

Annual Assessment Report for 2019-2020 Academic Year

Prepared by the
Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

Overview

This annual report provides update to the Lehman College community on the state of assessment for the 2019-2020 academic year. The report, which includes a discussion of the college's new and uniform six-step assessment process and an assessment management system, is organized around three major areas: Academic Assessment, General Education Assessment, and Administrative and Educational Units (AES) Assessment. A summary of lessons learned is also provided.

Introduction

The 2019-2020 academic year has been a challenging, but also productive year for assessment at Lehman College. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic during the spring led to an abrupt shift of all in-person classes to a fully online format and all student support and administrative functions to a remote setting. These developments disrupted academic assessment initiatives that were underway and rendered irrelevant the many AES assessment projects that were tied to an in-person delivery of services. Nevertheless, Lehman College made significant progress in strengthening and building its institutional improvement infrastructure. Many of these changes, including the formalization of its institutional effectiveness activities into a single document, were documented in Lehman's successful *Supplemental Information Report* that was accepted by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in June 2020. Lehman College hired Dr. Victor Brown as Associate Provost of Academic Programs and Educational Effectiveness. The Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness was established with dedicated office space on the 3rd floor of Shuster Hall and it held an online workshop on assessment within the context of Lehman College's six-step assessment process in April 2020. In addition, Lehman College approved Nuventive's *Improve* (Essential version) to replace *Taskstream*TM as its Assessment Management System (AMS).

Six-Step Assessment Process

Lehman College adopted and implemented a uniform 6-step assessment process for both academic and Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units (illustrated below) during Spring 2019 semester to better organize its institutional assessment and improvement initiatives. This process is outlined in the College's Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) that was shared with MSCHE in a *Supplemental Information Report (SIR)* submitted in Spring 2020. The IEP details the College's assessment activities, processes, and responsibilities.



The six steps, followed in academic and AES assessment are:

- Step 1:* Develop student learning outcomes or performance outcomes that align with Lehman College's mission, its institutional learning goals, and, where applicable, accreditation requirements;
- Step 2:* Determine or modify criteria for measuring success;
- Step 3:* Develop and implement methods of assessment involving direct and indirect measures;
- Step 4:* Collect and analyze data;
- Step 5:* Plan and carry out improvement initiatives, and;
- Step 6:* Document assessment and improvement activities.

Steps 4-6 Lay out the annual assessment cycle that is part of the multi-year six-step process.

Assessment Summary:

School or Administrative	Total Units	Plans	Reports	Reports as % of Plans
AES	48	46	34	74%
Academic:	28	28	19	68%
A&H	9	9	6	67%
HS2N	6	6	5	83%
NSS	13	13	8	62%
Gen. Ed.	7	2	2	100%
Total	83	76	55	72%

Note: The emergence of COVID-19 led to canceled or delayed assessment reporting. The COVID-19 pandemic, which abruptly shifted the College to a distance learning format and remote work was an extraordinary event. The planned nature of distance learning and remote work during AY 2020-21 will result in substantially greater assessment activity, as assessment is integrated into the online format. General Education: For purposes of comparability, each ILO was designated as a “unit” this time around. Plans comprised the number of ILOs that were scheduled to be assessed during the academic year. Reports were the number of ILOs for which assessment was completed.

Academic Assessment

Step 1: Learning Goals and Outcomes

Across Lehman College's five schools, 155 learning goals were reported. The goals reported by the units are aligned with the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) as summarized below.

Learning Goals by Department or School:

Department or School	Learning Goals(s)*	Mapped to ILOs
Africana Studies	5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Art	4	1, 2, 4, 5
English	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
History	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Journalism/Media Studies	2	1, 2, 3, 4
Lang. & Lit.	11	1, 2, 4, 5
Latin American & LatinX	5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Music, Multimedia, Theatre, Dance	5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Philosophy	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Health Sciences	10	1, 2, 3, 4
Nursing	12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7**
Recreation	4	1, 2, 3, 4***
Social Work	12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7****
Speech-Language-Hearing-Sciences	3	1, 2, 3, 4
Exercise Science	4	1, 2, 3, 4***
Accounting	5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5*****
Anthropology	4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Biological Sciences	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Business	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5*****
Chemistry	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Computer Science	8	1, 2, 3, 4, 6*****
Earth, Environmental, Geospatial Sciences	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Economics	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Mathematics	7	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Physics & Astronomy	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Political Science	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Psychology	3	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Sociology	5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Total	155	

*Departmental goals reflect the maximum goals for any departmental program.

