

# Assessment Practices at New York State's Colleges and Universities



Photo courtesy of the Sage Colleges

**The University of the State of New York  
The State Education Department  
Office of Higher Education  
Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness  
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# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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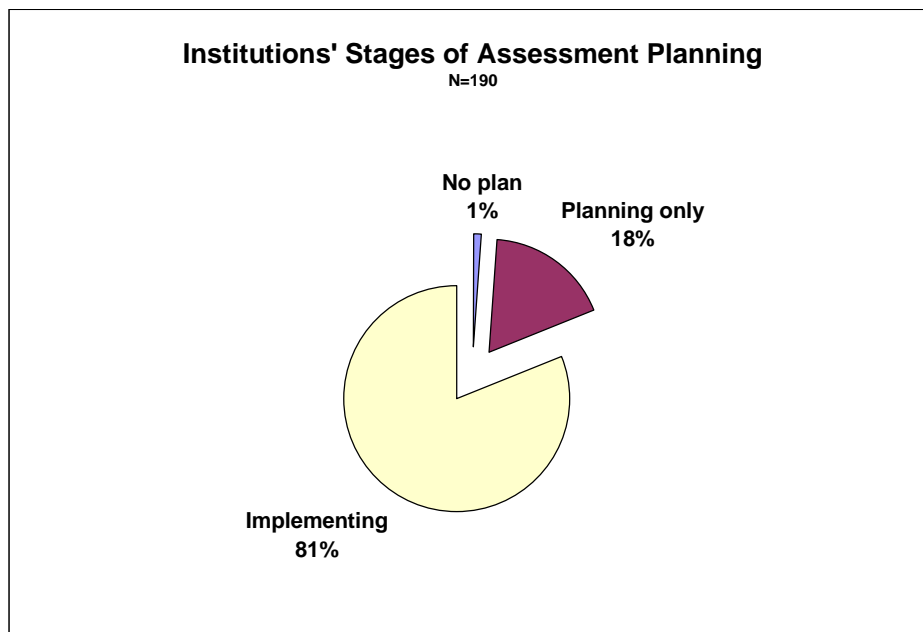
## Executive Summary

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The New York State Board of Regents, after extensive consultation with the higher education community as part of its Quality Assurance Initiative, is proposing to strengthen its assessment requirements. Under the new requirements, New York's colleges and universities will be required to demonstrate that they are assessing their own performance and using their findings to improve student learning and development.

To obtain baseline information before the new requirements go into effect, the Education Department conducted a survey of institutional assessment practices in the fall of 2000. The survey reveals that most of New York's colleges and universities already consider assessment to be an integral part of what they do and how they do it.

- Virtually all of New York's colleges and universities have assigned responsibility for leading assessment to an individual or group and involve faculty, administrators and others in setting learning goals and assessing whether those goals are being achieved.
- Eighty-one percent of New York's colleges and universities are already implementing assessment plans. Their plans rely on multiple approaches to assessing student learning, including direct measures, such as course-embedded exams, and indirect measures, such as student, alumni and employer surveys.
- The majority of New York's colleges and universities use assessment results for improvement. Improvements include the addition or deletion of programs and changes to curriculum, instruction and academic support services.

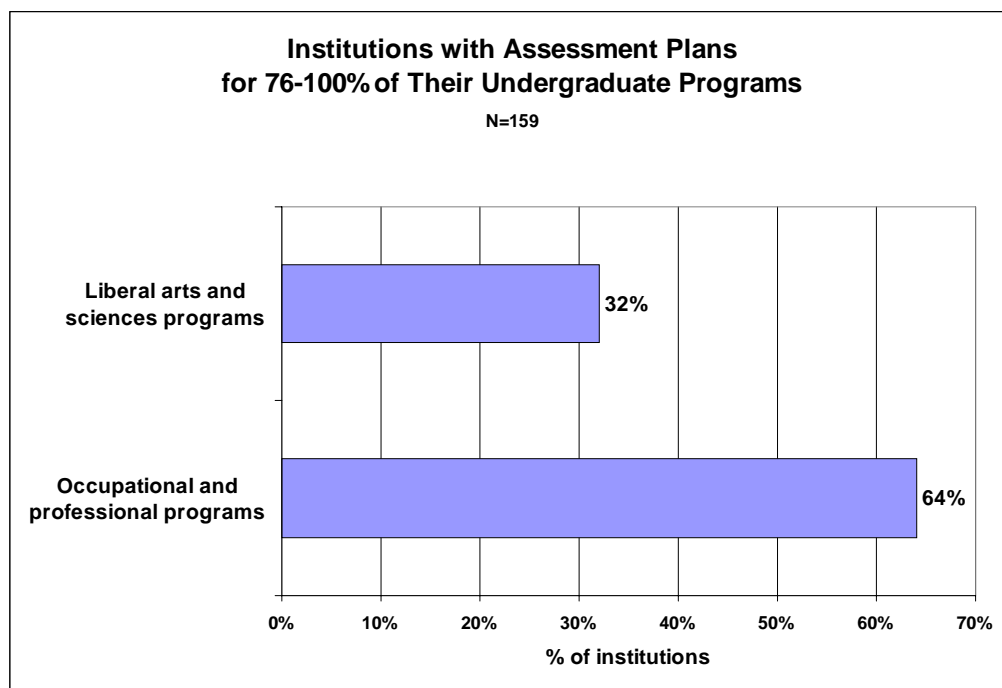


Despite this progress, there is still room for improvement at some institutions and in some types of programs.

- Nearly one out of every five institutions (19 percent) is not implementing any assessment plan.
- Only 32 percent of institutions have assessment plans for 76-100 percent of their undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences.
- Only 64 percent of institutions have assessment plans for 76-100 percent of their undergraduate vocational and professional programs.

More than six in ten colleges and universities (61 percent) tell us that they face barriers to assessing their students' learning and development. These barriers include faculty concerns and faculty reluctance, resource scarcity, inexperience, inadequate assessment tools, the unavailability of outcomes data (such as licensure exam results) and technical problems (such as low response rates on student and alumni surveys).

By strengthening New York State's requirements for assessment, the Regents will influence institutional practices. However, given the nature and size of the gaps in assessment, new requirements alone are not likely to create fundamental change. Faculty and administrators will need practical training and ongoing support systems such as Web sites with links to resource materials and peer networks.



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In the fall of 2000, the New York State Education Department's Office of Higher Education conducted a survey of the assessment practices of colleges and universities as part of its Quality Assurance Initiative. The survey provides the first systematic look at assessment in higher education in New York, and provides baseline information for policy development and technical assistance.

This report presents the survey findings in eleven sections. The first section describes the policy context for the survey. The following sections describe the purposes of the survey, the survey instrument, data quality, analytical methods and findings. A final section summarizes findings and their policy implications.

## **Policy Context**

As required by Education Law, the Education Commissioner meets with the Commissioner's Advisory Council on Higher Education to seek advice about priorities for the statewide system of higher education and for the Education Department's Office of Higher Education. One of the Council's priorities has been to improve the quality of student learning and development while respecting each institution's mission and autonomy and reducing unnecessarily duplicative accountability requirements. High standards for student learning are essential for higher education to serve the people of New York State and to receive continuing support from the public, the business community and political leaders.

The Council's recommendations about quality were consistent with Regents policies and were accepted by the Commissioner as an area for action. The first action step was the appointment of an external task force, co-chaired by two college presidents, to provide general guidelines for the State's role in quality assurance. The task force presented its report to the Office of Higher Education in August of 1999 and the report was discussed at the September 1999 Regents Legislative Policy Conference.

With the task force's report as a guide, in the fall of 1999, the Office of Higher Education launched the Quality Assurance Initiative to develop specific recommendations for action in consultation with an Advisory Group on Quality Assurance, the chief executive officers of institutions of higher education and others. In September 2000, the Regents Committee on Higher and Professional Education accepted four recommendations for the Initiative. The recommendations addressed (1) improving student learning and development; (2) improving information for consumers; (3) improving information for policy makers and (4) reducing unnecessarily duplicative accountability requirements for colleges and universities.

The first recommendation in the Quality Assurance Initiative called for the Regents "...to require each degree-granting college and university to engage in ongoing, systematic assessment of its educational effectiveness and to use the results of its assessments to improve its quality and effectiveness." To begin implementation of this recommendation, the Office of Higher Education worked with its Advisory Group on Quality Assurance and the regional accrediting agency to develop proposed amendments to Part 52 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. The amendments would require institutions to have educational effectiveness plans that included the assessment of their students' learning and development. If adopted as planned, the amendments would take effect in June of 2001 and require institutions to be prepared to provide the Department with their educational effectiveness plans by January of 2003. To eliminate unnecessary duplication, the amendments would permit institutions to develop a single educational effectiveness plan that could be used to satisfy the requirements of the Department, one or more accrediting agencies and, if applicable, the system administrations of the State University and the City University.

### **Purposes of the Survey**

In the spring of 2000, the Advisory Group on Quality Assurance and the Office of Higher Education agreed on the need for, and the format of, a survey on the assessment practices of New York's colleges and universities. For well over a decade, the Regulations of the Education Commissioner, the standards of the regional accrediting agency -- which accredits 72 percent of New York's colleges and universities -- and the standards of specialized accrediting agencies have required institutions to assess whether their educational programs were achieving their intended goals. However, there was no systematic information about either assessment practices or the barriers to assessment.

The survey was designed to fill information gaps and provide baseline information that could be used to promote improvement and to assess the impact of policy changes. In addition, the survey was designed to help the Department identify model practices that could be shared with New York's higher education community and the types of support that institutions might need to satisfy proposed requirements.

