R·I·T

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT
4TH ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
(ASSESSMENT CYCLE AY 2012-2013)

For further information, contact:

Rochester Institute of Technology
Academic Affairs
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Office
585.475.2310
rit.edu/outcomes

Acknowledgements

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Overview

The fourth annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Progress Report provides an in-depth look at program level assessment practices during AY 2012-13. The overarching goals for the annual progress report are to highlight student learning outcomes achievement in RIT's academic programs; determine how data are used to guide improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, and practices; and determine how to better support program level assessment practices across the university.

University and college level results are shared with the Provost's Office, Board of Trustees, Deans, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), departments, and programs.

RIT's academic programs are incorporating annual assessment practices, including reporting, into their internal processes.

We piloted a new format for completing Progress Report 4 with two of RIT's colleges. This pilot helped us advance our goal of a more manageable and sustainable reporting process for academic programs. Further discussion of the pilot is included on page 5.

In fall 2013, academic program chairs and directors were asked to report on the assessment of program level student learning outcomes and current departmental assessment practices. For the third year in a row, a response rate of 100% (160/160) was achieved. This trend is an indicator that RIT's academic programs are incorporating annual assessment practices, including reporting, into their internal processes.

RIT's Strategic Plan includes two metrics focused on the percentage of programs that meet/exceed designated student achievement benchmarks and use student learning outcomes assessment data for continuous improvement. Below is the summary of the Progress Report results for these two metrics.

Key Finding
The percentage of programs that met or exceeded at least one student learning achievement benchmark increased from 75% to 83%, an 8% increase from AY 2011-12.

Key Finding
The percentage of programs practicing data-driven continuous improvement decreased slightly to 79%. This represents a 5% decrease from AY 2011-12.

% of Programs that Met/Exceeded Student Learning Outcomes Benchmarks

Year	Actual	Goal
2012-13	83%	75%
2011-12	75%	65%
2010-11	56%	55%
2009-10	40%	No Benchmark
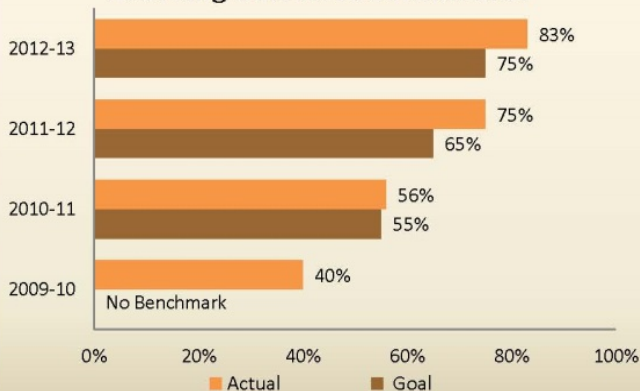
FIGURE 1: RIT STRATEGIC PLAN KEY RESULTS AREA GOAL 11AI

% of Programs Practicing Data-Driven Continuous Improvement

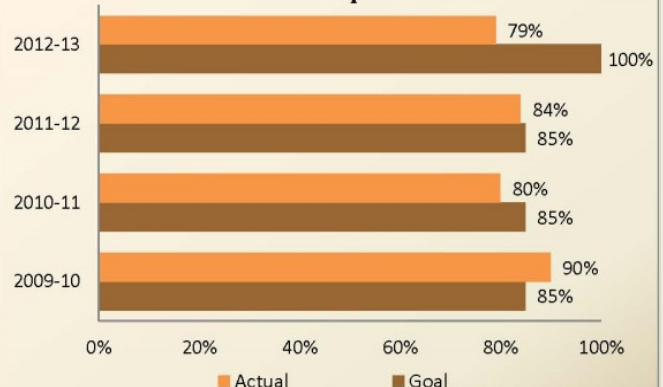| Year	Actual	Goal
2012-13	79%	100%
2011-12	84%	85%
2010-11	80%	85%
2009-10	90%	85%

