas, thinking critically, and communicating with others:

> 1. Effective inter-communication skills and literacy adapted as needed for the demands of various kinds of discourse: listening and speaking, reading and writing, media, and technological literacy.
>
> 2. An ability to employ appropriate observational, logical, analytical, and critical thinking skills within and across academic disciplines; and to apply these skills in problem solving.
>
> 3. An ability to employ appropriate methods and technologies for conducting empirical and scholarly research, to interpret research findings, and to use insights gained from such research as a basis for informed decision making.
>
> 4. An ability to analyze, synthesize, and integrate elements, information and ideas.
>
> 5. An ability to evaluate elements, information, and ideas on the basis of appropriate criteria.
>
> 6. An ability to apply and to transfer academic and experiential learning appropriately from one context to another.
>
> 7. An ability to learn and work effectively both independently and collaboratively.

Goal #2

Knowledge: Familiarity with principles underlying academic discourse in various fields:

> 1. An ability to discern the reciprocal influences of environments, cultural beliefs and attitudes, and societal institutions and practices.
>
> 2. An awareness of the fundamental characteristics and properties of the physical universe.
>
> 3. An ability to interpret events and trends within historical contexts.
>
> 4. Acquaintance with principles underlying languages, for example, linguistic, mathematical, and computer-language systems.
>
> 5. A recognition of the complex interactions between organisms, including human beings, and their environments.

6. An awareness of the aesthetic principles, methods, materials, and media employed in artistic performance and the creation of works of art and literature.

7. Self-knowledge, including awareness of one's own competencies, deficiencies, and optimal individual learning-style(s).

Goal #3

Attitude: Tendencies conducive to self-knowledge, personal growth and development, and responsible citizenship

1. Habitual reflection on ethical/moral implications of actions when weighing decisions and evaluating outcomes.

2. Exercise of responsible leadership, including leadership by example, and of responsible followership.

3. Respectful attentiveness to differing perspectives and willingness to engage in dialogue across differences in order to seek mutual understanding and equitable conflict resolution.

4. Cultivation of and support for attitudes and practices that foster physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.

5. Appreciation for the creative process and for the rich diversity of artistic achievement.

6. Commitment to social responsibility, including community service and civic engagement.

7. Motivation to pursue lifelong learning and ongoing intellectual growth.

General Education Assessment

Concord University's general education assessment process is designed to sustain and strengthen student learning across the core courses as well as programmatic progression. In the 2018-2019 academic year, a total of 351 distinct courses assessed general education outcomes from one of the three goals and twenty-one outcomes.

The table below illustrates the overall learning outcome average through spring of 2018 to spring 2019.

Figure 1: Overall Learning Goal Outcome Average
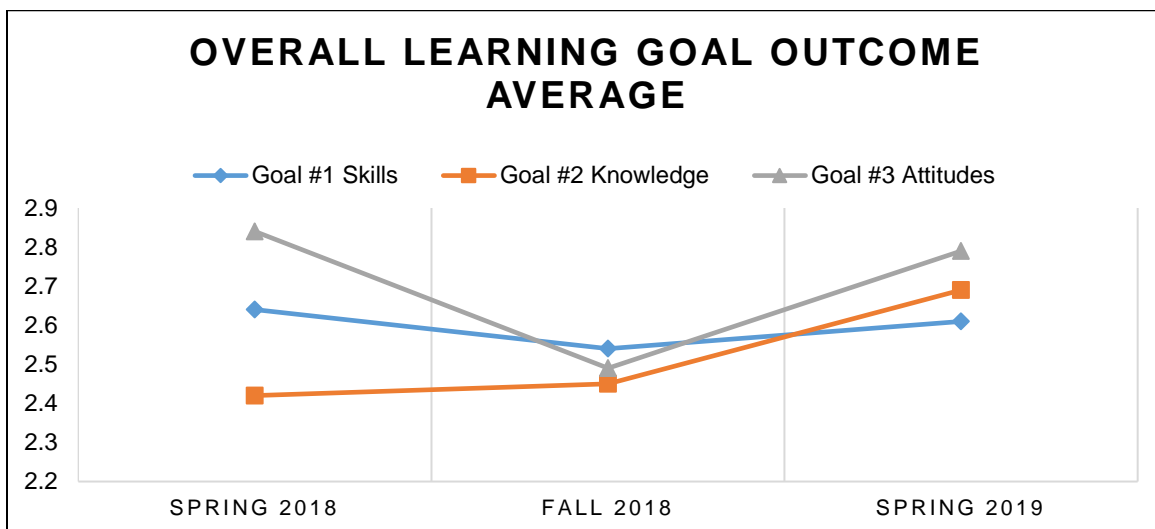
There is a slight drop in Goal #1 Skills and Goal #3 Attitudes during the fall of 2018. However, both areas rebounded through Spring 2019. Assessment data retrieved from General Education is shared with the assessment committee, department chairs, deans, and provost. Data comparison from the previous three semesters is also posted on the assessment committee website. Departments are encouraged to review data with faculty and make plans for improvements, if needed.