### **Survey Instrument**

The survey instrument, in Appendix A, was developed in consultation with the Advisory Group on Quality Assurance and the Research and Information System Advisory Group. It was sent to 261 degree-granting institutions in August 2000 as part of the regular data collection for the Higher Education Data System (HEDS) and was posted on the Internet. A

small number of institutions that are routinely exempted from selected HEDS surveys did not receive the survey. The due date for the survey was October 1, 2000 but responses were accepted through December 1.

The survey was directed to chief academic officers. Definitions were provided to make responses as consistent as possible for all institutions. Assessment was defined as “the

systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.” Current practice was defined as existing practice and practices that an institution had definite plans to implement within the next twelve months. The survey contained both multiple-choice and constructed response items. Multiple-choice items were included to obtain consistent information that could be easily summarized for the state and for groups of institutions. Multiple-choice items always contained an “other” option for respondents to add their own choices. Constructed response items were included so that institutions could describe their practices more extensively.

The survey had five parts, listed below. Every institution was asked to complete Parts A and E. Institutions with undergraduates were asked to complete Parts B and C. Institutions with graduate and first-professional students were asked to complete Part D.

- Part A - Leadership and shared responsibility for assessment
- Part B - Assessment in general education for undergraduates
- Part C - Assessment in the undergraduate major
- Part D - Assessment of graduate and professional education
- Part E - Barriers to assessment of student learning and development

<b>Table 1</b>				
<b>Survey response rates by institutional sector and level</b>				
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number of survey recipients</b>				
SUNY	30	30	1	61
CUNY	6	12	1	19
Independent	21	97	25	143
Proprietary	30	8	0	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>Number of respondents</b>				
SUNY	0	1	0	1
CUNY	6	12	1	19
Independent	21	92	24	137
Proprietary	26	7	0	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>190</b>
<b>Survey response rates</b>				
SUNY	0%	3%	0%	2%
CUNY	100%	100%	100%	100%
Independent	100%	95%	96%	96%
Proprietary	87%	88%	-	98%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>73%</b>
SUNY Central Administration submitted an alternate response on behalf of SUNY campuses that was not used for analysis. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000.				

## Data Quality

The quality of survey data can be described in terms of survey response rates, the representativeness of responding institutions, item response rates and data cleansing.

**Survey response rates (Table 1).** By December 1, 2000, 190 of the 261 survey recipients had submitted usable responses, for an overall response rate of 73 percent. The response rate was over 96 percent for each sector except for the State University of New York, whose low response rate (2 percent) was planned. The State University of New York's System Administration submitted an alternative response on behalf of SUNY campuses that was not used for analysis, and was granted a one-year extension for campus-level responses. The State University's Assessment Initiative is expected to result in changes to assessment plans and practices this year, and it was reasonable to wait for the latest information. The other eleven non-responses included an alternate response from an independent university (in the form of excerpts from a recent self-study prepared for regional accreditation), late responses, unusable responses and actual non-responses.

The response rate was 61 percent for two-year institutions, 76 percent for four-year or more institutions and 93 percent for graduate only institutions, such as freestanding law schools. These are reasonably high response rates and support the use of the data to describe assessment practices in New York.

	Survey Recipients		Survey Respondents	
	#	%	#	%
<b>Fall 2000</b>				
<b>Total</b>	261	100	190	100
<b>By level of institution:</b>				
Two-year institutions	87	33%	53	27%
Four-year or more institutions	147	56%	112	59%
Graduate only institutions	27	11%	25	13%
<b>By sector of institution:</b>				
SUNY	61	23%	1	1%
CUNY	19	7%	19	10%
Independent institutions	143	55%	137	72%
Degree-granting proprietary colleges	38	15%	33	17%
NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000.				

**Representativeness of responding institutions (Table 2).** The distribution of survey respondents by level of institution is similar to the distribution of survey recipients. For example, four-year or more institutions were 56 percent of survey recipients and 59 percent of survey respondents. This supports the use of the survey data to describe the state as a whole and groups of institutions defined by their level.

**Item response rates (Table 3).** Of the 190 responding institutions, 159 have undergraduates and 111 have graduate and first-professional students. Undergraduates are enrolled at 53 responding two-year institutions and 106 responding four-year or more institutions.

Graduate and first-professional students are enrolled at 86 responding four-year or more institutions and 25 responding graduate only institutions.

These are the numbers of responses used as denominators in percentages in every table in this report unless otherwise noted. Overall, item response rates were high.

<b>Table 3</b>				
<b>Number of responding institutions by institutional level and student enrollment levels</b>				
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of institutions	53	112	25	190
Number of institutions with undergraduates	53	*106	0	159
Number of institutions with graduate or first-professional students	0	86	25	111
These are the numbers of responding institutions used as baselines for other tables unless otherwise noted.				
*Some institutions (or their responding branches) are classified as “four-year or more” but did not actually enroll undergraduates. Classifications are based on authorized levels, not on actual enrollment.				
NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Items B1 and D1.				

Items with references to public system governing boards were excluded from all analyses because the lack of data from the State University would have made them misleading.

**Data cleansing.** Survey responses were entered into a Microsoft Access database and then converted to a Microsoft Excel workbook for data cleansing and analysis. Edit tests were performed to assure that responses had internal consistency and were consistent with other data reported to the Department, such as enrollment reports and institutional catalogs. When responses failed edit tests, the data was corrected using information from the survey itself or from other data sources. In a very few cases, responses that failed edit tests were considered unusable.

## Analytical Methods

For all multiple-choice items, Microsoft Excel was used to make cross-tabulations of item responses by institutional level. Responses to “other specify” items were listed in Appendix B.

For constructed response items, two types of analysis were performed. For Item E-1, responses were coded for the presence of key words or ideas and the codes were summed to determine the percentage of responding institutions reporting each coded response. For all other constructed response items, excerpts of responses were selected for quotation in an appendix table. These quotations capture the actual responses better than a coded summary. In addition, some constructed responses were tagged to indicate that the institution should be contacted in the future because its practices appeared to be effective models.

## Findings for Part A – Leadership and Shared Responsibility for Assessment

Part A of the survey posed questions about the overall assessment policies and practices of an institution,

including leadership, shared responsibility, stages of development, supporting resources and structures, and other quality assurance approaches.

	% of responding institutions			
	2-year institutions	4-year or more institutions	Graduate only institutions	Total
Faculty	98%	99%	100%	99%
Institution’s governing board	42%	26%	32%	31%
Administrators	96%	96%	92%	96%
Institutional researchers	17%	42%	20%	32%
Students	40%	28%	52%	34%
Other (See Appendix B)	9%	10%	20%	11%

Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can involve more than one group.  
 NYSED-OHE –BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-1.

**Shared responsibility for the design and implementation of assessment policies (Tables 4 and 5).** Both faculty and administrators are involved in the design and implementation of assessment policies at nearly all responding institutions. In addition, institutions involve students, institutional researchers, governing boards and others in designing and implementing assessment policies. Students and institutional governing boards tend to be more involved at two-year and at graduate only institutions while institutional researchers tend to be more involved at four-year or more institutions.

<b>Table 5</b>				
<b>Groups formally involved in implementing assessment policies</b>				
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>			
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Faculty	94%	97%	100%	97%
Institution's governing board	23%	11%	16%	15%
Administrators	94%	96%	92%	95%
Institutional researchers	15%	44%	12%	32%
Students	25%	21%	36%	24%
Other (See Appendix B)	6%	8%	12%	8%

Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can involve more than one group.  
 NYSED-OHE –BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-2.

**Leadership for assessment (Table 6).** Chief academic officers are the administrators

responsible for assuring that assessment is taking place in 74 percent of responding institutions.

The remaining institutions rely on others, such as presidents,

vice presidents, deans and committees, to assure that assessment is taking place.

<b>Table 6</b>				
<b>Administrators responsible for assessment</b>				
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>			
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Chief Academic Officer	75%	72%	76%	74%
Other (See Appendix B)	25%	28%	20%	26%
None	0%	0%	4%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>101%</b>

“None” may include committees of faculty.  
 Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-3.

**Stages of assessment (Table 7).** Virtually all responding institutions (99 percent) have at least begun an assessment plan and four out of five have some implementation of their plan. However, 1 percent of responding institutions has no plan and 18 percent have plans but no implementation, including 15 percent of two-year institutions, 22 percent of four-year or more institutions and 8 percent of graduate only institutions. More than half of responding institutions (53 percent) are making progress on implementing their assessment plans. Roughly one in five responding institutions (28 percent) have fully implemented assessment plans.

**Resources and structures to support assessment (Table 8).** Eight in ten responding institutions have at least one resource or structure to support assessment. Eighty percent

<b>Table 7</b>				
<b>Stages of development of assessment practices</b>				
<b>Stages of development</b>	<b>% of responding institutions</b>			
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
0 – No plan or implementation	0%	1%	0%	1%
1 – Planning but no implementation	15%	22%	8%	18%
2 – Making progress on implementation	34%	61%	56%	53%
3 – Continuously improving full implementation	51%	16%	36%	28%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Stages were described in the survey instrument and based on the research of Dr. Cecelia Lopez of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges.  
 NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-4.

have committees, 71 percent provide staff or release time, 69 percent provide technological support, 63 percent provide professional development, 59 percent provide institutional research and 41 percent provide physical facilities. Only 15 percent of responding institutions have separate budgets for assessment.

**Other quality assurance methods (Table 9).** In addition to “assessment” as defined in the

survey, most responding institutions use other methods to assure quality in their educational programs. More than 90 percent of responding institutions use internal program reviews,

<b>Table 8</b>				
<b>Resources and structures to support assessment</b>				
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>			
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Staff or release time	75%	67%	76%	71%
Committee structures	77%	79%	92%	80%
Professional development	79%	59%	44%	63%
Institutional research and support	38%	72%	48%	59%
Physical facilities	58%	33%	40%	41%
Technological support	74%	68%	68%	69%
Separate budget	6%	18%	20%	15%
Other (See Appendix B)	6%	5%	8%	6%

Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can have more than one type of resource or structure.  
 NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-5.

student evaluations of courses and faculty evaluations. In addition, 75 percent of responding institutions use external program review and 24 percent use other methods, such as workshops for faculty development and grants.

