

NOVA Institutional Effectiveness Audit of Educational Programs 2016-17 to 2020-21

Research Report No. XX-22

Office of Strategic Insights

NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

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***Institutional Effectiveness Audit of Educational Programs
2016-17 to 2020-21***

Executive Summary

Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) documents the assessment of student learning through *Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports (APERs) for Instructional Programs*. Associate-degree granting programs and select certificates submit assessment reports each year, and the *Institutional Effectiveness Audit of Educational Programs* provides an analysis of the assessment of student learning at NOVA. The following *Audit* presents assessment data and analysis for 2020-21 and compares this year's results with the previous four years. The highlights of the *Institutional Effectiveness Audit of Educational Programs, 2016-17 to 2020-21*, include the following:

- Submission rates of assessment reports decreased in 2020-21. Five of the required 59 reports were not submitted whereas there was nearly 100 percent submission rates in previous years.
- The College-wide average rubric score for assessment reports increased 1.3 percentage points, from 96.2 percent in 2019-20 to 97.5 percent in 2020-21. All rubric score areas increased except for the “SLO, CLO, & Program Goals” section. This decrease reflects the five incomplete reports that were submitted in 2020-21 as well as two programs not assessing their approved, published SLOs. Overall, the 2020-21 results confirm that programs are improving the quality and completeness of their reports as well as using assessment results to implement actions aimed at improving student learning at NOVA.
- Programs reported implementing a total of 2,000 actions for improvement, which equates to 37.0 actions per program. This is a slight decrease in the number of actions reported from the previous year, and can be attributed to the fact that five programs did not submit reports (thus, decreasing the overall number of actions reported) as well as the programs continuing to be impacted by the global pandemic which began in Spring 2020.
- The actions for improvement that programs implement each year are classified into five major categories. The categories and their frequency of usage in 2020-21 are listed below. It is important to note that Curriculum-Specific actions accounted for nearly half of all actions that programs implemented in 2020-21.
 1. Curriculum-Specific: 47.0 percent
 2. Co-Curricular Resources: 22.0 percent
 3. SLO Assessment Process: 19.9 percent
 4. College-Level: 6.6 percent
 5. Program Resources: 4.6 percent

- The five major categories listed above break down into 18 subcategories. The top five subcategories utilized by programs in 2020-21 are listed below along with their frequency of usage. These five subcategories account for nearly three-quarters of all actions implemented by programs in 2020-21:
 1. Course Revision (a subcategory of Curriculum-Specific): 23.2 percent
 2. Academic Support/Advising (a subcategory of Co-Curricular Resources): 19.8 percent
 3. Pedagogy Change (a subcategory of Curriculum-Specific): 15.1 percent
 4. SLO Assessment Change (a subcategory of SLO Assessment Process): 7.6 percent
 5. Curricular Change (a subcategory of Curriculum-Specific): 6.8 percent

- The most notable changes in the frequency and types of actions that were implemented in 2020-21 include the following:
 - Nearly half of the actions that programs implemented as a result of the 2020-21 assessment cycle fell into the Curriculum-Specific category.
 - The subcategory Course Revision accounted for nearly one-quarter of all actions taken by programs. Thus, programs continue to adjust and enhance courses in the curriculum to improve student learning.
 - The subcategory Pedagogy Change increased in 2020-21 as programs reported continuing their use of hybrid and remote modalities to provide students with more flexibility to their schedules. Some programs attributed this continued usage of hybrid and remote modalities to an increase in both enrollment and graduation in 2020-21.
 - The subcategory Human Resources doubled in 2020-21, demonstrating both the hiring of new personnel, particularly faculty, as well as increasing the number of training opportunities provided to faculty.
 - The number of Co-Curricular Opportunities increased in 2020-21 as programs were able to provide more coordinated activities for students to engage in outside of the classroom such as internships, career fairs, and other events.
 - The subcategory Communication on the Assessment Process also increased in 2020-21 as programs continued to communicate and coordinate assessment activities with faculty teaching different modalities including online, off-site dual enrollment, hybrid, and synchronous remote.

Introduction

At Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), we have built a culture of assessment that is ongoing, faculty-led, and aimed at improving student learning. For over ten years, NOVA has offered extensive College-wide workshops, presentations, and one-on-one meetings with programs and faculty to develop and enhance the assessment process at the College. Meetings are regularly held with faculty, staff, and administrators enhance the program-level assessment activities. Programs are regularly making evidence-based decisions based on assessment results to implement actions aimed to improve student learning and the student experience at NOVA.

This report analyzes the college-wide assessment of student learning in academic year 2020-21 as it was reported in the *Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports (APER) for Instructional Programs*. Both associate-degree and select stand-alone certificate programs are required to submit annual assessment reports. The *Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports for Instructional Programs* publicly document educational programs' assessment of three sets of outcomes: student learning outcomes (SLOs), core learning outcomes (CLOs), and program goals. NOVA defines student learning outcomes as the program-level, discipline-specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes/values that students achieve as a result of completing their program of study at NOVA. Core learning outcomes are college-wide general education competencies that students gain as a result of both general education requirements and discipline-specific courses in associate and certificate programs. The six core learning outcomes at NOVA were determined by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and represent the general-education competencies that students at all 23 VCCS colleges should achieve by graduation. Program goals comprise program placement (i.e., discipline-specific enrollment) and graduation outcomes, and programs monitor these metrics in order to make data-based decisions about how to best assist students entering and completing the program.

Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports for Instructional Programs detail the assessment of three SLOs each year, one core learning outcome, and program placement and graduation data. Programs choose the SLOs that they assess each year while the College has a three-year rotation schedule for assessing the six core learning outcomes (see the Core Learning Outcome Assessment Cycle included in the Appendix). All programs report on program-placement and graduation data, and they have the option of reporting on additional goals that relate to student achievement indicators and/or employment and enrichment activities. Table 1 explains the four areas that programs report on in their *Annual Planning and Evaluation Report for Instructional Programs*.

Table 1: Reporting Areas for Annual Planning and Evaluation Report for Instructional Programs

SLOs, CLO, and Program Goals	Assessment Methods	Assessment Results	Use of Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outcomes that were assessed (e.g., student learning outcomes, core learning outcomes, program goals). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The methods that were used (e.g., assignment, project, exam). The courses and sections that were assessed. The number of students in on-campus, online, and off-site dual enrollment sections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the assessments took place. The results. Whether the results improved since the last assessment. The areas that need improvement based on the results of this assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The actions that have been implemented in the past to improve student learning. The actions that will be taken in the future to improve student learning based on the current results.

This *Institutional Effectiveness Audit of Educational Programs* provides data on the past five years of assessment reports: academic years 2016-17 through 2020-21. The report begins with a summary of the improvements that have been made over the past decade in the reporting and analysis of assessments at the College (Section I). Program participation in assessment reporting is analyzed (Section II) along with the quality of reporting (Section III). A discussion of the actions that programs are taking with the purpose of improving student learning is provided in Sections IV through VI. Finally, the Appendix contains the raw data for the figures presented in this report as well as descriptions of actions that are classified into major categories and subcategories.

Section I. Process Improvements in Analyzing Assessments at NOVA

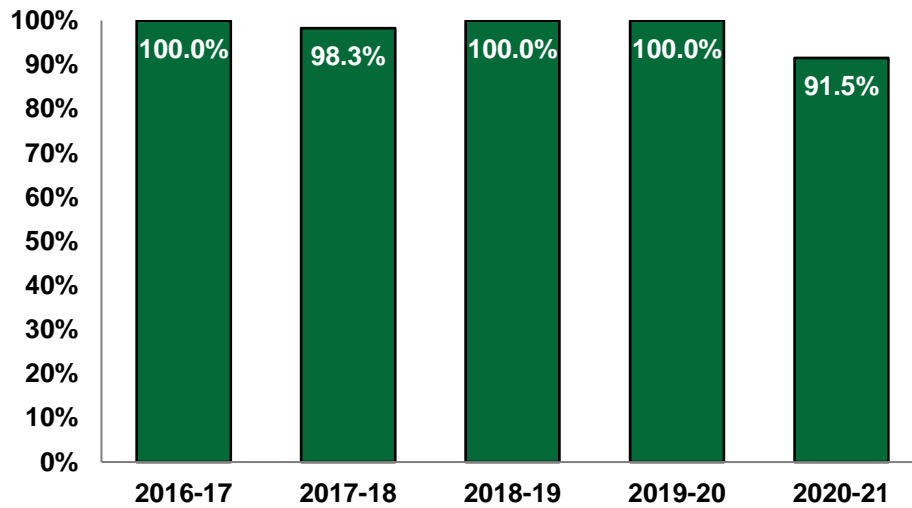
Over the past decade, programs have improved in their assessment and reporting of student learning and the College has improved its analysis of the *Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports (APERs) for Instructional Programs*. In 2013-14, NOVA implemented a more rigorous rubric to assess the quality and completeness of APERs. The rubric also provided specific, structured feedback to programs on the assessment and reporting process, and this rubric has been used to evaluate APERs since that time. Since 2015-16, the College created major categories and subcategories for its analysis of actions taken by programs. The addition of subcategories has increased the accuracy of the classifications provided in each *Audit* as well as the reliability of the total number of actions implemented by programs. For the 2017-18 reports, the College further refined the major category, SLO Assessment Process, by creating additional subcategories; in previous years, all changes to the assessment process were grouped together under one subcategory called “Assessment Methodology.” The new subcategories introduced in 2017-18 allow for a more specific understanding of the changes that programs are making to improve their assessment process and methods. (See the *Institutional Effectiveness Audit of Educational Programs 2013-14 to 2017-18* for a more detailed explanation of the changes made to the SLO Assessment Process category that year.)

In sum, the changes made over the past decade represent improved analysis of assessment at the College and continuous improvement at both the program and College level. Annual assessment reports demonstrate that programs are regularly examining their assessment data and results, and they are regularly implementing actions to improve student learning in areas where students are not meeting targets. Programs continue to broaden their understanding of the assessment process and the value that it brings to both the program and the students. As a result, programs utilize the assessment process to improve student learning, the student experience, and overall program quality at NOVA.