**Did not map to ILOs; data is based on natural sciences, Nursing's goals, and assessment plan.

***Did not map to ILOs; data is based on Health Sciences mapping.

****Did not map to ILOs; data is based on articulated competencies.

*****Did not map to ILOs; data is based on Economics mapping and program learning goals.

*****Did not map to ILOs; data is based on Mathematics mapping.

Lehman's ILOs are:

1. Critical thinking
2. Competence within a discipline
3. Quantitative Reasoning, Information Literacy, or Research
4. Communication Skills
5. Multicultural, Global/Ethical Awareness
6. Work as part of a team; and
7. Leadership

Step 2: Criteria for Measuring Success

Determining criteria for measuring success is a critical assessment element. Criteria provide benchmarks by which units can determine the level of student performance or unit effectiveness analysis. This assists the units to set clear and measurable objectives. A substantial majority of academic assessment plans came with either general descriptions of performance, comparison to results from previous years, or specific measurable targets. The breakdown was as follows:

- Measurable targets: 57%
- Comparison to prior year(s): 7%
- General description of performance: 21%
- No specified measurements of success: 14%

Among programs with specific measurable targets, expectations varied widely. Percentages of students expected to meet a given level of performance varied from 50% to 80% of students. Guidance on the development of measurable targets might represent a useful professional development opportunity.

Step 3: Methods and Measures

Academic assessment initiatives predominantly relied on direct measures of student learning. 89% of submitted academic assessment plans utilized direct and indirect measures. However, 79% used direct measures exclusively. 11% of academic assessment plans utilized indirect measures, exclusively. A small number of plans (11%) used both direct and indirect measures.

Assessment Methods and Measures:

Type of Measure	Percentage
Direct Measures	89% of all measures
• Tests/Exams/Quizzes	52% of direct measures
○ Pre- and Post-Tests	38% of tests/exams/quizzes
○ Certification/Standardized Test	15% of tests/exams/quizzes
• Paper/Written Assignment	36% of direct measures
• Discussion Board Contributions	4% of direct measures
• Lab Reports	4% of direct measures
• Performance	4% of direct measures
Indirect Measures	21% of all measures
• Surveys	83% of indirect measures
○ Satisfaction Survey	80% of surveys
○ SETL	20% of surveys
• Syllabi Review	17% of indirect measures

Step 4: Data Collection and Analysis

In fall 2019, Lehman College ended its use of *Taskstream*TM for its AMS, as it went through an institutional search for a new AMS that would better integrate annual assessment, program review, and strategic planning. Consequently, all academic assessment plans and reports for the academic year were submitted via Dropbox. Academic assessment plans were centered around departments to maximize the benefits of assessment relative to the assessment workload. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a disruption of assessment activity. Nevertheless, 68% of academic units completed their assessment plans and submitted assessment reports.

Step 5: Improvement Activities

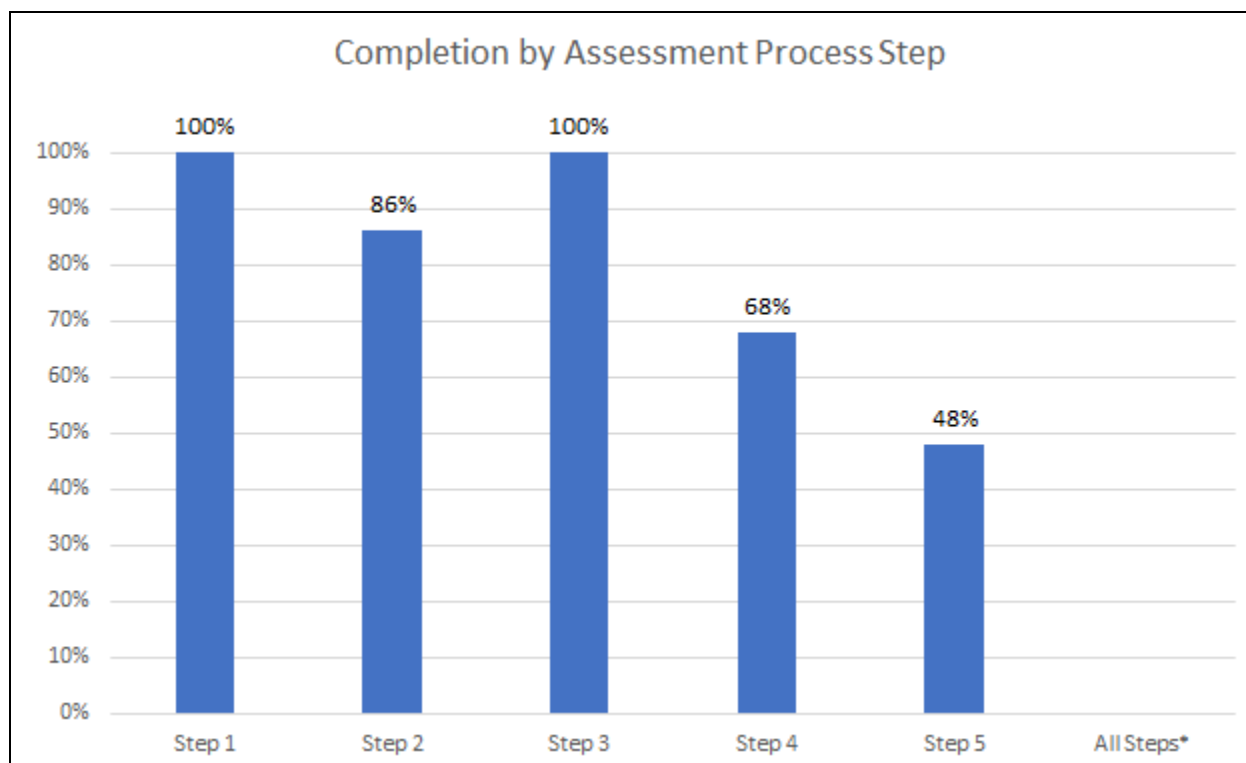
The overall purpose of assessment is continuous improvement. The assessment reports were examined for information related to improvement activities. 72% of assessment reports provided one or more initiatives for improvement. 28% did not provide teaching/learning/content changes. Instead, those assessment reports committed to repeating the assessment or making assessment related changes such as making the assessment exercise a graded assignment. In terms of assessment linked to measurable targets, 55% exceeded or met their target, and 44% were close but fell short of their targets.