FIGURE 2: RIT STRATEGIC PLAN KEY RESULTS AREA GOAL 11AII

RIT surpassed the goal for meeting or exceeding achievement benchmarks for the third consecutive year. We set an "ideal" goal as we increased the benchmark to 100% of our programs using assessment results and processes to guide planning and improvement. We did not meet the "ideal" benchmark and dipped slightly from the previous year. This dip is primarily attributed to our shift from quarters to semesters. Progress Report 4 asked programs to report on data collected in the last year of the quarter model. Quarter programs were modified, combined, and in some cases phased out in the calendar conversion to semester process. Given the significant programmatic changes, many RIT programs focused on looking forward and implementing new programs rather than using quarter-based results to guide improvements. Also, beginning last year, we advanced our assessment of what constitutes "using results for improvement." We have honed our definition of continuous improvement, and programs must clearly articulate the use of data to guide program improvements to curriculum, instruction, services, or assessment.

We have systematically documented the percentage of RIT's academic programs assessing student learning outcomes and using data from direct methods (i.e.: performance on assignments, projects, research, or labs) to drive changes or improvements to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and services. We will continue to focus our university-wide efforts on the challenge of "closing the loop," with the goal of reaching our ideal benchmark of 100%.

University Trends

Progress Report 4 was significant as it was the last program level student learning outcomes assessment report using quarter-based program assessment plans. The four year trend for all academic program outcomes assessment results is displayed in Figure 3.
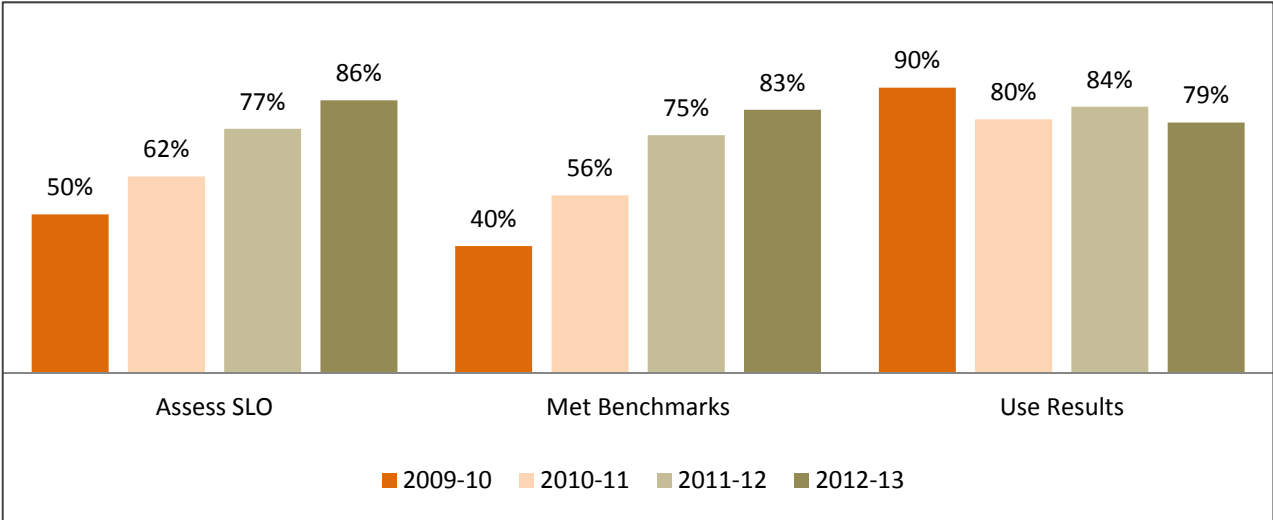
The number of programs assessing student learning continued to increase for the fourth consecutive year. Eighty-six percent of RIT programs assessed student learning outcomes, a 9% increase from AY 2011-12.

Table 1 displays the trends for the programs that assessed student learning outcomes (see Page 3). It is important to note that while we increased the total number of programs assessing student learning outcomes in each cycle, when we examine only those programs assessing student learning, using results for improvements was still a challenge in the last year of the quarter calendar.