The table below shows a review of the 2018-2019 assessment data collected from general education.

Table 1: 2018-2019 General Education Assessment Data

2018-2019 General Education Assessment							
Fall 2018				**Spring 2019**			
#1 -- Skills							
Learning Outcome	# of Courses that Assessed	Number of Students Assessed	Overall Learning Outcome Average	Learning Outcome	# of Courses that Assessed	Number of Students Assessed	Overall Learning Outcome Average
1	53	951	2.48	1	51	725	2.55
2	47	835	2.27	2	60	875	2.35
3	14	285	2.36	3	6	105	2.46
4	29	651	2.6	4	15	324	2.63
5	7	133	2.32	5	5	86	2.7
6	7	120	2.96	6	6	124	2.96
7	2	32	2.77	7	0	0	0.00
Total Distinct Courses -- 119			2.54	Total Distinct Courses -- 119			2.61
#2 -- Knowledge							
Learning Outcome	# of Courses that Assessed	Number of Students Assessed	Overall Learning Outcome Average	Learning Outcome	# of Courses that Assessed	Number of Students Assessed	Overall Learning Outcome Average
1	12	278	2.45	1	10	214	2.64
2	12	341	2.5	2	10	215	2.4
3	4	113	1.92	3	7	142	2.43
4	0	0	0.00	4	0	0	0.00
5	14	346	2.29	5	14	329	2.59
6	9	165	3.06	6	7	100	2.92
7	1	30	2.48	7	1	23	3.13
Total Distinct Courses -- 38			2.45	Total Distinct Courses -- 32			2.69
#3 -- Attitudes							
Learning Outcome	# of Courses that Assessed	Number of Students Assessed	Overall Learning Outcome Average	Learning Outcome	# of Courses that Assessed	Number of Students Assessed	Overall Learning Outcome Average
1	9	211	1.97	1	10	190	2.58
2	2	40	2.79	2	1	30	3.57
3	13	38	2.06	3	13	264	2.4
4	12	259	2.81	4	6	112	2.94
5	4	119	2.8	5	5	96	2.04
6	0	0	0.00	6	1	34	2.35
7	1	6	2.5	7	1	20	3.65
Total Distinct Courses -- 33			2.49	Total Distinct Courses -- 28			2.79

Annual Program Assessment Reports

Ninety-six percent of the University's academic programs submitted an Academic Assessment Report in 2018. Included in these reports were data on indicators of program specific goals as well as the disciplines contribution to learning in the General Education curriculum. University Assessment Committee members reviewed the reports and, where applicable, suggested improvements. In addition to academic programs, academic support programs, or co-curricular activities, have been integrated into the University assessment process. Admissions, advancement, athletics, business office, registrar, and student affairs submit similar assessment reports through the same process. After review, all reports are forwarded to department chairs and/or supervisors. Several academic disciplines have expanded their curricula as a result of feedback from assessment reports. Key findings and recommendations are noted below.

Assessment Report Overall Findings & Recommendations

- All academic programs provided adequate introduction and summary information to their program. However, several programs neglected to incorporate information about the improvements or anticipate changes since the last assessment report. This will need to be addressed in all future reports.
- The majority of academic programs provided program learning goals. Of those who did not include, or who have not identified program learning goals, will have until this review year to do so. Some program learning goals will need to be adjusted to address the ability to be measured successfully.