**Links between mission, goals and assessment (Appendix C).** Generally, institutions implementing assessment plans have some mechanism for assuring that the mission and goals of each of its units are aligned with the institution’s overall mission, goals and strategic plan. These institutions tend to have assessment at each level within the institution and a process for assuring that all the levels are contributing to overall mission and goals. However, some institutions are still working on aligning assessment with mission and strategic planning.

**Integration of assessment with planning and budgeting (Appendix D).** Some institutions do not integrate assessment with planning and budgeting, and

<b>Table 9 Methods used to assure quality in addition to the assessment of student learning and development</b>				
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>			
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Graduate only institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Internal program review	96%	91%	96%	93%
External program review	77%	77%	60%	75%
Student evaluations of courses	94%	96%	100%	96%
Faculty evaluations	98%	86%	96%	91%
Other (See Appendix B)	21%	27%	20%	24%
Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can use more than one method. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-6.				

some have definite plans to integrate these functions but do not yet do so. However, the majority of institutions consider assessment to be part of their regular cycle of planning and budgeting. The majority of institutions consider assessment to be part of the routine responsibilities of faculty and administrators and they include the cost assessment in regular budget requests from academic and other units.

**Findings for Part B - Assessment of General Education in Undergraduate Curricula**

Part B of the survey posed questions about assessment in general education for undergraduates. The items covered the presence of a general education requirement, the groups that identify learning goals for general education, definitions of general education goals, approaches to assessment in general education and changes made in responses to assessment results in general education.

The term “general education requirement” was not defined in the survey instructions. However, it usually refers to a set of competencies, content areas or courses that are required for most (or all) undergraduate programs to provide a broad and solid base for more specialized learning and for civic and personal life after graduation. General education is usually based on a philosophy of education and includes such competencies as writing, oral communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning and information literacy. At

institutions with missions to instill values, those values may also be included as a goal of general education.

**Presence of general education requirements (Table 10).** More than nine in ten institutions with undergraduates have some type of general education requirement, including 89 percent of two-year institutions and 92 percent of four-year or more institutions.

Generally, two-year institutions with no general education requirements are specialized institutions offering only professional-qualifying programs, such as nursing schools, and institutions offering programs leading to occupational degrees such as the Associate in Occupational Studies (A.O.S.) degree. Four-year or more institutions reporting that they have no general education requirement are institutions with specialized missions, institutions with distinctive approaches to undergraduate education and large universities with diverse missions.

<b>Table 10</b>			
<b>Institutions with undergraduates</b>			
<b>by general education requirement status</b>			
<b>Responding Institutions</b>			
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Number of institutions with undergraduates	53	106	159
Number of institutions with undergraduate general education requirements	47	97	144
Percent of institutions with undergraduates that have undergraduate general education requirements	89%	92%	91%
A requirement in undergraduate general education is not necessarily appropriate for every institution's mission. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Items B1 and B2.			

According to their catalogs, some of the two-year and four-year institutions reporting no general education requirement do have one or more general education or core requirements for at least some of their students.

**Groups identifying learning goals for general education (Table 11).** Faculty members are involved in identifying learning goals for general education at 98 percent of responding institutions and administrators are involved at 82 percent of responding institutions. In addition, 33 percent of responding institutions involve students, 30 percent involve employers of their graduates, 26 percent involve their governing boards, 24 percent involve their alumni and 20 percent involve institutional researchers.

**Definition of general education goals (Table 12).**

Some institutions have more than one definition of general education because of their separate units, such as a school of engineering and school of arts & sciences. Two in three responding institutions (67 percent) define at least some of their general education for undergraduates as a combination of competencies

across the curriculum and specific content and/or courses. In addition, 42 percent of responding institutions define some of their general education as only competencies across the curriculum, and 19 percent define some of their general education as only content knowledge.

**Assessment approaches in general education for undergraduates (Table 13).** New York’s colleges and universities use a wide range of approaches to assessing whether their undergraduates have

achieved learning goals in general education. The most common are course-embedded assessments (86 percent), student opinions (62 percent) and locally developed exams (51 percent).

Most of the other approaches on the survey -- including

certification and licensure exams, portfolios, performances and alumni opinions -- are used by at least one in three institutions. Two-year institutions are more likely than four-year institutions to use all types of exams, assessments of field experiences and employer opinions. Four-year institutions are more likely than two-year institutions to use capstone

	% of responding institutions		
	2-year institutions	4-year or more institutions	Total
Faculty	98%	98%	98%
Institution’s governing board	28%	25%	26%
Administrators	94%	76%	82%
Institutional researchers	23%	19%	20%
Students	26%	37%	33%
Alumni	28%	23%	24%
Employers of graduates	51%	20%	30%
Other (See Appendix B)	21%	10%	14%

Percentages are based on the number of institutions in Table 10. Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can involve more than one group.  
 NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item B-3.

	% of responding institutions		
	2-year institutions	4-year or more institutions	Total
Competencies across the curriculum	51%	37%	42%
Content knowledge	19%	20%	19%
Combination of above	57%	71%	67%
Other (See Appendix B)	2%	9%	7%

NOTES:  
 Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can have more than one definition. Percentages are based on the number of institutions in Table 10.  
 NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item B-4.

experiences. More detailed information about assessment in general education appears in Appendix E.

In addition to assessing student achievement in general education, many institutions assess the general education program itself. Program assessment includes faculty seminars, student evaluations of courses, faculty evaluations of the program and courses, student opinion surveys and reviews by internal

committees or external reviewers. Program assessment may also include national surveys, which provide benchmarks for peer institutions. More detailed information appears in Appendix F.

	<b>% of responding institutions</b>		
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Direct Measures:</b>			
Course-embedded assessments	89%	85%	86%
Commercially available exams	38%	24%	28%
Locally developed exams	64%	45%	51%
Comprehensive exams	49%	22%	31%
Certification and licensure exams	38%	39%	39%
Portfolios and performances	45%	40%	42%
Capstone experiences	19%	40%	33%
Assessments of field experiences	47%	33%	38%
<b>Indirect Measures:</b>			
Student opinions	64%	61%	62%
Non-completer opinions	17%	14%	15%
Alumni opinions	45%	43%	44%
Employer opinions	64%	27%	39%
Other (See Appendix B)	2%	14%	10%
Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can use more than one approach. Percentages are based on the number of institutions in Table 10. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item B-5.			

**Changes stimulated by assessment results in general education (Table 14).** The

assessment loop involves gathering, analyzing and using information for improvement. More than four in five responding institutions (84 percent) made at least one change in the past five years in response to assessment results in general education. More than half of the responding institutions made at least one change to curriculum

	<b>% of responding institutions</b>		
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Programs offered	53%	35%	41%
Curriculum	94%	79%	84%
Instruction	79%	56%	63%
Academic support services	62%	60%	60%
Student support services	60%	42%	48%
Staffing	60%	32%	41%
Other (See Appendix B)	4%	6%	6%
Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions could report more than one type of change. Percentages are based on the number of institutions in Table 10. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item B-6.			

(84 percent), instruction (63 percent) or academic support services (60 percent). Fewer than half made at least one change to student support services (48 percent), programs offered (41 percent) or staffing (41 percent). Two-year institutions were more likely than four-year institutions to make changes in response to assessment in general education. More detailed information can be found in Appendix G.

**Findings for Part C – Assessment in the Undergraduate Major**

Part C of the survey asked questions about assessment in the undergraduate major. Specifically, it asked about the groups involved in identifying learning goals for each major, the percentages of programs with formal assessment plans, approaches to assessment in the major and changes made because of assessment results.

**Groups involved in identifying learning goals and objectives for undergraduate majors (Table 15).** At virtually every responding institution faculty are involved in identifying learning goals and objectives for undergraduate majors. In addition, administrators are involved at 92 percent of two-year institutions and 68 percent of four-year or more institutions. Many institutions also involve employers of their graduates (45 percent), students (41 percent), their institutional governing board (21 percent), institutional researchers (16 percent) and others, such as specialized accrediting agencies (16 percent). Two-year institutions are more likely to involve all groups, and more than twice as likely to involve employers, as four-year institutions.

**Percentages of undergraduate majors using an assessment plan.** There are considerable differences among types of undergraduate programs. Programs in vocational and professional areas are more likely than programs in the liberal arts and sciences to have assessment plans and to use a range of assessment approaches.

<b>Table 15</b>			
<b>Groups formally involved in identifying learning goals and objectives for each undergraduate major</b>			
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>		
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Faculty	96%	99%	98%
Institution’s governing board	30%	17%	21%
Administrators	92%	68%	76%
Institutional researchers	21%	14%	16%
Students	49%	37%	41%
Alumni	34%	27%	30%
Employers of graduates	68%	33%	45%
Other (See Appendix B)	23%	13%	16%
Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can involve more than one group. Percentages are based on the number of institutions in Table 10.			
NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item C-1.			

**Vocational and professional**

**programs (Table 16).** Professional associations often accredit vocational and professional programs and offer certification exams to their graduates, which helps these programs identify and assess their learning goals. Nearly two out of three responding institutions (64 percent) use an assessment plan for 76-100 percent of their vocational and professional programs. Two-year institutions are more likely to have assessment plans for these types of programs than four-year institutions (86 percent vs. 52 percent with plans for 76-100 percent). Most institutions without assessment plans for vocational and professional programs are four-year or more institutions.