Section II. Submission Rates

Figure 1 below presents the submission rates of *Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports for Instructional Programs* from 2016-17 through 2020-21. In 2017-18, there was one report that was not submitted, and in 2020-21, there were five reports not submitted (see Table A1 in the Appendix). In all other years, the College had 100 percent submission rates, including 2019-20 which was the academic year most impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Figure 1. Submission Rate of *Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports for Instructional Programs* by Educational Programs: 2016-17 through 2020-21



Section III. Quality of Reporting

NOVA's culture of assessment has become more established over the past decade, so standards for assessing student learning and the quality of assessment reports have increased. A rubric was implemented in 2013-14 to evaluate the quality and completeness of the reports. The rubric provides percentile scores for each section of the APER, as well as an average overall score that is calculated from the total number of points earned (see Tables 2 and 3 below).

The four sections of the report that are scored using the rubric are: (1) SLOs, CLOs, Program Goals; (2) Assessment Methods; (3) Assessment Results; and (4) Use of Results (see Table 1 above for a description of these areas). Points are awarded for addressing each of the components in each section of the report: two points for meeting the requirement, one point for partially meeting it, and zero points for not meeting the requirement. Based on the total points earned, an overall percentage score is calculated. From this overall percentage score, reports fall into one of four categories: meeting expectations, mostly meeting expectations, partially meeting expectations, and not meeting expectations (see Table 2).

Table 2. Quality of Reporting in Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports for Instructional Programs: Rubric Score Scale

Overall Score on Rubric	Color on Rubric	Performance Level
90% - 100%	Dark Green	Meeting expectations
80 - 89%	Light Green	Mostly meeting expectations
70% - 79%	Yellow	Partially meeting expectations
Below 70%	Red	Not meeting expectations

The scores for 2016-17 through 2020-21 reports are provided in Table 3. Note that the scores for 2020-21 are for the 54 programs that submitted reports that year (out of 59 required reports). The five reports that were not submitted received scores of zero, but these zeros were not factored into the College-wide rubric averages so that the College-wide averages accurately reflect the quality and completeness of the reports that were submitted.

Table 3. College-Wide Rubric Results: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports Criteria	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Percentage Point Change: 2019-20 to 2020-21
SLOs, CLO, & Program Goals	98.2%	95.3%	94.8%	95.7%	94.4%	-1.3
Assessment Methods	97.2%	96.7%	96.2%	97.1%	98.5%	1.4
Assessment Results	91.9%	93.9%	96.3%	97.7%	99.3%	1.6
Use of Results	82.2%	90.4%	89.7%	95.3%	97.1%	1.8
TOTAL	92.4%	93.4%	93.8%	96.2%	97.5%	1.3

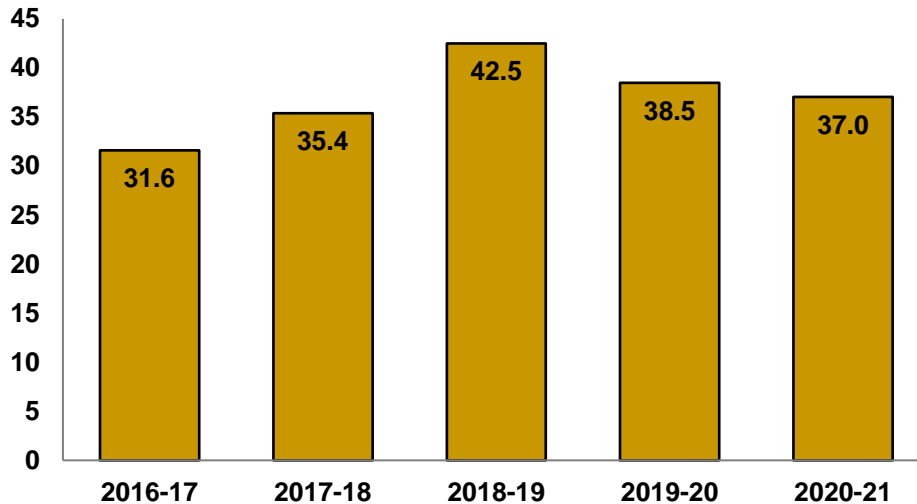
For 2020-21, all sections of the report as well as the overall average score meet expectations (i.e., fall in the 90-100% range). In addition, the College-wide average increased from 96.2 percent in 2019-20 to 97.5 percent in 2020-21. Rubric scores increased for each section of the report except for the “SLOs, CLO, & Program Goals” section. The decrease in this area reflects the number of incomplete reports submitted (five of the 54 reports submitted for 2020-21) as well as two programs not assessing approved, published SLOs.

Overall, the rubric score gains in 2020-21 confirm that programs are improving the quality of their assessment reports and implementing actions targeted at continuous program improvement.

Section IV. Use of Results to Improve Student Learning

At NOVA, we emphasize the stage of the assessment process known as “closing the loop,” which involves using the results from assessments to implement actions aimed at student learning outcome improvements. Programs report on the actions that they take as a result of assessing student learning, and these actions are counted and categorized into 5 major categories (see Sections V and VI below). Figure 2 illustrates the average number of actions that programs are implementing as a result of the assessment process.

