Full Report

This report is divided into three sections. The first describes additional in-depth analyses of points of interest from the 2018 HEDS Alumni Survey, following up on the fall report to the Board of Regents on the 2017-18 institutional surveys. The second section details current efforts by the faculty Academic Assessment Committee to implement changes to St. Olaf's assessment program based on recommendations from an external review of assessment that took place in the summer of 2018. The third section summarizes the process and results of the regular assessment cycle activity for 2017-18: the assessment of concentrations, conversation programs, and other academic programs (see Appendix B for a list of these programs).

Additional Analyses: 2018 HEDS Alumni Survey

In the fall of 2018, the Academic Assessment Committee reported on results from the 2017-18 institution-wide surveys: the BCSSE/NSSE/FSSE suite[1] and the HEDS Alumni Survey. By comparing the 2018 survey results to the 2015 administrations of these surveys, we identified four findings of interest to present to the Board of Regents:

1. Continued reporting of less frequent interactions with faculty by St. Olaf students compared to our peer institutions.
2. An increase in seniors' self-reported quantitative analysis abilities.
3. A decrease in alumni's perceived preparation for their current career.
4. A decrease in alumni's self-reported development of intercultural knowledge and competence while at St. Olaf.

As a deeper investigation into student-faculty interaction had taken place with the 2015 NSSE survey data[2] and as there were no clear curricular or programmatic changes that may have led to the increase in students' perceived quantitative skills, the Academic Assessment Committee chose to focus on the two results from the HEDS Alumni Survey: career preparation (#3) and intercultural competence (#4).

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[1] The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement, the National Survey of Student Engagement, and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement

[2] This investigation generally found that first-generation students and students with lower GPAs were more likely to interact with faculty, suggesting that the NSSE findings of less frequent interactions overall points to lower need among St. Olaf students, rather than unmet need.

Key findings included:

1. Larger decreases from 2015 to 2018 in reported career preparation among male alumni, alumni who majored within the Natural Sciences and Mathematics or Social Sciences Faculties, and those who reported that they were employed (as opposed to pursuing further education) at the time of the survey;
2. Larger decreases from 2015 to 2018 in perceived development of intercultural competence among male alumni and alumni who studied abroad at St. Olaf; and
3. Among alumni who participated in diversity or cultural awareness workshops and those who took 2 or more courses focused on intercultural competence (defined in the "Intercultural Competence" section below), a greater likelihood to report that St. Olaf contributed to their development of intercultural competence.

Career Preparation

Assessment staff identified potential subgroups of interest that could help us discover whether particular groups of alumni were less likely to report that St. Olaf prepared them for their current career. We disaggregated the survey responses based on the following subgroups:

1. Female alumni compared to male alumni.
2. Alumni who belonged to one or more historically underrepresented groups in higher education (domestic students of color, international students, first-generation students, low income students) compared to those who did not. We recognize that the former subgroup is a broad categorization; however, the low number of survey respondents from this group (particularly for the 2015 survey) prevented further disaggregation.
3. Comparing across different majors, aggregated at the Faculty division level.
4. Alumni who reported that they were employed at the time of the survey compared to those attending graduate or professional school.

Table 6 shows the 2015 and 2018 survey responses for each of these comparison groups. Note that different populations of alumni were surveyed each time.

Compared to females, a smaller proportion of males reported that St. Olaf prepared them for their current career in both surveys. Additionally, the proportion of alumni who felt prepared for their current career dropped more sharply among males than females from 2015 to 2018. Within Faculty divisions, the largest decline from 2015 to 2018 occurred among NSM and SS majors. Those who reported that they were employed at the time of the survey felt less prepared for their current career compared to those pursuing a graduate or professional degree in both 2015 and 2018, and the gap between these two subgroups widened in 2018. Within each survey, there was little difference in reported career preparation between alumni who were from historically underrepresented backgrounds and those who were not.