<b>Table 16</b> <b>Percentage of undergraduate majors in vocational or professional areas that use an assessment plan</b>			
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>		
	<b>2-year institutions (N = 50)</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions (N = 98)</b>	<b>Total (N = 148)</b>
0% - 25%	4%	19%	14%
26% - 50%	2%	8%	6%
51% - 75%	8%	20%	16%
76% - 100%	86%	52%	64%
Total	100%	99%	100%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 NYSED-OHE QA 2000, Item C-2.

**Liberal arts and sciences program (Table 17).** Only 32 percent of all responding institutions have a plan for 76-100 percent of their liberal arts and sciences programs. Four-year institutions are more than three times as likely to have assessment plans for these types of programs than two-year institutions (37 percent vs. 14 percent with plans for 76-100 percent).

<b>Table 17</b> <b>Percentage of undergraduate majors in liberal arts and sciences that use an assessment plan</b>			
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>		
	<b>2-year institutions (N= 28)</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions (N= 95)</b>	<b>Total (N = 123)</b>
0% - 25%	75%	36%	45%
26% - 50%	4%	13%	11%
51% - 75%	7%	15%	13%
76% - 100%	14%	37%	32%
Total	100%	101%	101%

Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.  
 NYSED-OHE QA 2000, Item C-3.

**Approaches to assessment in the undergraduate major (Table 18).**

Both direct and indirect measurements are used to assess learning in undergraduate majors.

The most common direct measurements are course-embedded assessments (89 percent of responding institutions), assessments of field experiences (74 percent), locally developed exams (73 percent) and certification or licensure exams (68 percent). The most common indirect measurements include student opinions (81 percent), employer opinions of graduates (70 percent) and alumni opinions (67 percent). Liberal arts and sciences programs are less likely to use every type of assessment method than vocational and professional programs.

<b>Table 18</b>				
<b>Approaches to assessing undergraduate achievement in the major</b>				
	<b>% of responding institutions (N = 159)</b>			
	<b>Vocational and professional majors only</b>	<b>Liberal arts and sciences majors only</b>	<b>Both types of majors</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Direct Measures:</b>				
Course-embedded assessments	31%	8%	50%	89%
Commercially available exams	25%	4%	12%	40%
Locally developed exams	26%	9%	38%	73%
Comprehensive exams	26%	3%	15%	44%
Certification and licensure exams	55%	1%	11%	68%
Portfolios and performances	28%	13%	21%	62%
Capstone experiences	21%	9%	33%	64%
Occupational skills assessments	38%	0%	8%	45%
Assessments of field experiences	40%	6%	28%	74%
<b>Indirect Measures:</b>				
Student opinions	28%	7%	46%	81%
Non-completer opinions	8%	3%	13%	24%
Alumni opinions	29%	5%	33%	67%
Employer opinions	48%	1%	21%	70%
Other (See Appendix B)	6%	1%	3%	9%
Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can use more than one approach. Two-year and four-year or more institutions are combined. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item C-4.				

**Changes stimulated by assessment results in undergraduate major (Table 19).** Nearly nine in ten responding institutions (87 percent) made at least one change in response to assessment results in an undergraduate major. The most common changes were to curriculum (87 percent of responding institutions), instruction (67 percent), programs offered (60 percent) and academic support services (55 percent). But many institutions also made changes to staffing (45 percent) and student support services (38 percent). Examples of changes made in response to assessment results in an undergraduate major can be found in Appendix H.

<b>Table 19</b>			
<b>Changes in the past five years stimulated by assessment results in undergraduate majors</b>			
	<b>% of responding institutions</b>		
	<b>2-year institutions</b>	<b>4-year or more institutions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Programs offered	60%	59%	60%
Curriculum	89%	87%	87%
Instruction	74%	64%	67%
Academic support services	60%	52%	55%
Student support services	53%	31%	38%
Staffing	53%	41%	45%
Other (See Appendix B)	0%	4%	3%
Columns will not sum to 100% because institutions can make more than one type of change. Percentages are based on the number of institutions in Table 10. NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item C-5.			

## Findings for Part D – Assessment of Graduate and Professional Education

Part D of the survey asked about assessment in programs for graduate and professional students. Specifically, it asked about the percentages of graduate and professional programs using assessment plans and how assessment was approached.

### Percentages of graduate and professional programs using assessment plans (Table 20).

More than two in three responding institutions (66 percent) with

graduate or professional programs use assessment plans for 76-100 percent of their programs. Virtually all graduate only institutions use assessment plans for 76-100 percent of these types of programs, while only 58 percent of four-year or more institutions do so.

### Approaches to assessment in graduate and professional programs (Table 21).

As in undergraduate programs, graduate and professional

programs use a variety of direct and indirect methods to assess student learning. The most common direct methods include course-embedded exams (86 percent of responding

	% of responding institutions		
	4-year or more institutions (N = 85)	Graduate only institutions (N = 24)	Total (N =109)
0% - 25%	16%	0%	13%
26% - 50%	4%	0%	3%
51% - 75%	22%	4%	18%
76% - 100%	58%	96%	66%
Total	100%	100%	100%

NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item D-2.

	% of responding institutions (N = 111)			
	Vocational and professional majors only	Liberal arts and sciences majors only	Both types of majors	Total
<b>Direct measures:</b>				
Course-embedded assessments	41%	6%	38%	86%
Commercially available exams	10%	0%	6%	16%
Locally developed exams	32%	5%	26%	62%
Comprehensive exams	20%	5%	26%	51%
Certification and licensure exams	50%	5%	14%	68%
Portfolios and performances	30%	7%	18%	55%
Capstone experiences	36%	7%	23%	66%
Occupational skills assessments	38%	4%	6%	48%
Assessments of field experiences	54%	7%	18%	79%
Student opinions	40%	6%	29%	75%
<b>Indirect measures:</b>	9%			
Non-completer opinions		1%	9%	19%
Alumni opinions	41%	4%	24%	68%
Employer opinions	41%	3%	15%	59%
Other (See Appendix B)	6%	3%	1%	10%
Other (See Appendix B)	2%	0%	0%	2%

Column will not sum to 100% because institutions can use more than one approach.  
NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item D-3.

institutions), assessment of field experiences (79 percent), certification and licensure exams (68 percent), capstone experiences (66 percent), locally developed exams (62 percent), portfolios and performances (55 percent) and comprehensive exams (51 percent). The most common indirect methods include student opinions (75 percent), alumni opinions (68 percent) and employer opinions (59 percent). Programs in vocational and professional fields are more likely than programs in the liberal arts and sciences to use every assessment method.

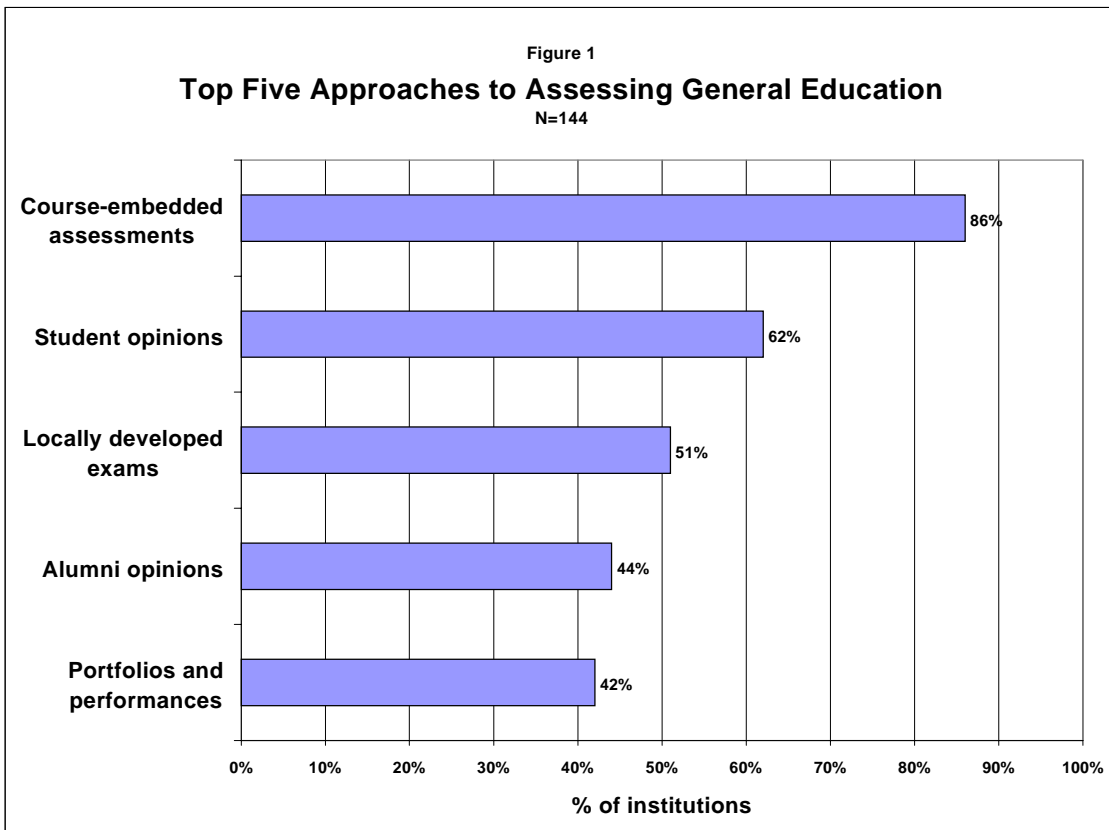
<b>Table 22</b>	
<b>Barriers to assessment of student learning and development</b>	
<b>Type of response</b>	<b>Number (% of Total)</b>
Usable responses containing barriers	116 (61 %)
No response, unusable response, response of “no barriers”	74 (39 %)
<b>Barriers Mentioned</b>	<b>% of Usable Responses</b>
<b>Culture of institution</b>	
Faculty concerns/faculty reluctance	19%
Tradition/culture of non-assessment	6%
<b>Inadequate resources</b>	
Inadequate finances	16%
Inadequate time	16%
Staff shortages	13%
Lack of resources (unspecified)	10%
Staff workload	4%
<b>Lack of tools, expertise and/or information</b>	
Lack of experience/Expertise	7%
Ineffective tools/exams for measurement	9%
Insufficient data (such as licensure exam results)	5%
<b>Technical problems</b>	
Non-quantifiable learning objectives	8%
Technological inefficiencies	4%
Student non-responsiveness	6%
Difficulties tracking alumni	4%
Difficulties tracking students	3%
Applying assessment to transfer students	2%
Measurement difficulties (pre- and post-testing)	1%
Student characteristics (e.g., poverty, homelessness)	1%
<b>Weak leadership and planning</b>	
Poor planning	11%
Not an administrative priority	4%
Poorly defined assessment goals	3%
NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item E-1.	