Figure 2. Average Number of Use of Results Per Program: 2016-17 through 2020-21



As shown in Figure 2, programs are regularly implementing actions aimed at continuous improvement. There were a record number of actions taken in the 2018-19 academic year: 2,422 actions total, which equates to 42.5 actions per program (see Table A2 in the Appendix). The number of actions that programs have taken in the two years since 2018-19 has decreased. In 2019-20, there were a total of 2,234 actions (38.5 actions per program) and in 2020-21, there were a total of 2,000 actions taken (37.0 per program). The decrease in 2019-20 can be directly attributed to the global pandemic which began in Spring 2020. The pandemic affected the number and kinds of actions that programs were able to implement that year. The decrease in 2020-21 is partially attributed to the fact that five programs did not submit reports, so their actions for improvement are not included in these figures. Also, the number of actions reported by programs in 2020-21 may continue to be impacted by the pandemic. Although some activities that were not available during the pandemic returned in 2020-21, programs, students, and the College were still affected by the pandemic in many ways.

Overall, Figure 2 demonstrates that programs are using assessment data to make decisions and take actions to improve student learning and the student experience at NOVA.

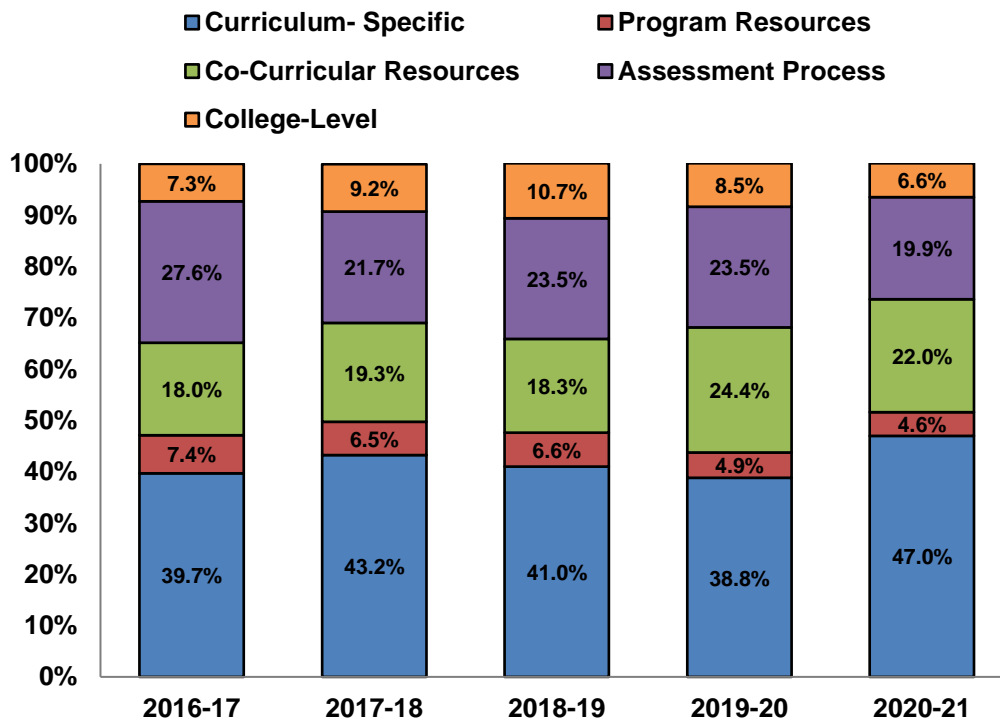
Section V. Use of Results by Major Category

The previous section discussed the number of actions that programs are taking to improve student learning. In addition to quantifying how many actions are reported in the Use of Results section of assessment reports, the reports are analyzed to determine the *kinds* of actions that programs take to improve student learning and the assessment process.

The Use of Results section of the APER classifies actions for improvement implemented by programs into five major categories: (1) Curriculum-Specific; (2) Program Resources; (3) Co-Curricular Resources; (4) SLO Assessment Process; and (5) College-Level. Each of these major categories contains several subcategories, explained in Section VI below.

Figure 3 displays how often each of the five major categories were utilized by programs in the past five academic years. Curriculum-Specific actions remain the most frequently implemented category reported by programs. In 2020-21, this category grew by nearly ten percentage points to make up nearly half of all actions taken by programs. Co-Curricular Resources remained the second most frequently cited category in 2020-21, with 22.0 percent of all actions falling into this category. The SLO Assessment Process made up 19.9 percent of all actions. College-Level and Program Resources both shrank this year; College-Level actions accounted for 6.6 percent of all actions while Program Resources made up 4.6 percent. See Table A3 in the Appendix for data on the total number of actions for each category.

Figure 3. Use of Results by Major Category: 2016-17 through 2020-21



Section VI. Use of Results by Subcategories

The five major categories discussed in the previous section break down into a total of 18 subcategories. Table 4 presents the major categories and their subcategories. A complete description of each subcategory with examples is provided in Table A11 in the Appendix.