Table 6. Career preparation: 2015 and 2018 HEDS Alumni Survey				
Demographic Group	**2015**[3]		**2018**[4]	
	# **Respondents**	**%**[5] **Prepared**	**#** **Respondents**	**%** **Prepared**
All respondents	**359**[6]	**72%**	**433**	**62%**
Female	223	74%	281	69%
Male	133	68%	152	50%
Not historically underrepresented	252	73%	309	62%
Historically underrepresented	85	72%	107	61%
Faculty division - major[7]				
Fine Arts (FA)	52	60%	61	67%
Humanities (HUM)	105	64%	113	57%
Interdisciplinary and General Studies (IGS)	40	62%	61	61%
Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM)	144	78%	182	65%
Social Sciences (SS)	126	75%	125	64%
Employed[8]	254	70%	323	58%
Graduate/professional school[9]	90	81%	95	76%

To look at the relationship between all of these variables together, we dichotomized responses to the career preparation question into those who responded "Very little/Some" and "Quite a bit/Very much." Using binomial logistic regression, we looked at which of the subgroup variables significantly predicted alumni's responses to the career preparation question. In 2015, none of these variables were significant predictors, while in 2018, both gender and current primary activity (i.e., employed or in graduate school) significantly predicted alumni's responses to the career preparation question. In other words, alumni who were female and/or pursuing graduate/professional school were more likely to feel that St. Olaf prepared them well for their current career.

We plan to share these findings with the Piper Center, not only as stakeholders with likely interest in them, but also to add to current efforts by their team in a related area. Together with CIR students, the Piper Center is currently investigating the types of students who use their services by disaggregating Piper Center engagement by various demographic groups (e.g., domestic multicultural students, first-generation students) as well as a host of other student characteristics (e.g., participation in music organizations, participation in athletics, GPA). They are combining this with data from the HEDS First Destination Survey on students' first primary

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[3] Survey population included alumni from the classes of 2009 and 2010

[4] Survey population included alumni from the classes of 2012 and 2013

[5] Table shows % who responded that St. Olaf prepared them "Quite a bit" or "Very much" for their current career

[6] In some instances, information was not known/provided for a subset of alumni; thus subgroup totals may not equal the overall total.

[7] Alumni who were double- or triple-majors were counted in each relevant faculty division

[8] Indicated their current primary activity was either "Employed, full-time", "Employed, part-time", or "Employed, multiple jobs"

[9] Indicated their current primary activity was either "Graduate or professional school, full-time" or "Graduate or professional school, part-time"

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activity after college and their confidence in their ability to pursue post-graduate work, education, or service. In particular, this latter aspect of the Piper Center study and the results presented in this report could mutually inform one another.

Intercultural Competence

We took a similar approach with the HEDS Alumni Survey question on intercultural knowledge and competence. In this case, assessment office staff defined the following subgroups of interest (some of which were the same as those used for the career preparation question above):

1. Female alumni compared to male alumni.
2. Alumni who belonged to one or more historically underrepresented groups in higher education compared to those who did not.
3. Those who indicated on the HEDS Alumni Survey that they frequently attended diversity or cultural awareness workshops at St. Olaf compared to those who did not.
4. Alumni who studied abroad while at St. Olaf compared to those who did not.
5. Whether alumni had taken courses from departments or programs broadly focused on developing students' intercultural competence: Asian Conversations, Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, Race and Ethnic Studies, Sociology/Anthropology, Women's and Gender Studies.[10]

We recognize that there are limitations to the list of departments and programs in number 5 above. The following guided the creation of this list: We wanted to move beyond majors/ concentrators in these areas to include students who may have taken courses in these departments/programs but not officially declared the major or concentration. However, limited time prevented us from gathering a more detailed list of individual courses from across the college that focus on these topics; thus the list is focused at the department and program level. Additionally, we certainly acknowledge the vital role language departments play in contributing to students' intercultural knowledge and competence, but all students are required to take courses in these departments. Our interest was in defining a set of departments and programs that could distinguish students' curricular pursuits above and beyond what is required. The group above represents our first attempt to do so, recognizing that further refinement and work in this area may prove necessary.

Table 7 shows the disaggregated results from the 2015 and 2018 HEDS Alumni Surveys. The proportions of male and female alumni reporting that St. Olaf contributed to their intercultural competence were similar in 2015, but there was a larger drop between 2015 and 2018 among males. There was a slightly smaller drop between 2015 and 2018 in the proportion of alumni from historically underrepresented backgrounds reporting that St. Olaf contributed to their

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[10] When necessary, the "historical" names for these departments and programs were used to look up alumni's coursework (e.g., Race and Ethnic Studies replaced American Racial and Multicultural Studies; Latin American Studies was formerly Hispanic Studies).

intercultural competence compared to those who were not from these backgrounds. The effect of participation in a study abroad program on alumni's reported development of intercultural competence was smaller for 2018 compared to 2015. Finally, participation in a diversity or cultural awareness workshop and completion of two or more courses focused on developing intercultural competence had generally the same effect on alumni's survey responses in 2015 and 2018; namely, those who completed these activities were more likely to respond that St. Olaf had contributed to their intercultural knowledge and competence.

