

Assessment & APR Quarterly

A publication from the UNM
Office of Assessment & Academic Program Review

August 2026

Academic Program Review

AY25-26 Review Teams Report:

The AY25-26 Academic Program Reviews reveal a common story across disciplines: UNM's academic programs are praised by dedicated faculty and staff, highly engaged students, meaningful community impact, and strong educational outcomes. At the same time, reviewers identified recurring challenges related to growth, advising, funding, facilities, and long-term sustainability.

Common Strengths Across Programs

Student Engagement and Mentorship

Across nearly every review, students expressed strong appreciation for faculty mentorship, accessible advising, and a supportive intellectual community. Students consistently described faculty as highly invested in their success and highlighted a strong sense of belonging, engagement, and commitment to their academic programs.

Applied Learning and Career Preparation

Review teams repeatedly highlighted the connection between classroom learning and real-world experience. Reviewers consistently praised programs for providing hands-on, experiential learning opportunities through applied projects, community engagement, research, and industry-connected experiences. They also confirmed strong student preparation, noting that graduates develop transferable skills and are well positioned for success in professional careers, with positive employer feedback and strong employment outcomes.

Faculty Excellence and Commitment

Across all reviews, faculty were consistently praised for their excellence in teaching, research, and service, amid increasing demands and limited resources. Reviewers emphasized faculty members' scholarly achievements, professional expertise, interdisciplinary collaboration, and commitment to student success, frequently noting that their dedication was a key factor in students' positive educational experiences.

Community Engagement

Community engagement emerged as a defining strength across many reviews. Programs were recognized for strong partnerships with community organizations, government agencies, cultural institutions, industry, and other stakeholders, creating meaningful opportunities for applied learning, public engagement, and service that benefit both students and the broader community.

Common Challenges Across Programs

Growth Is Creating New Demands

Several review teams observed that enrollment growth, expanded academic offerings, and increasing program visibility have outpaced available resources. Faculty and staff have described challenges associated with supporting growing student populations while maintaining educational quality.

Advising and Student Navigation

Students across multiple programs reported challenges navigating academic pathways and accessing advising support. Reviewers frequently recommended clearer curriculum pathways, stronger onboarding experiences, enhanced mentoring structures, and expanded advising capacity as programs continue to evolve and grow.

Graduate Student Funding and Support

Several APRs stakeholders cited concerns related to graduate assistantships, funding stability, graduate recruitment, and student support resources. Reviewers encouraged stronger onboarding, teaching preparation, mentoring, and professional development opportunities for graduate students.

Facilities and Space Affect Student Experience

Physical space emerged as a recurring issue. Reviewers identified concerns ranging from fragmented departmental locations to inadequate facilities and space constraints. Several teams noted that dedicated student and program spaces play an important role in advising, collaboration, identity, and community building.

Curriculum Mapping Institute

The Office of Assessment & Academic Program Review (OAAPR), in collaboration with Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), invites faculty and academic leaders to participate in a hands-on, two-day Curriculum Mapping Institute focused on a single degree program. This half-day workshop series offers a guided, practical approach to designing a curriculum map that aligns learning outcomes, course sequencing, and program goals with institutional priorities and accreditation standards.

Participants will work directly with OAAPR experts to create a comprehensive curriculum map that supports strategic planning, simplifies assessment, and enhances program coherence. Whether preparing for an APR, refining advising tools, or identifying gaps and strengths in your curriculum, this institute provides the tools and templates to turn data into actionable insights. Faculty will leave with a completed map, ready to inform future curriculum development and departmental planning.

Sign up today using the [Workshop Registration Form](#) to represent your program and help shape the future of academic excellence at UNM. Contact us at assess@unm.edu.

Fall 2026 Dates

September 30 & October 2 (Wed/Fri) 9 am - 12 pm

December 1 & 3 (Tues/Thur) 9 am - 12 pm



RECHARGE & RESET

Fall Academic Assessment

In Academic Year 25-26, UNM temporarily paused assessment reporting to enable all academic programs to recharge and reset. UNM assessment can be improved through the introduction of new measures, practices, and outcomes.

Assessment Reflections and Plans are due Fall 2026. Contact your College Assessment Review Committee/Leader for more info.

NEW templates are available at:

<https://assessment.unm.edu/assets/documents/unm-academic-assessment-plan-and-report-template.docx>

No assessment reports will be due in Fall 2026.