Improvement activities included:

- Collecting and analyzing student success data (participation, assignment completion, overall course success) (Computer Science)
- Developing a departmental repository of best practices in assessment and assessment results to be available to faculty (Math)
- Identifying “at risk” students and referring them for supplemental instruction (Psychology)
- Incorporating an increased research component into the course (History)
- Increasing digital experience and simulations for students (Nursing)
- Increasing instruction in areas of challenge e.g., the “Big Bang” concept (EEGS)
- Introducing a mid-term exam into the course (Anthropology)
- Developing new or revised assignments (Art)
- Remediation plan for students who did not fare well on a standardized exam (Sociology)
- Revising the lab manual to provide greater instruction and more examples in areas of challenge (Physics)
- Weekly moderated online forum for students (Exercise Science)
- Workshop for students and faculty (English)

Step 6: Documentation of Assessment and Improvement Activities

Lehman College adopted the 6-step assessment process in Spring 2019. As a result, the 2019-2020 assessment cycle was the first semester the process was used. Therefore, follow-up on improvement activities has not yet occurred. The maximum number of possible steps for completion for this report was five. Below is a graph that illustrates academic unit completion of each of the five steps.



General Education Assessment

Lehman College engaged in limited assessment of its General Education program as it transitioned toward a more robust approach to General Education assessment. The College assessed its information literacy ILO through assessing the impact of the Library's online tutorial designed to teach and assess information literacy to students in LEH 300 classes. The tutorial was developed in fall 2018 and is based on the AAC&U's Information Literacy Value Rubric. This assessment provided information on:

- Information literacy
- Critical reasoning (subset of the assessment)

The Tutorial concluded with a 20-question, multiple choice Blackboard quiz. Quiz questions mapped directly to the learning outcomes articulated in the Modules. This quiz was intended to be the main assessment tool for the Tutorial and to measure students' Information Literacy. The purpose of this assessment project was to determine whether there were any measurable differences in performance between native first-year students and transfer students on the Library's LEH 300 level Information Literacy quiz, a quiz based on a Tutorial designed primarily for upper-division undergraduates with limited exposure to Information Literacy.

The performance between the two groups was roughly the same, an achievement of about 80% (2 or above on the rubric). Native first-year students slightly outperformed transfer students. Further analysis may shed more light on this, but given the number of students who took the quiz in each category – 185 native first-year students and 685 transfer students – the data likely accurately reflects the performance of the populations that were assessed.

In addition, assessment of student performance results related to specific questions found that students generally performed weakest on a related set of questions that have as their common basis

a set of skills related to critical thinking – specifically the ability to make relevance judgments following some amount of reading.

Student performance on the other questions answered at lower levels, though, do not seem to point to problems with the Tutorial itself, but rather may be indicative of areas of thinking and conceptual understanding that both groups of students are still developing. The findings of this assessment exercise will be shared with the LEH Associate Director and faculty involved in the teaching of General Education courses. Overall, two of the seven (27%) of the ILOs were assessed. The rapid shift to distance education during the spring disrupted and limited assessment.