Table 7. Intercultural competence: 2015 and 2018 HEDS Alumni Survey				
Demographic Group	**2015**		**2018**	
	# Respondents	**%[11] Competent**	**# Respondents**	**% Competent**
All respondents	**359**	**70%**	**434**	**62%**
Female	222	68%	281	65%
Male	133	71%	153	54%
Not historically underrepresented	253	70%	311	60%
Historically underrepresented	85	71%	106	64%
Participated in diversity workshops[12]	178	85%	219	76%
Rarely/never participated in a diversity workshop	181	55%	215	46%
Studied abroad	288	73%	354	62%
Did not study abroad	71	58%	80	58%
Coursework – 2+ courses[13]	118	81%	143	71%
Coursework – 0 or 1 course	241	64%	291	57%

Again, we dichotomized responses to the intercultural knowledge and competence question into those who responded "Very little/Some" and "Quite a bit/Very much." Using binomial logistic regression, we looked at which of the subgroup variables significantly predicted alumni's responses. In both 2015 and 2018, diversity and cultural awareness workshop attendance significantly predicted alumni's responses to the intercultural competence question. Additionally, the number of courses taken in the departments/programs listed earlier in this section was a marginally significant predictor of alumni's responses on the 2018 survey. We can imagine several entities on campus with specific interest in these results, including the Taylor Center, the Council on Equity and Inclusion, and the faculty directors of the *To Include is To Excel* grant.

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[11] Table shows % who responded that St. Olaf contributed "Quite a bit" or "Very much" to their intercultural knowledge and competence

[12] Those who responded that they participated in a diversity or cultural awareness workshop "Sometimes", "Often", or "Very often" (compared to "Rarely" or "Never")

[13] For the purposes of summarizing the responses in Table 7, we divided alumni based on the median number of courses (from departments/programs in the list on page 4) taken by all alumni survey respondents (i.e., those who took 2 or more of these courses v. those who did not). For the regression analysis described later in the report, we treated number of courses as a continuous variable.

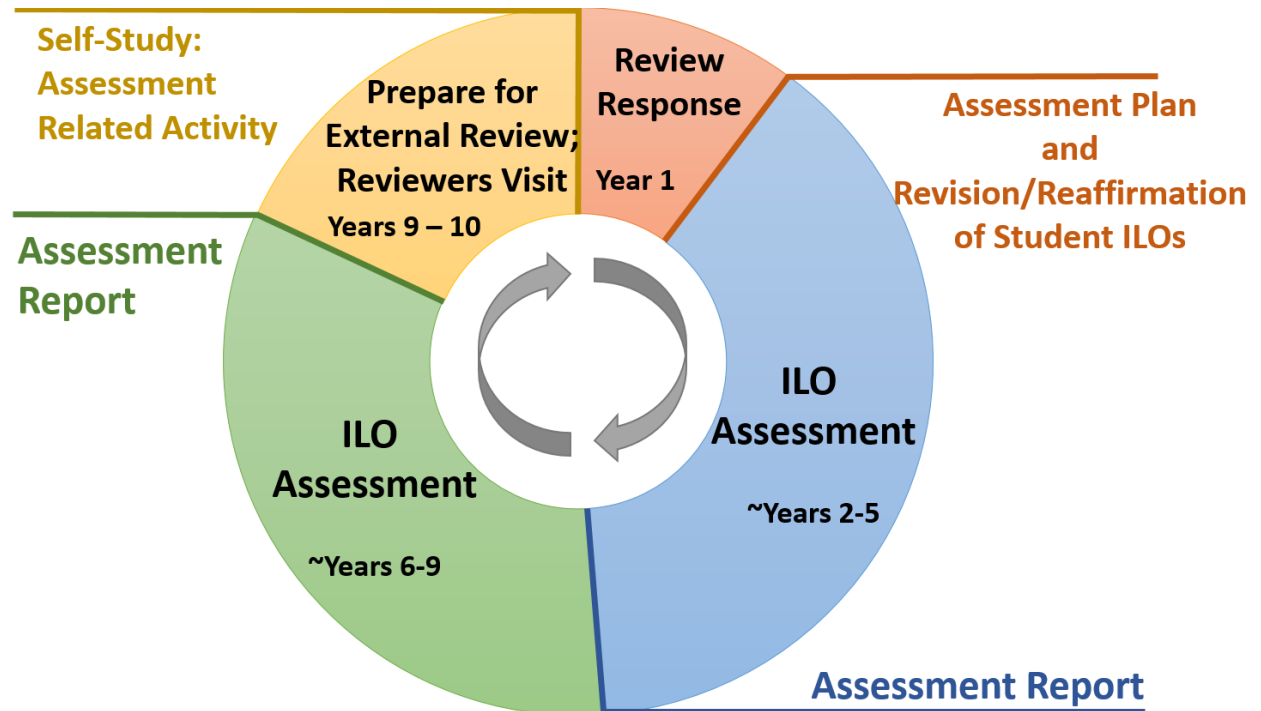## Assessment Program Review: Academic Assessment Committee Responses