## Findings for Part E – Barriers to Assessment of Student Learning and Development

As shown in Table 22, more than six in ten responding institutions (61 percent) provided usable responses to a constructed response item about barriers to assessing student learning and development. The most common barrier is faculty concern and reluctance, which was reported by about one in five responding institutions (19 percent). Other barriers involve inadequate resources; the lack of tools, information and expertise; technical problems; and leadership. Some of the barriers, such as leadership, are related to a specific institution. Other barriers, such as the lack of professional licensure exam results for graduates of licensure-qualifying programs, are systemic.

### Summary and Policy Implications

The current status of assessment at colleges and universities in New York State is mixed. There is strong evidence that New York’s colleges and universities consider assessment to be an integral part of what they do and how they do it.

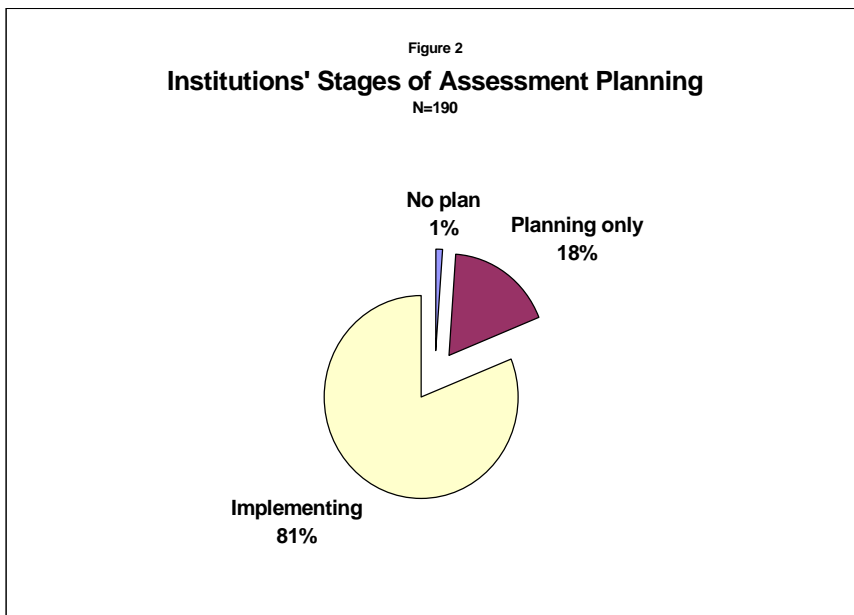


- Virtually all of New York’s colleges and universities have assigned responsibility for leading assessment to an individual or group and involve faculty, administrators and others in setting learning goals and assessing whether those goals are being met.
- As called for by “best practices,” colleges and universities use many approaches to obtain multiple indicators of student learning, including direct measures such as course-embedded exams and indirect measures such as student, alumni and employer surveys. (Figure 1)
- Colleges and universities use their assessment findings to make improvements to the mix of programs offered, curriculum, instruction, academic support services and other aspects of undergraduate and graduate education.

Despite this progress, there is still room for improvement at some institutions and for some types of programs.

**Institutional assessment plans (Figure 2).**

Virtually all responding institutions are either planning or implementing assessment policies. But nearly one in five responding institutions (19 percent) has neither a plan nor any implementation. This includes 15 percent of two-year institutions and 23 percent of four-year or more institutions.

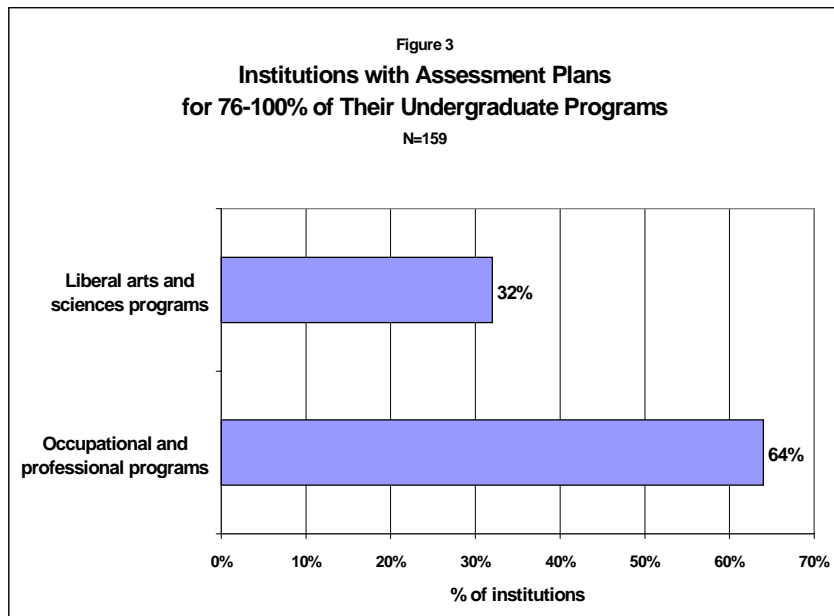


**Assessment in undergraduate majors (Figure 3).** Only 64 percent of responding institutions use assessment plans for 76-100 percent of their undergraduate programs in vocational and professional fields. Only 32 percent of responding institutions use assessment plans for 76-100 percent of their undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences.

**Barriers to assessment.** Sixty-one percent of responding institutions report that they face barriers to assessing student learning and development. The most common barriers are faculty concerns, faculty reluctance and resource scarcity. Other barriers are inexperience, inadequate tools, unavailability of data (such as professional licensure exam results) and technical problems (such as low response rates on student and alumni surveys).

**Policy implications.** By strengthening their requirements for assessment, the Regents will influence institutional practices. However, given the nature and size of the gaps in assessment, new requirements alone are not likely to lead to fundamental change. Faculty and administrators will need technical assistance and ongoing support systems such as Web sites with

links to resource materials and peer networks. In addition, the Education Department should strive to reduce the systemic barriers to assessment over which it has some control. For example, the Department should continue its efforts to provide institutions with outcomes information that they do not possess, such as professional licensure exam results.



## Appendix A

# Survey of Institutional Assessment Practices

### **Purposes**

The purpose of this survey is to get a snapshot of assessment practices at New York's colleges and universities to report in summary form to the Board of Regents and other State policymakers. Survey results will fill a gap in knowledge about how institutions have been implementing the longstanding requirements of the Regents and the accreditation community. Survey results may also be used to publicize effective practices.

### **Respondents**

We ask that this survey be directed to the Chief Academic Officer of each institution.

### **Cycle**

At this time, there are no plans to repeat this survey on a regular basis.

### **Survey Parts**

This survey has five parts, shown below. Parts A and E are for every institution. Parts B and C are for institutions serving undergraduates. Part D is for institutions with graduate and first-professional programs.

Part A - Leadership and shared responsibility for assessment

Part B - Assessment in general education for undergraduates

Part C - Assessment in the undergraduate major

Part D - Assessment of graduate and professional education

Part E - Barriers to assessment of student learning and development

### **Definitions**

Please use the following definitions when responding to this survey.

- **Assessment.** "Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development." (From: Catherine A. Palomba and Trudy W. Banta, Assessment Essentials, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999, page 4.)
- **Current practice.** Your institution's current practices and those it has definite plans to implement within the next twelve months.
- **Vocational and professional programs.** Registered programs directed toward specific occupational or professional objectives.
- **Liberal arts and sciences programs.** Registered programs not directed towards specific occupational or professional objectives.

### **Acknowledgments**

We wish to thank the Research and Information System Advisory Council (RISAC) and the Advisory Group on Quality Assurance for their help in developing this survey. Each of these groups has representatives from all sectors of higher education in New York State and all types of institutions as well as the system offices of SUNY and CUNY.

## Part A - Leadership and shared responsibility for assessment

1. **What groups are formally involved in developing assessment policies at your institution?** Check all that apply.
  - a Faculty
  - b Public system's governing board
  - c Institution's governing board
  - d Administrators
  - e Institutional researchers
  - f Students
  - g Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
  
2. **What groups are formally involved in implementing assessment policies at your institution?** Check all that apply.
  - a Faculty
  - b Public system's governing board
  - c Institution's governing board
  - d Administrators
  - e Institutional researchers
  - f Students
  - g Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
  
3. **What administrator is responsible for assuring that assessment is taking place at your institution?** Select one.
  - a Chief Academic Officer
  - b Other(specify)\_\_\_\_\_
  - c None
  
4. **At what stage of development are your institution's assessment practices?** *See Attachment 1 for definitions.* Select only one.
  - Stage 0: No plan or implementation
  - Stage 1: Planning but no implementation
  - Stage 2: Making progress on implementation
  - Stage 3: Continuously improving full implementation
  
5. **What resources and structures does your institution currently provide to support assessment?** Check all that apply.
  - a Staff (or release time)
  - b Committee structures
  - c Professional development
  - d Institutional research and support
  - e Physical facilities (e.g., office space)
  - f Technological support (e.g., computers)
  - g Separate budget
  - h Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
  
6. **In addition to assessing student learning and development, which of the following does your institution use to assure quality?** Check all that apply.
  - a Internal program review
  - b External program review
  - c Student evaluations of courses
  - d Faculty evaluations
  - e Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

7. **How does your institution link assessment to its mission and goals?**
  
8. **How is your assessment process integrated with your institution's cycle of planning and budgeting? How do academic units obtain resources to assess student learning, analyze their findings and test new approaches to teaching and learning?**

**Part B - Assessment in general education for undergraduates**

1. **Does your institution have undergraduates?** Check one.
  - Yes ➔ Continue with Item 2 below.
  - No ➔ Go to Part D.
  