To strengthen the foundation of the College's General Education assessment, Lehman College:

- Developed a multi-year General Education assessment plan.
- Mapped courses from the Required Common Core, Flexible Core, and College Option components of the General Education program to Lehman College's ILOs.
- Had three faculty members, along with the Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Educational Effectiveness and the Assessment Manager participate in the Association of American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) Institute on General Education and Assessment (IGEA). The IGEA provided hands-on webinars and discussions with a "mentor" to the Lehman College team in advancing the College's General Education Program and assessment of General Education. The Institute is framed around the five principles of General Education Maps and Markers (GEMS)—proficiency; agency and self-direction; integrative learning and problem-based inquiry; equity; and intentionality, transparency, and assessment. These principles were developed as part of the AAC&U's nationwide study of foundational purposes of general education programs to advance student learning and preparation.

AES Assessment

AES assessment activity was significantly impaired by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the services carried out by the College's AES units are typically in-person in nature. Therefore, assessment was focused on the in-person delivery of such services. The College's shift to a remote format precluded the completion of assessment plans resulting in a low percentage of completed assessment reports.

Step 1: Goals and Outcomes

Across Lehman College's AES units, there were 83 goals (based on explicit or implicit documentation of goals on webpages or in assessment plans). However, approximately one-third of the unit webpages listed goals, accounting for 49 of the noted 83 or 59%. One improvement would entail the following revision to the main pages of each AES unit:

- Mission Statement (almost always present on the webpages)
- Goals (broken down by learning, performance, or support categories)

Step 2: Criteria for Measuring Success

Determining criteria for measuring success is a critical assessment element. Criteria provide benchmarks by which units can determine the level of student performance or unit effectiveness analysis. This step helps the units to set clear and measurable objectives. Most AES assessment

plans came with either general descriptions of performance/creation of baselines or specific measurable targets. The breakdown was as follows:

- Measurable targets: 50%
- General or creation of baselines: 28%

Step 3: Methods and Measures

AES assessment initiatives relied on a wide range of measures, including direct and indirect measures of student learning where applicable.

Assessment Methods and Measures:

Measure	Percentage
Appointments/Utilization/Attendance	19%
Review of Activities	15%
Student Learning	15%
• Direct Only	43%
• Indirect Only	43%
• Both Direct and Indirect	14%
Surveys	9%
Review of Financial Data	6%
Number of Events	6%
Student Success Metrics	2%
Enrollment Data	2%
Number of Proposals	2%
Number of Clients	2%
Completed Inspections	2%
Satisfaction of Accreditation Criteria	2%
Other	17%

Direct student learning measures were comprised of exams, including pre- and post-tests (50%), written assignment (25%), and a reflection paper (25%). Half of the direct assignment measures involved the use of a rubric.

Step 4: Data Collection and Analysis

Lehman College had ended its use of *Taskstream*™ for its AMS, as it underwent an institutional search for a new AMS that would better integrate annual assessment, program review, and strategic planning. All AES assessment plans and reports were submitted electronically. The COVID-19 pandemic led to a substantial disruption of in-person services on which AES assessment was predominantly based. As a result, 74% of AES units completed their assessment plans and submitted assessment reports.