When it was first established, St. Olaf's current assessment program was nationally recognized as an exemplary model of student learning assessment. However, the acknowledgement that over a decade has passed since its inception prompted a comprehensive review of our assessment process to identify opportunities for further improvement. During the 2017-18 academic year, the Assessment Task Force (precursor to the current elected faculty Academic Assessment Committee) conducted a thorough self-study of St. Olaf's assessment program. In the summer of 2018, two external reviewers spent two days meeting with major stakeholders and participants in assessment at St. Olaf. The report we received from the reviewers contained many thoughtful recommendations for ensuring that St. Olaf's assessment program continues to be mission-driven, meaningful, and manageable.

The faculty Academic Assessment Committee crafted a response to the reviewers' recommendations in the fall of 2019, prioritizing changes that could or should be made in the short-term as the focus of its activities for the remainder of the current academic year. A summary of these changes can be found below:

1. **Change the 4-year assessment cycle to a 10-year cycle.** One of the major areas for revision concerns the current four-year assessment cycle of general education assessment; assessment of academic majors; assessment of concentrations, conversations, and other academic programs; and an assessment action year. In particular, our reviewers suggested, and the Academic Assessment Committee has discussed, changing the current four-year cycle to a 10-year cycle so that assessment can better support the 10-year program review cycle for departments and programs.

   Currently, the timing of the four-year assessment cycle is not always optimal for departments and programs undergoing program reviews. Often, those with upcoming visits are unable to complete an additional assessment project in the year(s) leading up to and including their external review due to the time demands of a program review. This puts the assessment cycle and the program review cycle at odds, rather than allowing assessment to support program review as it ideally should.

   Linking assessment more deliberately with individual departments' and programs' review schedules will better allow assessment to serve a meaningful role. Below is an example of how a 10-year assessment cycle might operate in parallel with the program review cycle. A similar example was presented to faculty at the March 14th faculty meeting.

With the linked cycles of assessment and program review, departments and programs will be able to use their reviewers' recommendations in a more intentional way to plan their assessment activities for the next 10-year cycle by creating an assessment plan tied to the questions and goals that have emerged as a result of the program review process. These assessment plans will be submitted to the Academic Assessment Committee for review and approval. The plans will be flexible, so that departments and programs can submit proposed changes to their plans in response to current assessment findings or other concerns that may emerge within the department/program throughout the ten years. This flexibility will also accommodate departments and programs that are on different program review cycles (e.g., an 8-year cycle) as well as the sometimes necessary delays or accelerations of the typical 10-year review cycle. Further details concerning the assessment plans, reporting cycle, and an example of a 10-year assessment plan for a specific department can be found in Appendix A.

Allowing for departmental and programmatic assessment plans should help reduce the perception shared by some that assessment is something imposed upon departments and programs, with the way the current four-year cycle requires all faculty to adhere to the focus of that year's assessment activity (e.g., majors). The 10-year assessment cycle model will allow for greater faculty control of assessment and better tailoring of assessment to department and program needs. Some requirements will need to be met by all departments/programs to ensure continued compliance with HLC accreditation criteria (such as requiring that all Intended Learning Outcomes be assessed at least once

throughout the cycle). Nevertheless, the new 10-year cycle may actually allow us to provide the HLC with better evidence of the use of assessment information to improve student learning if departments and programs are able to design their own assessment plans based on current concerns.