2. **Does your institution have a general education requirement for undergraduates?** Check one.
  - Yes ➔ Continue with Item 3 below.
  - No ➔ Go to Part C.
  
3. **What groups are involved in identifying the learning goals for general education at your institution?** Check all that apply.
 

<input type="checkbox"/> a Faculty	<input type="checkbox"/> f Students
<input type="checkbox"/> b Public system's governing board	<input type="checkbox"/> g Alumni
<input type="checkbox"/> c Institution's governing board	<input type="checkbox"/> h Employers of graduates
<input type="checkbox"/> d Administrators	<input type="checkbox"/> i Other (specify)_____
<input type="checkbox"/> e Institutional researchers	
  
4. **How does your institution define general education goals?** Check all that apply.
  - a A set of competencies across the curriculum (e.g., communication skills, critical thinking, problem solving, information literacy)
  - b Content knowledge (e.g., U.S. history, 'great books,' second language)
  - c Combination of above
  - d Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
  
5. **Which assessment approaches does your institution use to assess undergraduate achievement in general education?** Check all that apply.
 

<input type="checkbox"/> a Course-embedded assessments	<input type="checkbox"/> h Assessments of field experiences
<input type="checkbox"/> b Commercially available exams	<input type="checkbox"/> i Student opinions
<input type="checkbox"/> c Locally developed exams	<input type="checkbox"/> j Non-completer opinions
<input type="checkbox"/> d Comprehensive exams	<input type="checkbox"/> k Alumni opinions
<input type="checkbox"/> e Certification & licensure exams	<input type="checkbox"/> l Employer opinions
<input type="checkbox"/> f Portfolios and performances	<input type="checkbox"/> m Other (specify)_____
<input type="checkbox"/> g Capstone experiences	

6. **What changes within the past five years have been stimulated by assessment results in general education?** Check all that apply.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a Programs offered          | <input type="checkbox"/> e Student support services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b Curriculum                | <input type="checkbox"/> f Staffing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c Instruction               | <input type="checkbox"/> g Other (specify)_____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d Academic support services |   |

7. **If applicable, describe your institution's assessment process for general education.**

8. **If applicable, describe one example of a change made at your institution within the past five years that was stimulated by assessment results in general education.**

**Part C - Assessment in the undergraduate major**

1. **What groups are involved in identifying the learning goals and objectives for each degree program or major?** Check all that apply.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a Faculty                         | <input type="checkbox"/> f Students               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b Public system's governing board | <input type="checkbox"/> g Alumni                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c Institution's governing board   | <input type="checkbox"/> h Employers of graduates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d Administrators                  | <input type="checkbox"/> i Other (specify)_____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e Institutional researchers       |   |

2. **Estimate the percentage of your institution's undergraduate majors in vocational or professional areas that use an assessment plan.** Check only one.

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% - 25%  | <input type="checkbox"/> 51% - 75%  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26% - 50% | <input type="checkbox"/> 76% - 100% |

3. **Estimate the percentage of your institution's undergraduate majors in liberal arts and sciences that use an assessment plan.** Check only one.

- 0% - 25%
- 26% - 50%
- 51% - 75%
- 76% - 100%

4. **Which assessment approaches does your institution use to assess undergraduate achievement in the major?** Check only one box for each approach that is used.

Vocational & Professional Majors	Liberal Arts and Sciences Majors	Both Types of Majors
----------------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------

- a Course-embedded assessments
- b Commercially available exams
  
- c Locally developed exams
- d Comprehensive exams
  
- e Certification & licensure exams
- f Portfolios and performances
  
- g Capstone experiences
- h Occupational skills assessments
  
- i Assessments of field experiences
- j Student opinions
  
- k Non-completer opinions
- l Alumni opinions
  
- m Employer opinions
- n Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- o Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. **What changes within the past five years have been stimulated by assessment results in undergraduate majors?** Check all that apply.

- a Programs offered
- b Curriculum
- c Instruction
- d Academic support services
  
- e Student support services
- f Staffing
- g Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. **If applicable, please describe one example of a change made at your institution within the past five years that was stimulated by assessment results in an undergraduate major.**

**Part D - Assessment of graduate and professional education**

1. **Does your institution have graduate or first-professional students?**
  - Yes ➤ Continue with Item 2 below.
  - No ➤ Go to Part E.
  
2. **Estimate the percentage of your institution's graduate and first-professional degree programs that use an assessment plan.** Check only one.
  - 0% - 25%
  - 26% - 50%
  - 51% - 75%
  - 76% - 100%
  
7. **Which assessment approaches does your institution use to assess achievement for graduate and first-professional students?** Check one box for each approach that is used.

Vocational & Professional Programs	Liberal Arts and Sciences Programs	Both Types of Programs
--	--	---------------------------

- a Course-embedded assessments
- b Commercially available exams
  
- c Locally developed exams
- d Comprehensive exams
  
- e Certification & licensure exams
- f Portfolios and performances
  
- g Capstone experiences
- h Occupational skills assessments
  
- i Assessments of field experiences
- j Student opinions
  
- k Non-completer opinions
- l Alumni opinions
  
- m Employer opinions
- n Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- o Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Part E - Barriers to assessment of student learning and development**

1. **What barriers, if any, does your institution face in assessing student learning and development?**

**Attachment 1**  
**Lopez Model of Stages of Implementation of Learning Assessment Programs\***

<b>Patterns of Characteristics</b>	<b>STAGE 1 Planning Implementation of an Assessment Program</b>	<b>STAGE 2 Making Progress in Implementing Assessment Programs</b>	<b>STAGE 3 Continuous Improvement of Assessment Programs</b>
<b>Institutional Culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Mission</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Shared Values</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statements of Mission or Purpose for the entire institution and its units do not include wording about student learning.</li> <li>▪ A shared understanding of the purposes, advantages and limitations of assessment is just beginning to emerge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statements of Mission and Purpose for the entire institution and its units state the value the institution places on student learning.</li> <li>▪ A shared understanding of the purposes, advantages and limitations of assessment exists and some academic programs have Goal Statements that emphasize student learning, its assessment and its improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Statements of Mission and Purpose for the entire institution, its units and its academic programs place an emphasis on student learning, its assessment and improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Shared Responsibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Faculty</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Administration and Governing Board</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Students</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Faculty have not yet described measurable objectives for the goals of academic programs; have not identified and used direct measures of student learning; and have not expanded assessment beyond faculty evaluation of student learning and grades.</li> <li>▪ The Board and administration show some interest in improving assessment.</li> <li>▪ Students know little about the assessment program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many faculty members have developed and use measurable objectives for their program's educational goals; are becoming knowledgeable about assessment and its uses; and support the institution's assessment program.</li> <li>▪ The Board and administration express their understanding of the goals of the assessment program, have assigned responsibility for assessment to the Chief Academic Officer and support the assessment program with resources, committee structures and reward systems.</li> <li>▪ Students serve on assessment committees and area becoming knowledgeable about the assessment program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Faculty supports the assessment program publicly and explores the uses of assessment in the context of related research.</li> <li>▪ The Board and administration continue and enhance, when needed, their support.</li> <li>▪ Student leaders educate their peers about the assessment program through conversations, public presentations and in the student newspaper.</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Structures</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Resources</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The structure of the assessment program is beginning to take shape.</li> <li>▪ The institution has not allocated sufficient resources to operate and sustain as assessment program and there are few provisions for</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The institution has an organization chart and annual calendar for the implementation of its assessment program; structures and staffing to support the program, including responsibilities for department heads;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Syllabi for all existing and proposed courses contain measurable learning objectives; data collection sustains the assessment program; and the</li> </ul>

<b>Attachment 1</b>			
<b>Lopez Model of Stages of Implementation of Learning Assessment Programs*</b>			
<b>Patterns of Characteristics</b>	<b>STAGE 1 Planning Implementation of an Assessment Program</b>	<b>STAGE 2 Making Progress in Implementing Assessment Programs</b>	<b>STAGE 3 Continuous Improvement of Assessment Programs</b>
	collecting, interpreting or using data about student learning above the level of the individual classroom.	professional development for assessment; and feedback loops about assessment results so that all constituencies can use them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The institution has a budget for the assessment program that provides adequate technological support, physical facilities and space; professional development opportunities; knowledgeable research or comparable staff to support assessment and other appropriate resources.</li> </ul>	program itself and its impact is assessed regularly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All resources for a comprehensive assessment system are allocated annually.</li> </ul>
<b>Efficacy of Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation of the assessment program is stalled or progressing more slowly than planned; few academic programs are using assessment results; and there is still some confusion about the purposes and relationships among: faculty evaluation, assessment of student learning, program review and institutional effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Faculty are beginning to use assessment results to develop recommended changes for academic programs and other areas and their recommendations are being incorporated into regular strategic planning and budgeting cycle.</li> <li>▪ Assessment findings are beginning to be incorporated in program reviews and the self-study of institutional effectiveness.</li> <li>▪ Academic unit heads are documenting the changes made as a result of assessment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student learning has become central to the culture of the institution and finding ways to improve it.</li> <li>▪ A "culture of evidence" has emerged, sustained by faculty and administrative commitment to excellent teaching and learning.</li> <li>▪ Programmatic benchmarks are established against which students' learning outcomes are assessed.</li> <li>▪ Student achievement is publicly and regularly celebrated.</li> </ul>

\*This matrix was adapted from a model developed by Dr. Cecelia L. Lopez, Associate Director of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. The Lopez model was based on an analysis of nearly 1,000 accreditation reports prepared between 1989 and 1999 after the North Central Association began requiring institutions to develop and implement assessment plans with direct measures of student learning.