- Data collection and analysis were discussed on all assessment reports. On future reports, this information should be more data focused and less on anecdotal information. Several programs are doing a great job with collection and analysis.

- All programs should include information within the Follow-Up Actions section. Programs should always be improving and using data driven assessment results to better their program and students learning experience.

5-Year Program Reviews

Five programs were scheduled for program reviews during the 2018-2019 academic year. Geography, History, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology submitted 5-year program reviews to the University Assessment Committee. After providing recommendations, the University Assessment Committee submits 5-year program review summaries to the Provost and Board of Governors for approval. When reviewing the 5-year program reviews, attention is given to the enrollment and program graduates, viability and program cost factors, adequacy and rationale for the program, assessment of student learning, and consistency with mission.

5-Year Program Review Findings & Recommendations

Recommendations for improvements were given to four out of the five programs. Consistent areas to improve upon included assessment, plans for future progress, better data tracking for graduate information, and increase recruitment and retention efforts.

Programs should work toward annual assessment reports that identify where University and programmatic goals and outcomes are addressed and assessed with

quantitative data. Using data, faculty should document how analysis and review of data resulted in changes or adjustments of course material or reinforcements within the classroom. Program reports should illustrate benchmarks and plans for improvement to meet and exceed these benchmarks.

Future plans are a result of a clear program identity and direction of where the program is going and how the program will meet its goals. Future plans or upcoming changes should be addressed within the program review plans. Plans should be a result of data, working with employers, research, etc. Plans may include how to strengthen recruitment and/or retention efforts and how to better track graduate and employer satisfaction data.

Several programs across campus will be working closely with Career Services to track graduate data. Quantitative data should be collected on student satisfaction and graduate employment. For example, what portion of your graduates are employed in-field or matriculating into graduate/professional school?

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) measures student perceptions of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interactions, enriching educational experiences, and supportiveness of the campus environment. A random sample of freshmen and seniors completed the survey in the spring 2019 semester.

Table 2: NSSE Survey Completions

NSSE 2019 Survey Completions		
	First-year	*Senior*
Submitted population	565	398
Adjusted population[a]	565	396
Survey sample[b]	565	396
Total respondents[b]	170	148
Full completions[c]	139	132
Partial completions	31	16
a. Adjusted for ineligible students and those for whom survey requests were returned as undeliverable. b. Number of census or randomly sampled students invited to complete the survey. Targeted, experimental, and locally administered samples not included. c. Submitted demographic and (if applicable) Topical Module sets.		

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Results of the NSSE are clustered into four broad themes: Academic Challenge, Learning with Peers, Experiences with Faculty, and Campus Environment. Highlights from the overall reports are illustrated below. Please note that all data are provided in this section are done so by the National Survey of Student Engagement.

Stimulating intellectual and innovative work is essential to student learning and educational quality. Concord University promotes student learning by challenging and supporting them to engage in a variety of integrated and broad experience. Academic Challenge theme includes four engagement indicators: Higher-Order Learning, Reflective & Integrative Learning, Learning Strategies, and Quantitative Reasoning.

Table 3: Mean Comparisons for Academic Challenge First-Year

Mean Comparisons for Academic Challenge	Your first-year students compared with			
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Higher-Order Learning	37.2	37.7	36.9	38.0
Reflective & Integrative Learning	34.9	34.7	34.6	34.5
Learning Strategies	38.7	38.4	37.7	39.0
Quantitative Reasoning	28.6	28.3	27.2	28.3

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Table 4: Mean Comparisons for Academic Challenge Seniors

Mean Comparisons for Academic Challenge	Your seniors compared with			
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Higher-Order Learning	40.4	40.1	39.5	41.0
Reflective & Integrative Learning	40.0	37.7	38	37.7
Learning Strategies	40.4	39.3	38.1	39.5
Quantitative Reasoning	30.7	30.5	39.4	30.5

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Compared with Southeast Public, Concord University students' average was significantly higher for seniors when asked about Reflective & Integrative Learning. Fifty-two percent of first-year students reported that their courses highly challenged them to do their best work, 41% of first-year students frequently used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue, and 61% of seniors frequently reached conclusions based on their own analysis of numerical information.

Learning with Peers include two engagement indicators: Collaborative Learning and Discussions with Diverse Others.