Table 4. Use of Results Codes: Major Categories and Subcategories

Major Category	Subcategories
Curriculum-Specific	Curricular Change
	Course Revision
	Pedagogy Change
	Subject-Matter Expert Feedback
Program Resources	Financial
	Human Resources
	General Resources
Co-Curricular Resources	Co-Curricular Opportunities
	Academic Support/Advising
SLO Assessment Process	SLO Assessment Change
	Data Analysis Method Change
	Student Learning Outcome Change
	Target Changed
	Increase Sample Size
	Communication on the Assessment Process
College-Level	Dual Enrollment
	Articulation Agreement
	Recruitment/Marketing

Figure 4 illustrates the 18 subcategories in order of most frequently to least frequently utilized by programs in 2020-21. Course Revision is the most-frequently cited action, with nearly one-quarter of all actions falling into that subcategory. The second most-frequently cited subcategory is Academic Support/Advising. For 2019-20, which was impacted the most by the global pandemic that began in Spring 2020, this subcategory was the most-frequently utilized, as students required more support during that unprecedented time. As the pandemic became more manageable in 2020-21, this subcategory decreased in usage. Pedagogy Change remains the third-most frequently utilized subcategory, with 15.1 percent of all actions. The top three subcategories make up nearly 60 percent of all actions taken by programs in 2020-21. All other subcategories comprise less than 10 percent each of the total number of actions cited in the assessment reports.

Figure 4. Use of Results by Subcategory in Descending Order: 2020-21

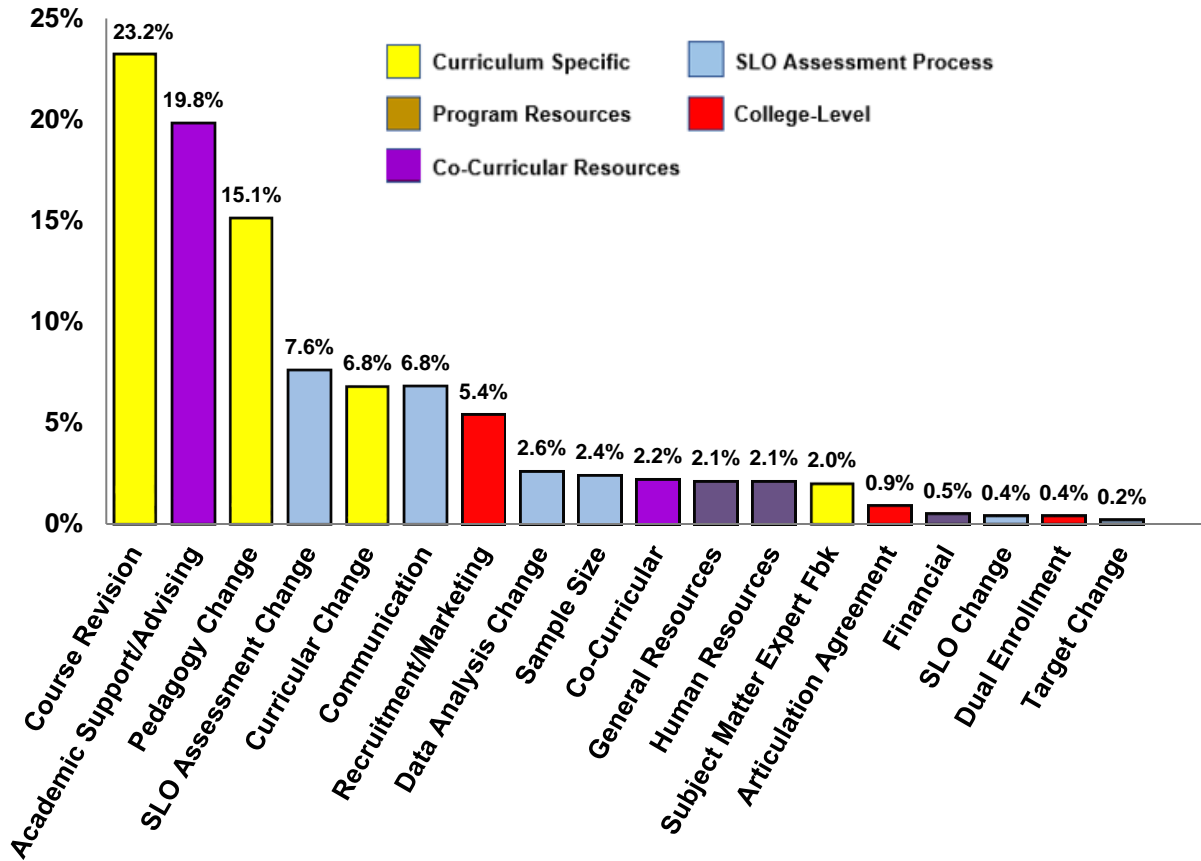


Table 5 displays the top five most frequently cited subcategories over the past three years. The table provides the frequency that these subcategories were utilized each year (in percentage form) as well as the total percent of these top five subcategories.