86% of RIT programs reported assessing student learning outcomes in AY 2012-2013

Assessment Goals	2009-10 (50% OF ALL PROGRAMS)		2010-11 (62% OF ALL PROGRAMS)		2011-12 (77% OF ALL PROGRAMS)		2012-13 (86% OF ALL PROGRAMS)	
	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL
Programs reporting at least one achievement benchmark level met or exceeded	N/A	93%	55%	100%	55%	**97%**	75%	**96%**
Programs using results to make program improvements	N/A	100%	85%	98%	85%	**96%**	100%	**88%**

How Programs are Using Results

Programs were asked to provide examples of how they analyzed program and student learning outcomes assessment data and proposed or made changes at the course or program level. Programs provided examples of how they used results, and over a third of those programs reported analyzing and using direct assessment findings. The following examples highlight how results were used for program improvement in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and services.

Curriculum

- **Curricular Reform: Graduate-level/STEM Program –** *Changed the research methods course and thesis protocol to provide a more in-depth analysis and description of the elements of research design earlier in the program. This action is a result of finding students were struggling to complete their theses.*

- **Curricular Reform: Undergraduate-level/Social Sciences Program –** *Changed the textbook and included additional case reports in order to make learning more applied. Faculty were not satisfied with level of student applied learning outcomes despite meeting benchmark.*

Instruction

- **Teaching Strategy: Undergraduate- level /Art and Design Program –** *Provided more structured faculty verbal critique opportunities and engaged students in written processing of the critique proceedings. Faculty determined students needed additional reflection occasions to better analyze and incorporate critical feedback into their work.*

- **Teaching Strategy: Undergraduate-level/STEM Program –** *Incorporated additional practice and lessons using technical vocabulary to increase knowledge and retention and meet unique learner needs. Faculty noted that lack of fluency with technical vocabulary was a barrier to progress in advanced work and future courses.*

Assessment

- **New Thesis Rubric: Graduate-level/STEM Program –** *Created a new thesis defense rubric instrument to focus students more clearly on the important elements of research. Faculty found students lacking in understanding what comprises high research quality.*

- **Portfolio Process Refinement: Graduate-level/ Design Program –** *Refined the portfolio review process, rubric, and materials to improve quality of assessment instruments and practices used by faculty to measure student capstone learning outcomes.*

Services

- **Advising Model: Graduate-level /Imaging and Arts Program –** *Implemented a new thesis advising model to help improve students' difficulty with thesis completion. The new model resulted in a significant increase in the number of students who completed their thesis proposals on time.*

- **Tutoring Services: Undergraduate-level/STEM Program –** *Increased the amount of tutoring available for students weak in certain content areas. The assessment results indicated students needed additional support to improve the overall grade in the course. Program faculty will re-assess in the next cycle.*

College and Degree-Granting Unit Overview

The Progress Report results are disaggregated by college or degree-granting unit (see Table 2) and provide an overview of programs that reported on assessing student learning outcomes, meeting benchmarks, and using results for continuous improvement. The following highlights are based on the findings:

❖ CHST, NTID, and GIS reported 100% in each of the three program assessment processes (assessing SLO's, meeting benchmarks, and using results)

❖ No significant decreases for the majority of colleges or degree-granting units in the percentage of programs assessing student learning or the percentage of programs meeting or exceeding benchmarks

❖ Over half of RIT colleges and degree-granting units (7/11) had modest decreases in use of results. Three units had significant decreases primarily due to program transitions related to conversion and reorganization.