Table 5: Mean Comparisons for Learning with Peers First-Year

Mean Comparisons for Learning With Peers	Your first-year students compared with			
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Collaborative Learning	32.7	33.4	31.6	26.8
Discussion with Diverse Others	38.1	39.9	38.7	39.4

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Table 6: Mean Comparisons for Learning with Peers Seniors

Mean Comparisons for Learning With Peers	Your seniors compared with			
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Collaborative Learning	35.6	33.7	32.2	23.7
Discussion with Diverse Others	41.5	41.1	39.1	41.1

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Fifty-three percent of first-year students and 68% of seniors frequently worked with their peers on course projects and assignments. Among first-year students, 70% frequently had discussions with people with different political views, 65% frequently had discussions with people from a different economic background, and 67% frequently had discussions with people from a different race or ethnicity.

Faculty are vital for the development and effectiveness of student learning. Students learn from faculty and interact with faculty both in and out of the classroom and, therefore, faculty become role models, mentors, and life guides. Experiences with Faculty include two engagement indicators: Student-Faculty Interaction and Effective Teaching Practices.

Table 7: Mean Comparisons for Experiences with Faculty First-Year

Mean Comparisons for Experiences with Faculty	Your first-year students compared with			
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Student-Faculty Interaction	24.0	22.5	22.9	19.1
Effective Teaching Practices	39.6	39	37.6	38.5

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Table 8: Mean Comparisons for Experiences with Faculty Seniors

Mean Comparisons for Experiences with Faculty	Your seniors compared with			
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Student-Faculty Interaction	30.6	25.6	26.5	19.6
Effective Teaching Practices	43.7	40.0	40.3	40.3

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Fifty-five percent of first-time students rated the quality of their interactions with faculty as high and 60% of seniors frequently discussed career plans with faculty. Sixty-two percent of first-year students and 75% of seniors said instructors substantially gave prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments.

Research shows that students who experience a more supportive and engaging campus atmosphere benefit overall and are more satisfied. Therefore, relationships among students, faculty, and staff play a significant role in the overall achievement in creating a quality and supportive environment.

Table 9: Mean Comparisons for Campus Environment First-Year

Mean Comparisons for Campus Environment		Your first-year students compared with		
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Quality of Interaction	44.7	42.6	43.1	44.0
Supportive Environment	36.5	37.1	35.5	33.2

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Table 10: Mean Comparisons for Campus Environment Senior

Mean Comparisons for Campus Environment		Your seniors compared with		
	CU	**Southeast Public**	**Peer Institutions**	**All WV Institutions**
Engagement Indicator	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*	*Mean*
Quality of Interaction	45.8	42.9	43.6	44.5
Supportive Environment	33.8	33.6	33.3	29.3

Note: Data retrieved from NSSE 2019 Concord University Institutional Report.

Seventy-seven percent of first-year students said the institution substantially emphasized the use of learning support services. Sixty-four percent of first-year students and 60% of seniors gave the quality of their interactions with academic advisors a high rating.

The complete NSSE 2019 Institutional Report will be available later this semester. Results of the NSSE are encouraging. Concord's first-year students were significantly more likely to rate a higher quality of interactions than the comparison group. Concord's seniors were more likely to rate a significantly higher degree of student-faculty interaction and effective teaching practices than the comparison group.

Graduating Senior Survey

The Graduating Senior Survey (GSS) was available for graduating seniors during the 2018-2019 academic year. The purpose of this survey is to gain valuable input to Concord for making decisions to improve our academic programs and our services for students. The GSS provides self-reports of demographic information as well as information on students' experiences while attending Concord. Satisfaction with various University components including academic advising, general education, teaching, and a variety of University services and facilities are also measured. Below is a summary of key findings from the 125 graduating seniors responding in December, 2018, May, 2019, August, 2019. In some instances, percentages do not equal 100% due to missing responses. The full report is available in Appendix II.

Demographic

Of the 125 responses obtained for analysis, 22% were from seniors graduating in 2018, 74% were spring, 2019 graduates, and 4% were summer, 2019 graduates. Seventy-two percent of respondents were female, with the remaining 28% being male. The majority of graduating seniors were between the ages of 18-22. A majority of the students (82%) were single, with 4% responding as married. Eighty-eight percent of graduating seniors identified as white/non-Hispanic, while black/non-Hispanic and Asian accounted for 4% and 2%, respectively.