2. **Utilize more direct assessments of student learning.** An additional area of improvement considered by both the external reviewers and the Academic Assessment Committee involves greater use of direct assessment of student work in assessing learning outcomes. While not all outcomes lend themselves well to this type of assessment, analyzing student work products (as opposed to students' self-reported knowledge on a survey, for example) when possible allows for greater insight into students' knowledge and skills.

    The Academic Assessment Committee is paying particular attention to direct assessment in the context of the current revision of the general education curriculum. The redesign of the GE curriculum offers an opportunity to discuss how direct methods may be incorporated into the assessment of this curriculum moving forward. The current model of GE assessment feels fractured and unhelpful to many faculty. Divorcing it from the regular assessment cycle and aiming for more authentic assessment of student work that is sampled from across a particular general education learning outcome, rather than within individual GE courses, will provide better opportunities for reflection and inquiry-driven improvements.

    The Academic Assessment Committee plans to apply for faculty development funds next year to support a pilot year of cross-departmental direct assessment of student work in lieu of the scheduled GE assessment. Piloting this new model rather than continuing with the old will better position us to integrate assessment into the new GE curriculum as it unfolds.

3. **Create a model for mapping STOGoals.** Curriculum mapping is a useful exercise for identifying gaps in a curriculum's support of student learning outcomes, as well as points in the curriculum where assessment of student learning would be most fruitful. The Academic Assessment Committee intends to model this process using St. Olaf's eight institutional learning goals (STOGoals). The results of this mapping process will have both internal and external benefits. Internally, it will help departments and programs identify how they contribute to the STOGoals and allow us to see how the curriculum as a whole supports (or fails to support) these goals. Additionally, this map could be a useful tool for students, both current and prospective, to illustrate connections between their general education courses, major and/or concentration courses, and co-curricular experiences (see below) through the lens of STOGoals.

4. **Form a Co-Curricular Assessment Committee (and rename the faculty Assessment Committee).** The external reviewers recommended the creation of a parallel Co-Curricular Assessment Committee to better support assessment outside of the academic division of the college. Co-curricular assessment is also specifically identified in the HLC's criteria for accreditation. In December, Jo Beld convened a group of individuals from co-curricular areas of the college[14] to discuss how assessment may be coordinated more intentionally within and across these offices. The group met two additional times in January, and will continue to evolve in the coming months. In light of this new group and for purposes of clarity, the faculty voted to change the name of the Assessment Committee to the Academic Assessment Committee. The Academic Assessment Committee plans to partner with the co-curricular group in the future, beginning with the STOGoals mapping exercise.

2017-18 Assessment of Concentrations, Conversations, and Other Academic Programs

Program Participation

Number of concentrations, conversations, and other academic programs with completed assessment reports: 26 out of 30 programs (87%)

Of the four programs without completed assessment reports:

- One was given permission to abstain from assessment activities this year, due to the small size of the program and particular time demands for the program director in 2017-18.
- One deferred submission of the report until the end of the current academic year in order to finish up last year's assessment activities.
- One program director indicated plans to submit late report by the end of the fall semester, but didn't respond to additional follow-up emails.
- One program director never responded to the report submission reminders or additional follow-up emails.

Assessment Methods

Half of the programs that participated conducted indirect assessment of students' perceptions, experiences, or attitudes. About a third of programs utilized some form of direct assessment of student knowledge as demonstrated in samples of student work such as exams and course assignments. Of the remaining programs, one program used both direct and indirect assessment methods, while four programs chose to focus solely on reconsidering and/or

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[14] Divisions and offices represented include: Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Educational Research and Assessment, Athletics, the Center for Advising and Academic Support, Student Support Services/TRIO, International and Off-Campus Studies, Student Life, College Ministry, the Piper Center for Vocation and Career, the Institute for Freedom and Community, Music Organizations, Libraries, DiSCO, and Student Employment.

revising program Intended Learning Outcomes. Table 1 summarizes the methods of assessment utilized by all programs for which an assessment report was submitted.