TABLE 2: PROGRESS REPORT TRENDS BY COLLEGE/DEGREE-GRANTING UNIT

COLLEGE/ DEGREE-GRANTING UNIT	PROGRAMS THAT ASSESSED SLO'S				MET OR EXCEEDED BENCHMARKS				USE OF RESULTS			
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
CAST	80%	82%	82%	**88%**	75%	82%	82%	**82%**	95%	94%	82%	**71%**
CHST	N/A	86%	100%	**100%**	N/A	86%	100%	**100%**	N/A	86%	100%	**100%**
CIAS	17%	52%	73%	**79%**	9%	39%	73%	**79%**	86%	73%	85%	**91%**
COLA	53%	47%	69%	**71%**	24%	35%	63%	**71%**	94%	65%	69%	**65%**
COS	40%	43%	95%	**91%**	20%	38%	91%	**73%**	83%	71%	95%	**68%**
GCCIS	47%	59%	65%	**100%**	35%	47%	53%	**94%**	94%	82%	65%	**100%**
KGCOE	57%	54%	82%	**95%**	52%	50%	82%	**95%**	95%	77%	82%	**77%**
NTID	88%	100%	100%	**100%**	88%	100%	100%	**100%**	94%	100%	100%	**100%**
SCB	60%	83%	0%	**33%**	60%	83%	0%	**33%**	100%	83%	100%	**33%**
CMS	67%	67%	67%	**67%**	67%	67%	67%	**67%**	100%	100%	67%	**0%**
GIS	0%	100%	50%	**100%**	0%	100%	50%	**100%**	0%	100%	50%	**100%**
TOTAL	50%	62%	77%	**86%**	40%	56%	75%	**83%**	90%	80%	84%	**79%**

International Programs

An additional focus area for the university is the continued inclusion and expansion of program level student learning outcomes assessment of our academic programs offered at international locations. This year, data was collected from programs in Croatia (Dubrovnik and Zagreb), Dubai, and Kosovo as part of an ongoing effort to integrate international programs into RIT's annual student learning outcomes assessment reporting

International programs continued working with their "home" program on the Henrietta campus to implement the new Program Level Outcomes Assessment Plans designed for the semester calendar. Regularly scheduled meetings with international programs have resulted in some positive momentum; however, more work in this area is needed. The campuses are working on implementing a systematic approach across programs, designing instruments, and analyzing data to make improvements. Programs are working together to ensure that they implement the assessment plans and share best assessment practices and processes.

All international campuses participated in RIT's fourth annual Progress Report

Two out of the ten (20%) international programs reported formally assessing student learning outcomes, meeting benchmarks, and using results in the 2012-13 academic year (See Table 3). International programs reported using indirect measures such as course grades, student evaluations, and retention rates to guide improvements. We are working with programs to move them towards using direct measures to assess student learning.

We did not expect Kosovo and Dubai to formally report assessing student learning in the AY 2012-13 assessment cycle, but they are both making progress in implementing the program assessment plans. The Kosovo team is developing practices and processes that align with RIT's home program. Dubai participated in the annual survey for the first time to increase their understanding of the reporting process. We anticipate they will report student learning outcomes assessment data in the next cycle.

TABLE 3 PROGRESS REPORT RESULTS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS THAT ASSESSED SLO'S	MET OR EXCEEDED BENCHMARKS	USE OF RESULTS* (ALL PROGRAMS)
Croatia, Dubrovnik	50% (0/1)	50% (0/1)	50% (0/1)
Croatia, Zagreb	67% (2/3)	67% (2/3)	67% (2/3)
Dubai	0% (0/5)	0% (0/5)	0% (0/5)
Kosovo	0% (0/1)	0% (0/1)	0% (0/1)
Total	20% (2/10)	20% (2/10)	20% (2/10)

Progress Report Pilot

As mentioned, two colleges (COS and GCCIS) participated in our pilot to utilize Taskstream, RIT's Assessment Management System, to complete the Progress Report. The colleges were selected because 100% of their programs are using Taskstream to manage their assessment plans. Programs in these colleges were able to complete and submit their Progress Reports directly in their Taskstream work spaces rather than receive a link to complete a survey. These programs were able to use archived assessment information (assessment cycle data and findings) to complete the Progress Report.

These colleges provided feedback about their experience via an on-line survey. The overall results were positive, with the majority of survey respondents reporting that the new timeline was optimal, the questions were clear, and that reporting took less than 30 minutes to complete. Moving forward, all academic programs will use Taskstream for Progress Report 5. In the spring, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) Office presented the survey results as well as the college level Progress Report results to the colleges.