GSS Highlights

Seniors responded to several questions concerning their reasons for attending Concord University. Thirty percent of respondents cited location; affordability/cost was a

determining factor for 23%. Fifty-eight percent of respondents intended to undertake graduate or professional education. Prior to commencement, 22% of graduates indicated spending approximately 4-6 hours per week on course related work. Fifty-five percent of students strongly agreed with having a well-developed understanding of the ethical and moral implications of their actions and those of others. Fifty-three percent of graduates agreed with having learned to apply the critical thinking skills needed for problem solving. Seventy-seven percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to having broadened their appreciation for the arts.

Upcoming Changes/Area for Improvement

Several steps will be made in the 2019-2020 academic year to continue strengthening the assessment process within Concord University. The newly adopted University Learning Outcomes and Goals will be implemented in Fall 2019 (See Appendix). The goals and outcomes will guide the assessment of general education and student learning. Several workshops will be introduced in the 2019-2020 academic year to assist faculty with adopting the new goals, understanding assessment, using assessment within the classroom, etc. The goals of the workshops will be to create a culture of assessment and for faculty to clearly help facilitate the alignment of University mission, goals, and learning outcomes.

An in-house assessment portal system was developed for the purpose of streamlining the routine assessment process. Concord Assessment Portal System (CAPS) will house the collection and review process for both the annual assessment

reports and 5-year program reviews. During the 2019-2020, all 5-year program reviews and a select few annual assessment reports will utilize the new system

There was a decline in student participation in the graduating senior survey. Efforts should be made to collaborate with faculty and/or events at which graduating seniors will attend to encourage and help facilitate the participation. Some efforts were made last year, but we should continue to build on the momentum. In 2017-2018, there were 321 responses as compared to 131 in 2018-2019. Student participation needs to be increased.

Concord recognizes the need to increase the number of co-curricular departments on the Assessment Committee and for those departments to take part in the annual assessment review process. During the 2019-20 academic year, the committee will use data and analysis from the NSSE and GSS to determine these areas.

References

Institutional Report 2019. (2019). *National Survey of Student Engagement.*

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https://www.concord.edu/About/History-Future/University-Assessment.aspx

Appendix

Concord University Goals Preamble

Concord University strives to ensure that students come away from their experience with knowledge and skills that will enable them to fulfill their personal and professional aspirations and awareness in respect to their chosen discipline. The learning goals and outcomes are derived from national research and best practices surrounding liberal arts education and Concord University's mission. The goals are a shared vision of what is expected of all Concord graduates. The educational programs of Concord University are designed to foster knowledge/mastery of content, critical thinking, communication, and personal, civic, cultural, and global competence.

General education, the core of all undergraduate curricula, is an essential element in an educational process designed around student learning expectations. Continuous improvement of courses, curricula, and programs is essential for institutions to ensure the improvement and sustainability of student learning and effective instruction. Assessment of general education is not only necessary to satisfy accrediting bodies and stakeholders, but to provide evidence to answer our own question – Did students learn what we wanted them to learn? (Assessing General Education Programs, Allen, 2006)

University Goals and Learning Outcomes

1. Knowledge/Mastery of Content

Students will demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in a discipline of their choosing, and they will demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across varied disciplines.

2. Critical Thinking

Student will demonstrate the ability to access, analyze, and interpret information, respond and adapt to changing situations, make complex decisions, solve problems, and evaluate actions.

3. Communication

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

4. Personal, Civic, Cultural, and Global Competence

Students will demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.

A Statement on the Philosophy of Assessment and Our University Goals

Concord's mission is clear: to provide a quality, liberal arts education that fosters scholarship, creativity, and service. Our university goals are the principal means to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to accomplish that mission. They provide a measurable, manageable, and efficient means of assessment. They render us accountable to our students, faculty, administrators, and, as a public university, the wider community. They provide a comprehensive definition of the parameters of our mission. Finally, they are inclusive, applicable to all of Concord's academic programs, co-curricular and other activities. (T. J. Mc Kenna, 2018)