Table 1. Methods used to assess student learning, 2017-18		
Method of Assessment	**Number of Programs**	**Percentage of Assessed Programs[15]**
Direct Assessment Methods		
Outcome-focused grading of an assignment or exam (e.g., using a rubric)	7	27%
Oral presentation	2	8%
Indirect Assessment Methods		
Survey of current students	7	27%
Survey of alumni	4	15%
Focus group or interviews	3	11%
Transcript analysis	2	8%
Student reflection paper	1	4%
Survey of faculty	1	4%
Student success metrics (graduation rates, etc.)	1	4%
Programs assessed using only indirect assessment(s)	**13**	**50%**
Programs assessed using only direct assessment(s)	**8**	**31%**
Programs assessed using both direct and indirect assessments	**1**	**4%**
Programs that focused solely on ILO revision	**4**	**15%**

Programs also used a variety of sampling methods for selecting students to assess. The most common methods were selecting all students enrolled in the particular course or courses where direct evidence of learning was gathered, or selecting a subset of current students or alumni, such as for a focus group or survey. Table 2 shows the distribution of sampling methods used.

Table 2. Method for selecting assessment sample, 2017-18		
Sampling Method	**Number of Programs**	**Percentage of Assessed Programs[16]**
All students in selected course(s)	8	31%
Subset of current students (e.g., survey participants)	7	27%
Cohort of current students (e.g., all seniors)	5	19%
Subset of alumni (e.g., survey participants)	4	15%
N/A (ILO revision only)	4	15%

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[15] Based on the total number of programs with completed assessment reports (26) – note that percentages add up to greater than 100% in the top section due to some programs reporting use of multiple methods

[16] Based on the total number of programs with completed assessment reports – note that percentages add up to greater than 100% due to some programs reporting multiple sampling methods

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Assessment Results

Table 3. Classification of assessment results, 2017-18		
Overall Results	**Number of Programs**	**Percentage of Assessed Programs**
Generally proficient or exemplary	11	42%
Mixed (proficient in some respects but not others)	6	23%
Generally not proficient	0	0%
Not applicable	9	35%

Assessment staff summarized the reports submitted by programs by placing the student learning assessment results into one of the following three categories: "generally proficient or exemplary", "mixed", or "generally not proficient." "Generally proficient or exemplary" (42% of assessed programs), typically meant that a very large majority (85% or more) of the students' work products or questionnaire responses indicated that they met or exceeded the Intended Learning Outcome criteria, or the program reported that most/all students achieved the outcome. In other cases, "generally proficient" meant that all students demonstrated proficiency in most elements of the outcome, but still showed some room for improvement.

Assessment reports were classified as "mixed" (23% of assessed programs) if students showed proficiency in some aspects of the assessed learning outcome but were deemed not proficient in others. No programs reported that the majority of students failed to achieve the desired outcome, and thus none were classified as "generally not proficient."

For several programs (35%), proficiency designations were not applicable. For instance, four programs focused solely on reconsidering and/or revising their Intended Learning Outcomes. Others did not focus on a specific ILO or set of ILOs, instead seeking student input on aspects of curricular redesign (either proposed or recently implemented) or information on students' motivations for pursuing a particular concentration or program.

Use of Assessment Results

All departments and programs reported at least one intended use of their assessment results. The responses are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Responses to department/program assessment results, 2017-18		
Use/Intended Use of Assessment Results	Number of Programs	Percentage of Assessed Programs[17]
Curriculum redesign (e.g., changing content of specific courses, changing requirements for a concentration, new course addition)	9	35%
Pedagogical changes (e.g., clearer communication of assignment criteria, scaffolding, incorporating inclusive teaching practices)	5	19%
Revise Intended Learning Outcome(s)	5	19%
Enhance advising practices (e.g., career advising)	4	15%
Continue with current practices (no changes made/anticipated)	3	11%
Other programmatic changes (e.g., staffing, budget needs)	2	8%
Use to plan future assessments (e.g., as baseline data)	1	4%

The most common theme that emerged from these responses was curricular change, such as modifying the content of a specific course, adding new course requirements, or even rethinking the overall structure of the program. Additionally, five programs made changes to their Intended Learning Outcomes.