Table 5. Top Five Subcategories: 2018-19 through 2020-21



Rank	2018-19	% of Total	2019-20	% of Total	2020-21	% of Total
1.	Course Revision	19.7	Academic Support/Advising	22.6	Course Revision	23.2
2.	Academic Support/Advising	16.0	Course Revision	19.2	Academic Support/Advising	19.8
3.	Pedagogy Change	12.7	Pedagogy Change	10.7	Pedagogy Change	15.1
4.	SLO Assessment Change	8.8	SLO Assessment Change	9.3	SLO Assessment Change	7.6
5.	Recruitment/Marketing	7.8	Curricular Change	6.8	Curricular Change	6.8
Total		65.0		68.6		72.5

Course Revision and Academic Support/Advising were in the top two places in 2018-19 and 2020-21, whereas in 2019-20 those two subcategories switched spots, with Academic Support/Advising moving into the number one place. This is likely due to the increased need for academic support and advising that resulted from the global pandemic which began in Spring 2020.

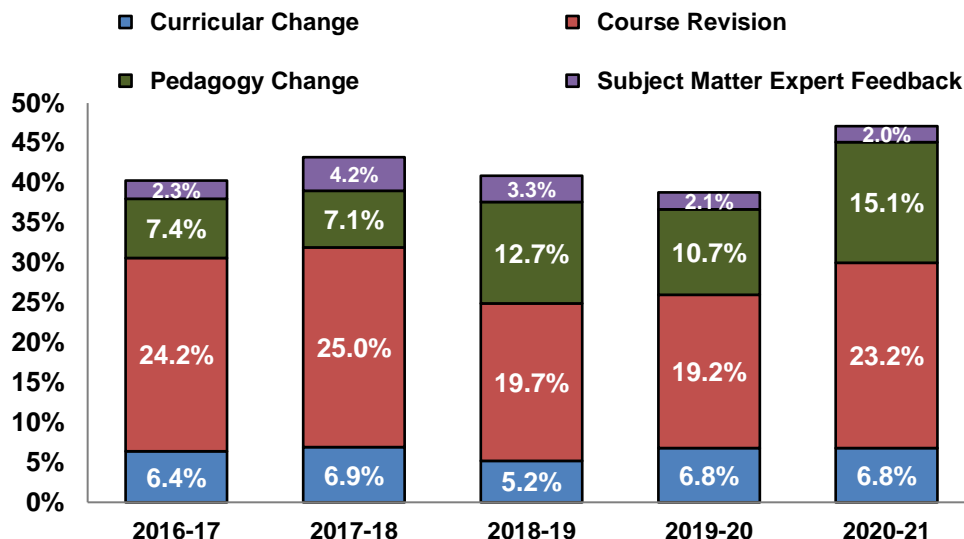
In all years, Pedagogy Change and SLO Assessment Change were in the third and fourth spots, respectively. In 2018-19, Recruitment/Marketing was in the fifth spot, but in the two subsequent years, Curricular Change held fifth place. This indicates that programs have been making more curriculum-level changes since 2019-20, possibly as a result of the effects of the global pandemic.

The top five subcategories in 2018-19 accounted for 65.0 percent of all actions reported that year. In 2019-20, they accounted for 68.6 percent of all actions, while in 2020-21, the top five subcategories accounted for nearly three-quarters of all actions. This means that these top five subcategories were the most-frequently cited changes in assessment reports. An analysis of each subcategory is provided in subsequent sections below.

A. Curriculum-Specific

The Curriculum-Specific category has been the most frequently utilized category for the past five years, growing to nearly half of all actions in 2020-21. Curriculum-Specific actions consist of four subcategories: Course Revision, Pedagogy Change, Curricular Change, and Subject-Matter Expert Feedback. Figure 5 illustrates the trends over the past five years in this category.

Figure 5. Curriculum-Specific Changes: 2016-17 through 2020-21



The Course Revision subcategory is used to capture actions taken to “what” students learn, i.e., the content of the course. This category increased in 2020-21 to 23.2 percent of all actions compared to 19.2 in the previous year. This subcategory was the most frequently cited subcategory of the 18 subcategories for each of the past five years except for 2019-20, when it fell to second place behind Academic Support/Advising (see Table 5).

Pedagogy Change refers to changes in “how” students learn and how teachers structure the learning environment, including adding or replacing on-campus courses with online or hybrid modalities; integrating technology into the course; and including more experiential activities, including labs. Actions classified as Pedagogy Change increased five percentage points in the past year, from 10.7 percent in 2019-20 to 15.1 percent in 2020-21. Many programs reported keeping remote/hybrid teaching modalities that were utilized during the global pandemic as options for students in the 2020-21 academic year. This allowed students more options to take classes remotely, which allowed them the flexibility that they needed coming out of the pandemic.