Academic Assessment

AY 26/27

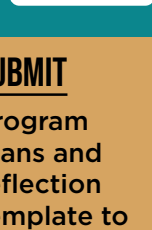


REFLECT

Complete the OAAPR assessment reflection template

CREATE

Design new assessment & action plans



SUBMIT

Program plans and reflection template to CARC

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

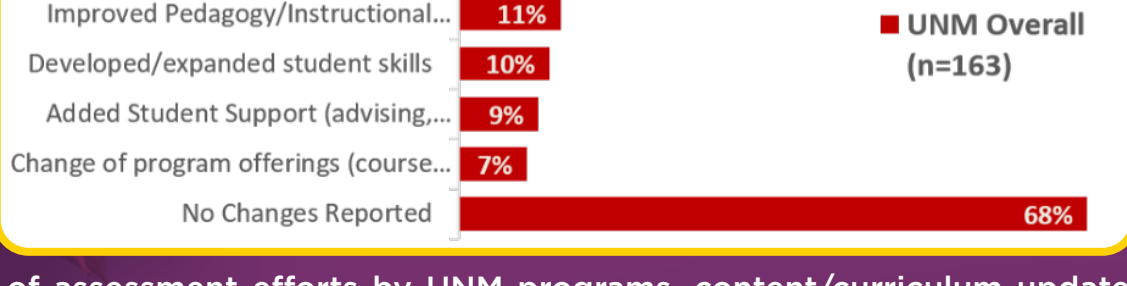
Celebrate new milestones toward student success!



AY24/25 Academic Assessment Results

The AY 2024-25 assessment reporting results present a comprehensive snapshot of institutional assessment activity across 163 degrees and 814 SLOs. A three-year analysis (AY 2022-2025) of assessment plan trends identifies areas of strength and future consideration for future assessment planning. Key themes emerge from the analysis:

- Participation decline requires attention (AY 24-25):** At 52%, overall participation is at its lowest point in seven years. Addressing this decline when moving forward to new assessment planning activities in Fall 2026 should be a priority to ensure that assessment data remains representative of institutional practice.
- Quantity of SLOs matters (AY 24-25):** While most programs maintain a manageable 3-6 SLOs, the increase in programs reporting 7 and 8+ SLOs may lead to assessment fatigue and diluted focus. Assessing too many outcomes simultaneously may complicated data collection and analysis.
- Assessment and program revisions reflect maturation (AY 24-25):** Both assessment and program revisions have focused on targeted refinements — SLO alignment, more nuanced analysis of student success, and incremental curriculum adjustments — consistent with a maturing institutional assessment culture.
- Direct assessment measures are prominent (2022-2025):** Projects/Assignments (43%), Tests/Exams (36%), and Rubrics (33%) are the three leading UNM student learning measures. Rubric adoption has more than doubled since 2020, representing the strongest positive trend in assessment measurement.
- Cultural/Community content continues to rise (2022-2025):** At 24%, the measurement of this content area has nearly tripled since 2020, reflecting a sustained institutional commitment to culturally responsive and community-engaged learning.



As a result of assessment efforts by UNM programs, content/curriculum updates are being revised, added, or made more explicit, followed by the improvement of pedagogy and instructional delivery, sharpening timelines and adding new instructional focus.

GE Submissions Aplenty!

This marks the first year of our third cycle and **what a record year!** Thank you to GE instructors for your submissions for this year's GE Assessment. Submissions for this cycle included the Essential Skills for Communication, Information and Digital Literacy, Personal and Social Responsibility, and Quantitative Reasoning. A total of 209 submissions were rated over the summer, which represents an impressive 919 student artifact. The level of participation this year is the highest in the last 7 years. Initial feedback from our raters include how thoughtful the level of detail in the prompts for the assignments were in relation to the skill and dimensions chosen. Keep an eye out for the final results in our next newsletter.

The next skill for our upcoming workshop is Critical Thinking, so now's the time to review the rubrics and join us for our 2026 workshop on September 18th, which will focus on aligning Critical Thinking assignments with NMHED skill definitions. [Register for the Fall 2026 workshops here.](#)

If you ever find yourself asking "What does an exemplary assignment look like?", please check out our [Rubrics and Example Assignments page.](#)

The Art & Science of Data: From Numbers to Narratives

Mark your calendars: **Wed, December 16th, 2026**

The Office of Assessment & APR and the Office of Institutional Analytics, in collaboration with Academic Affairs, will host The 2026 Art & Science of Data: From Numbers to Narratives event. This is a virtual daylong data event designed to empower faculty, staff and students with training and insights on leveraging institutional data to better understand their units and tell impactful stories. More registration information to come!

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS - Fall 2026

The fall Workshop Registration Form is located here:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/ZghBN9zQXf>

How to Restart Your Assessment Planning Friday, August 28th 10-11am

Join us to walk through the new and improved assessment template, discuss strategies to maximize your student monitoring, and bring your questions about efficient and impactful assessment structures.

Assessment Meaningful Analysis Friday, September 11th 10-11am

UNM units report challenges with assessment analysis. This workshop is developed to guide participants through the analysis process from start to finish, with a focus on enhancing interpretation and contextualization of processes.

Aligning Critical Thinking Assignments for NMHED Friday, September 18th 10-11am

Join the OAAPR in a workshop focusing on the NMHED GE Critical Thinking essential skill. UNM's GE assessment cycle is solely measuring Critical Thinking this year and is providing this opportunity for our GE instructors to learn ways to embed this skillset into courses and assessment tools. We will share relevant examples, NMHED rubric dimension applications, and ways for students to evidence their skill growth.

Schedule an appointment

Questions about incorporating assessment into your program, course, or your upcoming APR? Come talk to us!

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