Other departments or programs considered changes to teaching practices such as better communications with students about particular assignment requirements, implementation of inclusive teaching practices, or improved scaffolding of skills across a course. Additionally, several were "closing the assessment loop" by assessing changes they had implemented based on prior assessment results. Some plan to make additional changes based on their assessments, while others found that their new practices are indeed successful and plan to continue them.

Even among programs that reported generally high levels of student achievement, many still identified certain areas for improvement. For example, one program found that, while all students had received a high overall score (via rubric) on their final paper, there was still room for improvement in two skill areas assessed by the rubric. Another program plans to pursue methods for conducting a more in-depth assessment of their chosen learning outcome. Still others desired more students to display exemplary, rather than merely satisfactory, work in the future.

Programs were also asked to identify ways in which they had used assessment evidence collected during past assessment cycles. Table 5 summarizes these responses. Again, the most common response reflected some type of adjustment to the curriculum.

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[17] Percentages add up to greater than 100% due to some programs reporting multiple planned uses

Table 5. Prior responses to department/program assessment results		
Past Use of Assessment Results	Number of Programs	Percentage of Assessed Programs[18]
Curriculum redesign	14	54%
Incorporate into program review	6	23%
Pedagogical changes	5	19%
Continue with current practices	3	11%
Enhance advising practices	3	11%
Other programmatic changes (e.g., staffing, budget needs)	2	8%
Professional development	1	4%
Use to plan future assessments	1	4%
Revise Intended Learning Outcomes(s)	1	4%
No past assessment conducted or prior responses not discussed in report	4	15%

Tables 4 and 5 indicate that programs have approached and continue to approach the assessment process in a variety of ways. Faculty are committed to discovering ways of continuing to improve in the education of their students, and not solely reporting on ways in which they are already successful.

Summary

In accordance with St. Olaf's four-year data collection schedule, the focus of program-level assessment in 2017-18 was on the assessment of concentrations, conversation programs, and other academic programs. For each concentration, conversation, or other academic program, directors were asked to select and assess one of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for their program. Alternatively, directors were given the option of reviewing their program's full set of ILOs to determine if any changes should be made. In October 2018, programs were asked to submit reports to the Educational Research and Assessment (ER&A) office. These reports asked directors to describe the ILO(s) they had chosen to assess, the method of assessment and its results, and the use or planned use of the results (see Appendix C for a copy of the report template). The October due date for these reports aimed to ensure that programs had ample time to discuss their assessment results from the previous year.

There were generally good levels of participation by programs, the majority of which focused on using indirect assessment methods (i.e., gathering information on student experiences and/or student perceptions of their own knowledge and skills). Programs also reported a range of uses and/or planned uses of their assessment data for improving student learning. This was the case even for some programs that reported overall satisfactory assessment results,

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[18] Percentages add up to greater than 100% due to some programs reporting multiple past uses

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indicating that faculty are approaching assessment with a utilization- and improvement-focused mindset.

The assessment work described above supports St. Olaf's demonstration of the Higher Learning Commission's criteria for accreditation with regards to assessment (Criterion 4.B): 1) "The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals"; 2) "The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs"; 3) "The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning"; and 4) "The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members."

Appendix A: Description and Example of a 10-Year Assessment Cycle

The heart of the proposed ten year assessment cycle for departments and programs is an assessment plan drafted as part of the department/program's response to the comments of the external reviewers. This plan, subject to revision, will guide the academic unit's assessment activities through the unit's next external review.

This Assessment Plan will be written by the members of each department/program with the unit's goals for student learning in mind. The plans may differ significantly from one program or department to the next. The idea is for the plan to reflect the concerns and aspirations of each academic unit, informed by recent reflection in the creation of the unit's self-study document and the comments of external reviewers.

The Assessment Plans across departments and programs will have some common features. Specifically,

1. Accounting for the assessment of each of the program's Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs).
2. Scheduling of conversations around potential changes to a program's set of ILOs if such a change seems appropriate.
3. Creation of specific action plans to address concerns raised during the external review process and concerns raised during the final years of the previous ten year cycle.
4. Scheduling reassessment of student learning in areas in which actions have been taken recently, thus closing the loop on prior assessment work.
5. Identify two years, within the ten-year cycle, in which Assessment Reports will be submitted to the Academic Assessment Committee. Each report will be due on October 1st in the specified year.

These Assessment Plans will be submitted to the Academic Assessment Committee for its approval in a manner similar to the submission of new course proposals to the Curriculum Committee.