Summary

Overall, RIT's academic programs continue to advance in assessing program level student learning and meeting benchmarks. Notwithstanding, using assessment results to guide data driven improvements continues to be a challenge, particularly in the last year of quarter-based reporting. While semester conversion is noted as a significant factor for the university's slight decrease in programs using results, we are still working to guide programs in how to use assessment results to make data driven changes to curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices. In particular, we are working directly with colleges to provide guidance around analysis and use of results. Additionally, we are developing resources (e.g., exemplars, shared definition of continuous improvement) for programs that will help them clearly articulate how they use data to make programmatic changes and how best to report these practices at the university level.

We have continued to expand the scope of the Progress Report to include our international programs in the reporting process. Progress Report 5 will include all RIT international programs. Support for the implementation of semester-based assessment plans for international programs continues to be an ongoing initiative.

Use of Results and Next Steps (2014.15)

The SLOA office has analyzed the data from Progress Report 4 and will share results and devise college- or unit-specific next steps. Additionally, SLOA will continue to work with the programs that have not yet implemented their semester program level assessment plans. The major action items include:

- ❖ Disseminate reports, findings, and recommendations to deans, colleges, programs, and international locations
- ❖ Meet with all colleges and degree-granting units to further analyze data and develop recommendations and areas of focus for AY 2014-15
- ❖ Provide guidance to academic programs (including international) as they begin or implement assessment practices
- ❖ Focus on and improve how programs articulate and use results to guide improvements
- ❖ Develop additional resources for programs as they continue to use their Taskstream workspaces
- ❖ Use feedback collected from the Taskstream pilot to make minor changes to the Progress Report process
- ❖ Work with academic programs to fully utilize Taskstream to sustain assessment practices

Epilogue: SLOA Office and Continuous Improvement (work from 2013.14)

Last year, the SLOA Office outlined several action items based on data collected in Progress Report 3 (AY 2013-14). Below is a high-level summary of our specific continuous improvement priorities related to these findings:

1. **Action Item:** Work with the programs that did not report assessing student learning in Progress Report 1, 2, or 3. This number represented approximately 10% of our programs. The SLOA office worked with each program on implementing their assessment plans and completing the next Progress Report.

   Result: Over 50% of these programs reported assessing student learning in the Progress Report 4 cycle and 65% reported using results for improvement.

2. **Action Item:** Provide additional examples of how to use results for improvements to guide programs.

   Result: The SLOA Office developed a Continuous Improvement Rubric to articulate a university-wide definition and understanding of using outcomes assessment data for continuous improvement at the program level. The rubric was shared with the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC) and piloted during the qualitative analysis of the Progress Report items that asked programs to report on continuous improvement activities. The rubric will be shared with colleges and programs for the next assessment cycle. The SLOA Office is working with programs to compile outstanding examples of how programs are using results to guide improvements, which will be highlighted on the SLOA website.

3. **Action Item:** Provide continued support for programs as they transition their program level assessment plans from paper to Taskstream. This action item was especially important as we began planning for the transition of the progress report from an email-based survey to the program workspace in Taskstream. This year, our AMS Coordinator worked with an additional three colleges as they "moved" into their Taskstream workspaces.

   Result: 89% (8/9) of colleges' program assessment plans are partially or completely in Taskstream. 50% (1/2) degree-granting units' program assessment plans are partially in Taskstream. The remaining college and degree-granting unit will be moved in prior to Progress Report 5 launch.

We are moving…

… to a new time and a new place.

taskstream

Progress Report 5

MOVING VAN

This fall RIT's Annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Progress Report 5 will be completed using Taskstream.

Need help with your move?

Contact SLOA Office or your college's Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee member:

Robin Cass (CIAS)

Babak Elahi (COLA)

Marianne Gustafson (NTID)

Clyde Hull (SCB)

Matthew Marshall (KGCOE)

Heidi Miller (CHST)

Linda Tolan, Chair (CAST)

Laura Tubbs (COS)

Michael Yacci (GCCIS)