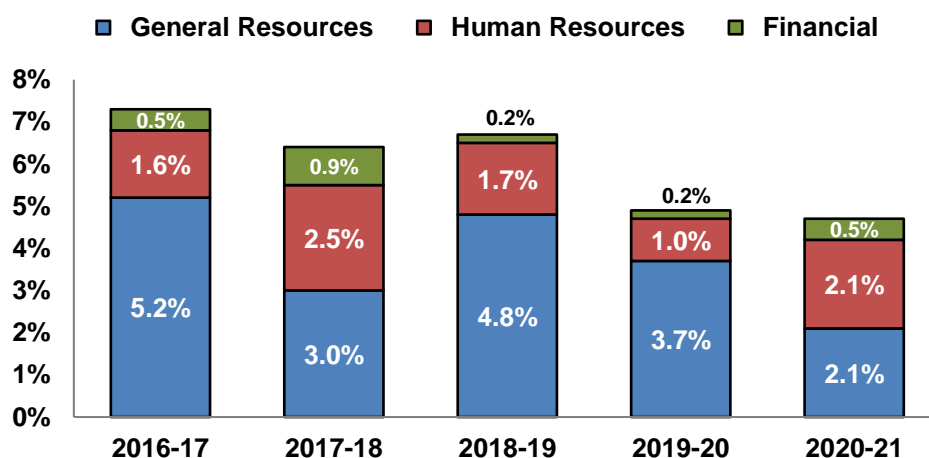
Curricular Changes refer to broader changes to the degree program itself, for example adding a course or other requirement (including a new prerequisite), increasing the number of course sections offered, or changing the sequence of courses. Curricular Changes remained stable at 6.8 percent in both 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Subject-Matter Expert Feedback involves seeking recommendations from internal or external stakeholders, such as employers, on-site clinical supervisors, the Program Advisory Board, or an accrediting body. This subcategory also includes the program review process that programs undergo every five years because program review involves feedback and recommendations from stakeholders across the College. Subject-Matter Expert Feedback remained steady at 2.0 percent of all actions taken.

B. Program Resources

The Program Resources category has been shrinking for the past five years, with 4.6 percent of all actions falling into this category in 2020-21.

Figure 6. Program Resources Changes: 2016-17 through 2020-21



The Program Resources category includes three subcategories: General Resources, Human Resources, and Financial. General Resources consist of increasing/improving physical resources, such as obtaining new software or hardware/equipment, expansion of physical space, or utilizing external partners as guest speakers. Human Resources include hiring new

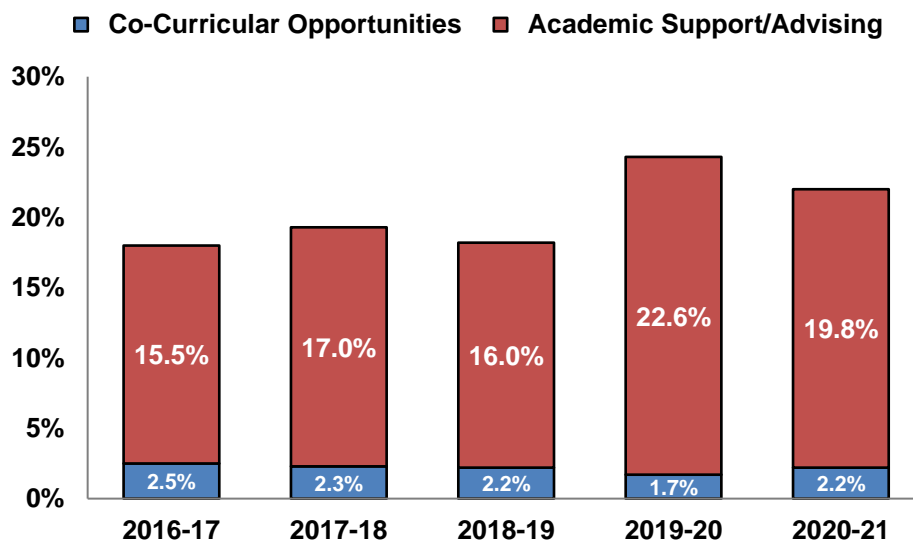
personnel as well as providing professional development training for faculty and staff. Financial resources entail requesting or allocating additional funds to achieve learning outcomes and/or program goals.

Figure 6 demonstrates that the Human Resources subcategory doubled, increasing from 1.0 to 2.1 percent in the past year. This is attributed to both the hiring of personnel and the training opportunities provided to current faculty and staff. The General Resources subcategory decreased from 3.7 to 2.1 percent, while the Financial subcategory increased from 0.2 to 0.5 percent.

C. Co-Curricular Resources

The Co-Curricular Resources category was the second most-frequently utilized category of the five major categories for the past two years. In 2020-21, it comprised 22.0 percent of all actions. This category includes two subcategories, Co-Curricular Opportunities and Academic Support/Advising. Co-Curricular Opportunities are coordinated activities for students to engage in outside of the classroom and which are not a required part of a course. These activities include field trips, internships, social gatherings, career fairs, study sessions, and participation in professional or student organizations. Academic Support/Advising actions refer students to academic support resources such as student advisors, the Writing Center, Science Lab, Math Lab, or peer tutoring. This subcategory also includes orientation activities, faculty advising sessions, and improving guidance provided to students about degree-related topics.

Figure 7. Co-Curricular Resources Changes: 2016-17 through 2020-21



Academic Support/Advising actions decreased over the past year, from 22.6 percent in 2019-20 to 19.8 percent in 2020-21. It is important to note that this subcategory increased dramatically in 2019-20, likely as a result of the global pandemic, as students required more advising and support during that academic year. Although this subcategory decreased over the past year, the number of actions in 2020-21 still exceeds the three years prior to the global pandemic, demonstrating an overall increase in the support and advising provided to students since the beginning of the pandemic.