The Assessment Reports referred to in number 5 above will be considered by the Academic Assessment Committee, with comments and concerns returned to the submitting program or department. These reports will include:

1. A description of the assessment tools that have been used and/or that will be used in the implementation of the Assessment Plan.
2. Any rubrics used in assessments.
3. A description of how assessment results have been, or will be, used in affirming or supporting changes in student experience.
4. Discussion of how reassessment, i.e. closing the loop, will be carried out in response to any changes you are making as a result of assessment.

5. If a department or program cares to amend their Assessment Plan, they should submit the amended plan as part of the Assessment Report.

These Assessment Reports will, ideally, help in the drafting of each department or program's self-study and inform the upcoming external review.

In addition to these two Assessment Reports, programs and departments will be asked to respond very briefly (on the order of two of three sentences) to two prompts as part of their Annual Report to the provost. The two prompts are:

1. What assessment activities have you undertaken in the past year?
2. Is the current version of your department's or program's assessment plan still serving you well? If not, how can the Academic Assessment Committee offer assistance?

Appendix B: List of Concentrations, Conversations, and Other Academic Programs

The following programs were asked to submit assessment reports for 2017-18:

Concentrations

1. Africa and the Americas concentration
2. Asian Studies concentration
3. Biomolecular Science concentration
4. Educational Studies concentration
5. Environmental Studies concentration
6. Family Studies concentration
7. Film Studies concentration
8. German Studies concentration
9. Latin American Studies concentration
10. Linguistic Studies concentration
11. Management Studies concentration
12. Mathematical Biology concentration
13. Media Studies concentration
14. Middle East Studies concentration
15. Neuroscience concentration
16. Nordic Studies concentration
17. Race and Ethnic Studies concentration
18. Statistics concentration
19. Women's and Gender Studies concentration

Conversations

1. American Conversations
2. Asian Conversations
3. CH/BI
4. Environmental Conversations
5. Great Conversation
6. Public Affairs Conversation
7. Science Conversation

Other academic programs

1. International and Off-Campus Studies
2. Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum (FLAC)
3. Libraries (Research & Instruction)
4. Student Support Services

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Appendix C: Concentrations, Conversations, and Other Academic Programs Assessment Form

Name of program:

1. **What Intended Learning Outcome (ILO) or outcomes did you assess in 2017-18, and how did you conduct the assessment?**

    What questions, issues, or concerns about your program prompted you to select this outcome(s) for investigation? How did you explore the questions, issues, or concerns? What new data did you collect or what existing data did you examine?

2. **What were the results?**

    In the space below, please provide a sentence or two that summarizes these findings in relation to the outcome(s) you assessed. (Your response to this question will be included in summary reports for a variety of college audiences.)
    a. Please attach the results from your assessment project, including a copy of any instruments you used (rubrics, rating sheets, questionnaires, etc.).

3. **What do you plan to do in response to these results?**

    Please describe what you expect to sustain or continue, as well as anything you think you will change. Examples include the content or sequencing of requirements, the content of specific courses, pedagogical strategies, student assignments, advising, staffing requests, budget requests, or any other departmental decision or practice. (Your response to this question will be included in summary reports for a variety of college audiences.)

4. **What changes, if any, are you making to your statement of Intended Learning Outcomes for your program?**

    Please review the Intended Learning Outcomes statement for your program and indicate any changes (or "no change") below. If you are making changes to your ILOs, please complete the ILO Revision Submission Form. Changes will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee before the ILOs are updated on the ILO web page.

5. **What use of assessment evidence has your program made in the past?**

    What actions (if any) has your program taken to date in response to assessment evidence from any source (e.g., college-wide surveys such as NSSE, General Education assessment, or assessment within your program)? Please describe any aspect of curriculum or instruction that has been affected, and cite the evidence that informed your program's practice. (Note that a decision to *continue* one or more present practices in light of satisfactory findings also constitutes a "use" of assessment evidence.)

6. **Who else needs to know about your results and plans, and how can they help you?**

    Consider your Associate Dean; other administrators; the Libraries; the Center for Advising and Academic Support; the Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts; the Piper Center; Institutional Research and Effectiveness; Government, Foundation, and Corporate Relations; relevant faculty committees; or other individuals or offices on campus.