## Appendix B “Other Specify” Entries

### Item A-1

Academic Senate  
Accrediting agencies  
Advisory Board  
Advisory Boards  
Advisory Councils  
Advisory Group (SON)  
Alumna & professional educator  
Alumni  
Assessment Committee  
ATS  
Board of Exams Chaplain  
Committees  
CUNY Board of Trustees  
Department of Student Services & Others  
Input from Professional Organizations in field  
Middle States Self-Study  
Outcomes Assessment Committee  
Permanent Accreditation Committee  
Practitioners  
Program Directors  
Recruitment Director of Student Activities

### Item A-2

Advisory Boards  
Advisory Councils  
Alumni  
Alumni; Employers of our graduates  
Assessment Committee  
ATS  
Board of Exams Chaplain  
Enrollment Management/Retention SVCs  
External Reviewers  
Funeral Directors  
Permanent Accreditation Committee  
Program Directors  
Registration & assessment  
Staff  
Support Staff

### Item A-3

Academic Deans and Institutional Research & Planning  
Administration/Faculty  
Also the Chief Executive Officer for some areas.  
Appointed Faculty Member  
Assessment Coordinator-Academic Dean  
Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs  
Assistant Provost for Academic Programs  
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies Institutional  
Associate Dean of Planning, Research & Assessment  
Associate Provost  
Associate Provost, Academic Deans  
Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Asst. Dir. Of Inst. Research, Planning & Assessment  
Board of Academic Standards  
Campus outcomes assessment committee  
Chief Assessment Officer  
Dean

Dean and President  
Dean for SPA  
Dean of Students/VP for International Programs  
Dean of Students; Chief Info and planning Officer  
Dean, School of Biological Sciences  
Deans of the four Schools, Assistant VP, Academic  
Diffuse responsibility  
Director  
Director of Assessment  
Director of Assessment  
Director of School  
Director, School of Nursing  
Director, school of nursing  
Director-School of Nursing  
Division chairs  
Faculty Chairman  
Faculty-Staff-Administrator Provost Coordinator  
Individual school deans cent admin role under revision  
Ivan (Provost)  
Permanent Accreditation Committee  
President  
President  
President  
Program Directors  
Registrar, Deans, Associate Deans, Chairpersons &  
Special Assistant to President for Planning  
Vice President for Assessment & Accountability  
Vice president for finance and administration  
Vice President for Planning  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
VP, Institutional Research/Planning

### Item A-5

Attendance at off-campus assessment workshops  
Compensation to Liberal Education Assessment Committee  
Consultant  
Developing institution-wide committee structures  
External program review for NCAIE programs  
Grants  
Grants  
Office of Planning  
Office of Planning research & effectiveness  
Stipends  
Training Workshops  
Use of existing offices, staff, and tech support

### Item A-6

Alumnae/alumni survey  
Alumni Survey  
Clinical resources & facilities survey to assess w  
Graduate outcomes survey, Alumni surveys, Employee  
survey  
Graduate survey and employer survey six months aft  
Middle States Accreditation status as candidate  
Participation in national surveys (NSSE)  
Post placement employer & employee survey  
Post tenure review  
Student comprehensive evaluation

**Item B-3**

Academic Program and Policy Committee  
 Accreditation  
 Accrediting Commission Guidelines  
 Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges  
 Advisory Board  
 Collegiate affiliate  
 Corporate Education Branch  
 Integrative studies collegium  
 NY State Education Department Regulations  
 Professional accrediting bodies related to program  
 Professional Organizations  
 Program evaluators

**Item B-4**

Accreditation standards of FIDER and NASAD  
 Core curriculum  
 Core Curriculum  
 Demonstrated ability to link classroom and on-the-job learning  
 Distribution requirement; goals for the First Year  
 Mathematical literacy  
 Reliable on university procedures  
 Understanding of diverse cultures, environmental awareness

**Item B-5**

Advisory Board  
 Case Studies  
 College-wide assessment plan (in planning stage)  
 Field placement agency opinions  
 Goal certification  
 Major Seminars are surveyed  
 National surveys administered to students  
 Review/newly progressive general education requirements  
 Standardized test (LSAT & CPE)  
 Student and faculty surveys  
 To give a fuller picture of the College's approach  
 University Proficiency Examination

**Item B-6**

Assessment being implemented 2000 - 2001 academic year  
 Community Advisory Boards  
 Discussions of revisions to General Education  
 Entire core curriculum is currently being reevaluated  
 Equipment  
 Library provision strengthened

**Item C-1**

ABFSE American Board of Funeral Service Education.  
 Accrediting Agencies.  
 Accreditation bodies  
 Accreditation Bodies  
 Accrediting bodies and NYSED

Advisory Boards  
 Advisory Boards  
 Advisory Boards  
 Advisory Council for each program  
 American Board of Funeral Service Education  
 Committees: Curriculum Review and Development Comm  
 Community Advisory Boards  
 Corporate Education Branch  
 Curriculum Review Committee  
 Dean, Provost  
 External evaluators  
 Field work supervisor if applicable  
 Market Research  
 Middle States  
 NLNAC  
 Professional accrediting bodies related to program  
 Professional Accrediting/Licensing agencies  
 Professionals in each discipline  
 Program Advisory Committees  
 School of Education & Employers of graduates

**Item C-4**

Advisory Board  
 Advisory Boards  
 Agents  
 American Chemical Society Accreditation etc  
 Community advisory boards  
 Faculty observation  
 Faculty observation  
 Internship/co-op supervisor opinions  
 Professional accreditation reviews  
 Senior Outcomes Assessment Interviews  
 Senior thesis  
 Transfer colleges

**Item C-5**

Additional computer and learning centers  
 Increase budget allocation  
 Structure & Organization of the Major

**Item D-3**

Advisory  
 Case studies  
 Clinical & student preceptor evaluate of site  
 Community advisory boards  
 Diocesan Assessment of seniors  
 Faculty Advisement Program  
 Faculty Opinions  
 GRE, LSAT, MCAT  
 GRE, LSAT, MCAT  
 Professional accreditation reviews  
 Research papers  
 Residency Directors

**Appendix C**

**Excerpts from Selected Responses about Linking Assessment to Institutional Mission and Goals**  
N=136 usable responses

**Planning for assessment**

- *Our University, comprising seven diverse divisions, is currently working toward developing links of assessment to the university-wide mission and goals.*
- *Assessment will be driven by core competencies identified by the faculty curriculum committee, which in turn is driven by the school's mission and vision statement.*
- *There is an ongoing effort to review student skills in light of goals articulated for each graduate program. These goals are reviewed in light of the mission statement. Assessment tools are currently under review.*
- *That stage has not yet been reached. The intention is to review the final list of outcomes for co-ordination (or lack thereof) with the mission and to review the mission with that in mind.*
- *Assessment is only loosely tied to mission and goals. This year we will be finalizing a strategic plan that has explicit linkage(s) and plans for assessment.*

**Implementing assessment**

- *Our assessment of First Year Seminars utilizes a separate course evaluation form linked to mission. Moreover, our current curriculum involves 8 specified ""goals"" (directly linked to mission) which each student addresses via course work.*
- *Mission statement is the basis of strategic planning. Each area or department or program has developed its own mission statement and goals related to the college mission statement. Assessment is tied to these individual statements and goals.*
- *Each unit develops its own assessment plan. Assessment goals specifically link to missions and strategic goals.*
- *A new budgeting process has been put in place for the 2001-02 FY that requires all units to create a performance plan that is tied to the strategic objectives of the unit. All objectives must have associated metrics and will be updated on a yearly basis.*
- *The mission and goals of the college are clearly stated in documents that go to all students, faculty, and administrators. They are widely agreed on and supported by the entire community. Student work is evaluated within that context.*
- *Academic Program Reviews assess program quality and effectiveness in relation to mission and goals.*
- *Assessment is a significant element of institutional planning and budgeting.*
- *Linkage is established through the traditional approach of a matrix that ties desired outcomes (extracted from the missions and goals) to where the courses and programs provide the education.*
- *The assessment process is intended to work simultaneously at different levels: course, program, school, and institution.*
- *Each college, school and support service area has developed a mission and goals statement and is participating in strategic planning. A liaison between Strategic Planning Committee and Outcomes Assessment Committee provides updates to each committee.*
- *...by using the Mission and Goals as reference point for evaluations and for assessing the merits of program or course changes/revisions/additions.*

NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-7.