Step 5: Improvement Activities

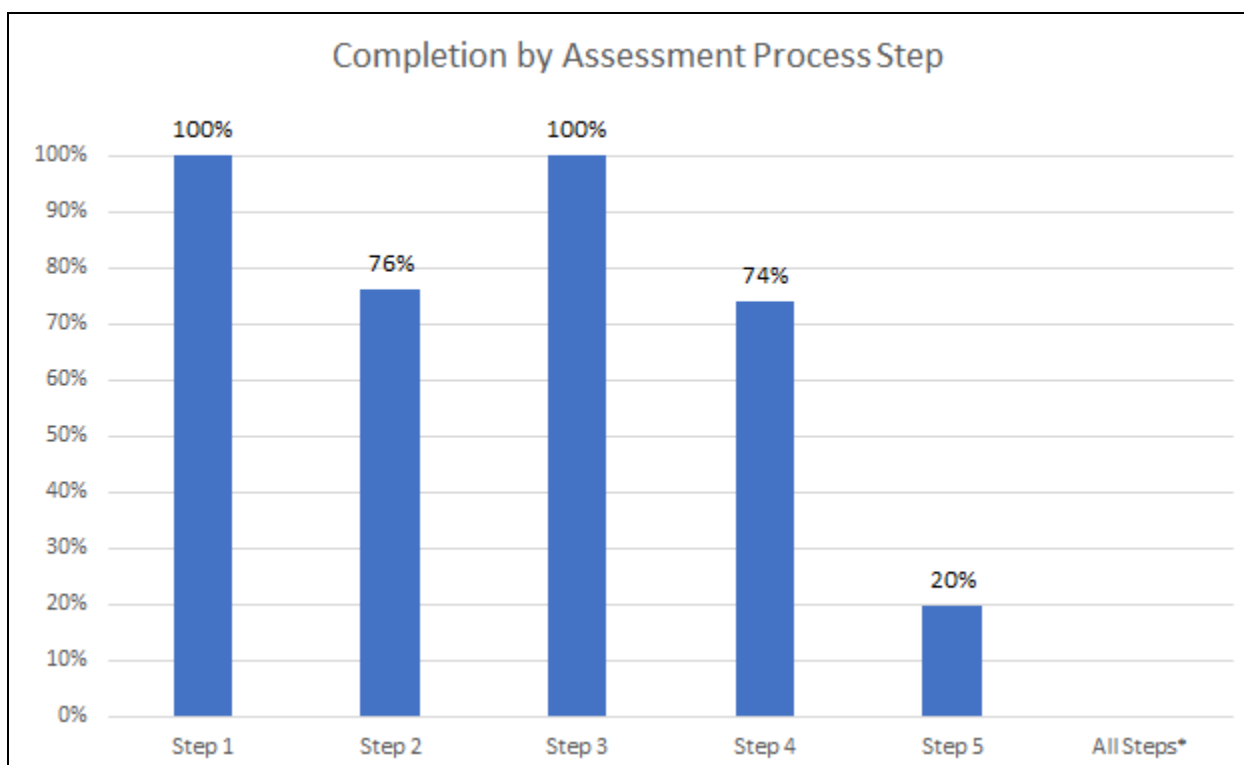
The overall purpose of assessment is continuous improvement. The assessment reports were examined for information related to improvement activities. 29% of assessment reports provided one or more initiatives for improvement. The other reports committed to maintaining current processes or repeating the assessment. Of the reports in which assessment was linked to targets, 89% met or exceeded their targets, and 11% missed their targets. Half of the missed targets resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.

Improvement activities included:

- Obtaining new equipment (Print Shop)
- Updating a report to inform potential curriculum and course changes (GPS)
- Review of questions on an assessment instrument (Library)
- Collaboration with General Education faculty on information literacy and critical thinking (Library)
- Increased use of data for accepted students and waivers of deposits to determine student enrollment (Admissions & Recruitment)
- Establish a target based on assessment findings (Strategic Persistence Initiatives)
- Full automation of the iDeclare system by which undergraduate students declare majors (Registrar)
- Increase the number of focused interventions to enhance student use of time (SEEK)

Step 6: Documentation of Assessment and Improvement Activities

Lehman College adopted the 6-step assessment process in Spring 2019. As a result, the 2019-2020 assessment cycle was the first one where this process was used. Therefore, follow-up on improvement activities has not yet occurred. Therefore, the maximum number of possible steps for completion for this report was five. Below is a graph that illustrates AES unit completion of each of the five steps.



Professional Development

During the academic year, the Assessment Committee and Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness engaged in outreach to departmental assessment liaisons/coordinators to gain insight into their assessment-related needs and to develop professional development activities.

The Assessment Committee identifies and addresses assessment professional development requisites and opportunities, and distributes information on best practices; advises on development of broader assessment policies to promote student achievement and improvement in curricular, pedagogical, administrative, and support services; and, periodically reports assessment outcomes and changes to the Provost and Lehman College Senate.

Lehman College also appointed a Faculty Assessment Fellow who is embedded within the Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness and works with faculty in all stages of their assessment work.

The Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness held a workshop on the College's six-step assessment process on April 30.

Summary

Lehman College launched implementation of its 6-step assessment process during the 2019-2020 academic year. The COVID-19 pandemic impeded assessment activities, but a foundation was laid for building out assessment for the 2020-2021 academic year. A professional development assessment workshop, "Using the 6-Step Process," was held on April 30. In addition, workshops and brown bag lunches have been scheduled on a monthly basis for the 2020-2021 academic year. These activities combined with increased sharing of assessment activity reports will deepen Lehman College's culture of assessment, strengthen the organization and documentation of assessment activities, expand assessment awareness and expertise. The College's scaling out of assessment activities and the support infrastructure in place will enhance its overall capacity for continuous improvement and increase its ability to fulfill its mission and achieve its goals.