**Excerpts from Selected Responses about Integrating Assessment with Budgeting and Planning**  
**N=180 usable responses**

**Not currently integrated and no plans to integrate**

- *The College of Arts and Sciences has had no direct link from assessment to planning and budgeting.*
- *Assessment is not now integrated with planning and budgeting. There are no special resources available.*
- *It is not integrated and there are no resources currently other than the operating budgets.*

**Planning to integrate**

- *Currently the planning and budgeting is a separate activity from the assessment conducted by the college. However, the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research, created in February of 1999, exists to support the activities within both.*
- *Currently, the assessment process is not integrated significantly into the cycle of planning and budgeting. Assessment at the college-wide classroom/academic unit level is in the planning stages, but not yet implemented.*
- *Our college is in the process of changing a long-established budgeting process to more directly link planning and assessment with the budgeting process.*
- *The present process of integration is informal. One of the duties of the New Institutional Effectiveness Committee will be to formalize these processes.*

**Integrated, with or without a separate budget**

- *It is part of the regular budgeting process.*
- *Departments request funds through the annual budgeting process. A program of Faculty Development Small Grants provides support for individual faculty to develop teaching and learning approaches.*
- *Requests for funding are included in the yearly budget process. In some cases donations or other outside funding sources are requested.*
- *The assessment process annually identifies needs for new resources, changes in the deployment of current resources, new academic programs or courses, and changes to existing academic programs and courses. The schedule of assessments and quality indicators are planned so that required data are available prior to the start of the budget process.*
- *Using assessment, departments and programs develop goals for inclusion in the College's institutional plan. Goals are stated with commensurate resource, staffing and facilities requirements.*
- *Assessment is integrated with planning and budgeting on an annual and on a longer-term basis. Each academic department develops an itemized and annual budget request that includes budget justifications.*
- *The budgeting process includes funds directly available for these activities through provision for workshops, conferences, and professional development opportunities. In addition, there are general institutional monies.*
- *Assessment results are analyzed. Changes requiring financial expenditures and human or physical resources are proposed for our yearly updates of 3-year plan.*

NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item A-8.

**Excerpts from Selected Responses about Assessing Student Achievement in General Education  
N=106 usable responses****Courses**

- *A general education course required of all students is evaluated through student performance on a measure of content knowledge and critical thinking.*
- *General education core courses are structured to fulfill specific, highly articulated competencies in the skill and content areas. Assessments occur with the classes, including capstone senior seminars, as well as by external instruments.*
- *There will be a "capstone" course for general education in the sophomore year.*

**Exams**

- *Aside from in-course assessments, our students take a new exam midway through their college experience.*
- *Writing Across the Curriculum process has initially focused on general education courses... It will be assessed through standardized testing (e.g., CUNY Proficiency Examination) and internally.*
- *We used to use ACT's COMP as a pre- and posttest for freshman and seniors but found the data of little value. We now rely primarily on individual course-embedded assessment.*
- *A standardized test, the Academic Profile, is used as a measure of general education, I.e., it measures college-level reading, college-level writing, mathematics, and critical thinking.*
- *GRE and MCAT result, teacher certification exam results.*
- *There are entry and exit assessments in courses as well as yardsticks for each competency that must be met for student success.*

**Portfolios**

- *A core curriculum committee identified 15 specific objectives of the core and then read a series of senior portfolios against the 15 objectives.*

**Surveys of student opinions and perceptions**

- *College outcome measures project (COMP); Student opinion survey (SOS); College student experiences questionnaire (CSEQ); Sheperd scale (local instrument re: spiritual values).*
- *Annual participation in a senior survey that asks about educational gains; self-estimates from seniors then linked to self-estimates provided as an incoming freshman*

## Excerpts from Selected Responses about Assessing General Education Programs

N=106 usable responses

**No assessment process of the general education program**

- *Two faculty committees in the past 13 years have reviewed the general education requirements without any mechanism for assessing the efficacy of those requirements or their implementation.*
- *Faculty and administrators engage in discussions about general education objectives on a regular basis.*
- *There is no separate process for assessing general education as a component of academic programs.*

**Approaches to assessing the general education program**

- *A faculty oversight committee reviews the results of faculty and student surveys.*
- *Core Curriculum has been assessed continually for the past twenty years, including all-day faculty development seminars held each year in June.*
- *First year core courses are evaluated each spring. Sophomore core courses are evaluated each fall. Core area courses are evaluated in alternating semesters. World Literature is evaluated each semester. All results are reported to the faculty, department chairs, etc.*
- *Course evaluation, program review, student and alumni surveys, and benchmarking studies.*

NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item B-7.

**Appendix G**  
**Examples of Changes Stimulated by Assessment Results in General Education**  
**N= 117 usable responses**

**Changes to scope and sequence of curricula and courses**

- *A mathematics college-wide requirement has been added.*
- *Strengthening the liberal arts components of teacher education programs. The Liberal Arts and Sciences Tests of the NYSTCE has stimulated the Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty to emphasize more writing in their courses.*
- *Faculty added a first-semester course, Principles of Communication to the curriculum.*
- *We added a new course sequence to help our students better understand the role of mathematics and science in our everyday world.*
- *The core curriculum was modified to require that students select courses to fulfill requirements in critical thinking and international/multicultural awareness.*
- *Development of new majors.*
- *Complete overhaul of Computer Literacy competency requirement, based in large measure on student course evaluations and student satisfaction questionnaires.*
- *The College of Arts and Sciences coordinated the development of the campus-wide writing-across-the-curriculum.*
- *We included a requirement for a computer course as a result of the weakness in our students' information literacy skills.*
- *Studio course methods (<http://www.ciue.rpi.edu/>) extended to engineering school.*

**Changes to instructional methods**

- *On the basis of a long term assessment done on a new method of teaching introductory science courses (Studio Teaching, ref <http://www.ciue.rpi.edu/>) which were part of the general education requirement, the engineering school decided to employ these methods.*
- *In 1997, as part of the revision of the College's Core requirements, all first-year students were required to participate in a learning community.*

**Changes to academic and student support services and campus life**

- *Concern about the poor verbal and written communication skills of some students led us to hire a full-time director of Academic Support Services.*
- *We have developed an ESL intensive immersion program.*
- *Post-testing of students' writing skills contributed to the creation of a "Bridge" program for underprepared students and to an increase in the availability of supervised tutoring services.*
- *More attention to advising and tutorial services.*
- *Addition of campus cultural activities.*
- *The addition of a course for probation students.*
- *A writing skills club was formed.*

**Changes to grading and assessment**

- *An exit writing exam was introduced.*
- *In April 1998 the passing grade in all English courses was raised from D to C. In April 1998 the passing grade in all science courses was raised from C to C+.*
- *Faculty developed critical thinking exercises to be used by students throughout the semester. A standardized critical thinking tool will be put into place this semester & repeated near graduation.*

**Changes to staffing**

- *The student to preceptor ration recitation & lab sections was reduced.*
- *The addition of three new faculty positions where need was driven by Gen. Ed. Requirements.*

NYSED-OHE-BIAE, QA 2000, Item B-8.

**Examples of Changes Stimulated by Assessment Results in Undergraduate Majors  
N=136 usable responses**

**Changes to curriculum and instruction**

- *The Department has revised its programs based upon changes in the health care system.*
- *Many departments have made appropriate changes to incorporate technology into required courses.*
- *After assessing the practical lab skills of their students, the faculty decided to design an additional lab course because they were not satisfied with the level of practical skills their students were displaying.*
- *Assessment of Teacher Education programs has resulted in the reorganization of student field experiences and student teaching evaluations.*
- *A curriculum in media studies was recently revised based on assessment of student expectations, industry requirements and student performance expectations.*
- *Curriculum changes in an Anatomy and Physiology course for pre-clinical nursing students, were implemented as a result of assessing students' areas of weaknesses on a practice NYCLEX exam and on a common standardized final exam.*
- *The introduction of film and television workshops and seminars.*
- *Students are involved in direct research in their immediate communities and local business corridors.*
- *the increase in the number of courses in which the instructor uses some kind of educational technology (multimedia materials, Internet,*
- *Student/Alumni survey results in the Social Sciences Program Review suggested the need for a new Criminal Justice minor, subsequently devised and implemented.*
- *Most science departments strengthened the senior project to include specific public presentations.*
- *Four of the major programs have added a service component as a requirement for their majors to reflect our mission as a Jesuit Catholic College.*
- *The College established a major program in Computer Engineering as a result of the assessment of our Computer Science and Electrical Engineering programs.*
- *In response to student interest, the English department developed a new minor in Writing.*
- *The College's Business Administration Department has made major program changes to the core curricula of its undergraduate degree programs based on input from the Department's Advisory Board regarding program outcomes.*
- *Employer feedback to the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) faculty indicated need for students to display stronger skills in patient interaction.*
- *Addition deletion of courses changes in text and resources.*
- *In the Office Sciences program we converted from keyboarding on typewriters to computerized keyboarding. We have increased the number of computer courses in our program, connected to the World Wide Web and now offer the MOUS certification.*

**Changes to staffing and facilities**

- *Hiring of additional faculty in the Computer Science department.*
- *Increased computer labs.*
- *Part-time instructors were replaced with one-year full-time instructors largely on the basis of student course evaluations, focus groups, exit interviews, and student satisfaction questionnaires.*

**Appendix I**

**Accreditation Status of Degree-Granting Institutions in New York State**

<b>Table I-1</b>		
<b>Regional Accreditation Status of Degree-Granting Institutions in New York State, Fall 2000</b>		
<b>Regional Accrediting Agency</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
Middle States Association	190	71.7%
Not applicable	68	25.7%
Not reported	6	2.3%
Southern Association	1	0.4%
Total	265	100.0%

**NOTES**

- Includes 265 degree-granting institutions in Fall 2000.
- "Not applicable" means that the institution has another source of accreditation such as a national, state or specialized accrediting agency.
- "Not reported" means no response was entered.
- Data from Fall 1999 IPEDS-IC data as corrected by NYSED using directories of accredited institutions from MSA and NYSED.

SOURCE: NYSED-OHE-BIAE, December 2000.

<b>Table I-2</b>		
<b>Accreditation Status of Degree-Granting Institutions in New York State, Fall 2000</b>		
<b>Accreditation status</b>	<b>Institutions</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Regional accrediting agency, not Regents	189	71%
Regional accrediting agency and Regents	2	1%
Regents only	24	9%
Other	50	19%
Total	265	100%

**NOTES**

- Data from Fall 1999 IPEDS-IC data as corrected by NYSED using directories of accredited institutions from MSA and NYSED.
- "Other" includes national and specialized accrediting agencies.

SOURCE: NYSED-OHE-BIAE, December 2000.