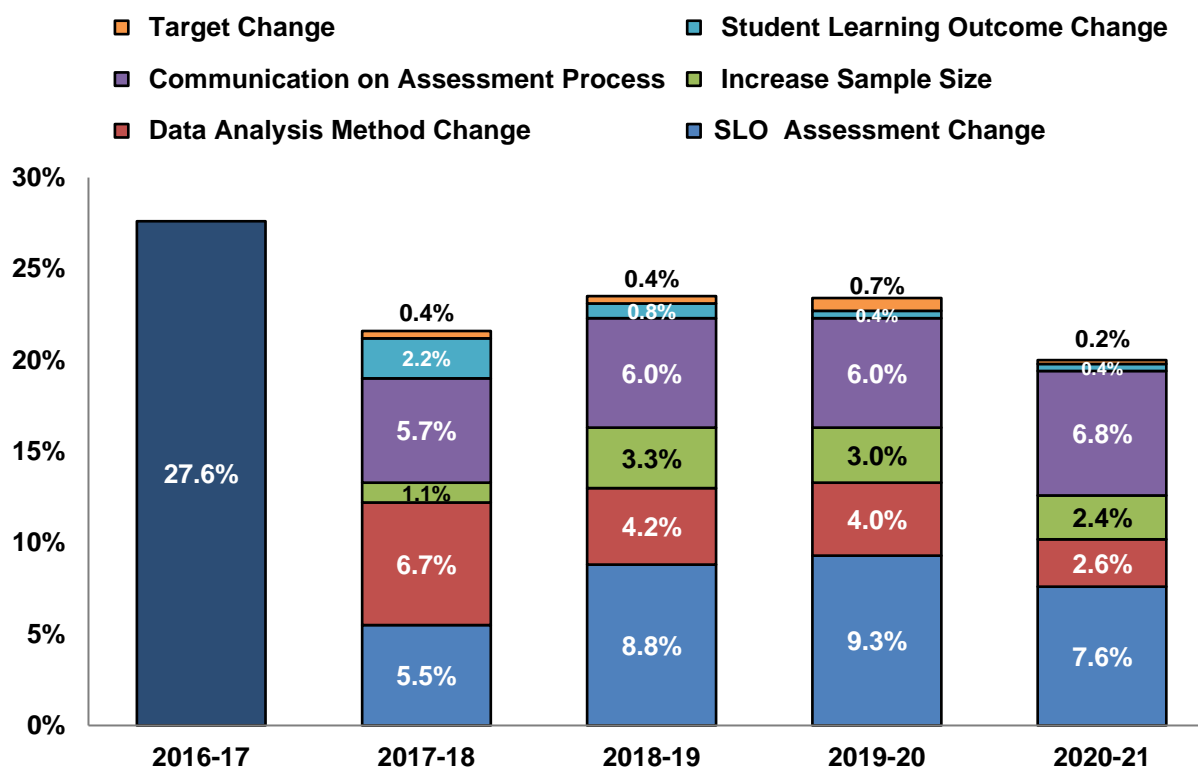
Co-Curricular Opportunities grew from 1.7 to 2.2 percent over the past year. These opportunities had decreased during the pandemic as many of these co-curricular activities were cancelled due to the closing of venues, both on and off campus, and restrictions on public gatherings. The increase over the past year demonstrates that programs were able to offer these opportunities again to students in 2020-21.

D. SLO Assessment Process

As explained in previous *Audits*, the SLO Assessment Process category was refined in 2017-18. Prior to that year, this category only contained one subcategory under which all assessment process changes were captured (see Section I). In 2017-18, six subcategories were added to more accurately capture and better classify the kinds of changes that programs are making to their assessment process. The six subcategories are: (1) SLO Assessment Change; (2) Data Analysis Method Change; (3) Student Learning Outcome Change; (4) Target Change; (5) Increase Sample Size; and (6) Communication on the Assessment Process.

For 2017-18 through 2020-21, changes in these six subcategories are displayed in Figure 8 below. For 2016-17, data can only be reported on the total percentage of SLO Assessment Process actions because only one subcategory was in place at that time.

Figure 8. Assessment Process Changes: 2016-17 through 2020-21



In 2020-21, all subcategories decreased except for Communication on the Assessment Process, which increased from 6.0 to 6.8 percent. This subcategory encompasses changes aimed at improving/increasing communication with faculty and other internal constituents in

order to clarify or revise the assessment process, train faculty on implementing the assessment, and/or standardize processes and procedures for conducting assessments.

The largest subcategory in this group is SLO Assessment Change, which accounted for 7.6 percent of all actions in 2020-21. This subcategory involves modifications to the method of assessing the learning outcome (e.g., a new assignment or test), a change to the assessment itself (e.g., new test questions, changing the format from multiple choice to short answer, etc.), or the addition of SLO/CLO components that are individually assessed.

Data Analysis Method Changes represent 2.6 percent of the actions that were reported by programs in 2020-21. This subcategory involves changes to how the data is collected or analyzed, and it also includes the development and implementation of a new rubric for scoring assessments.

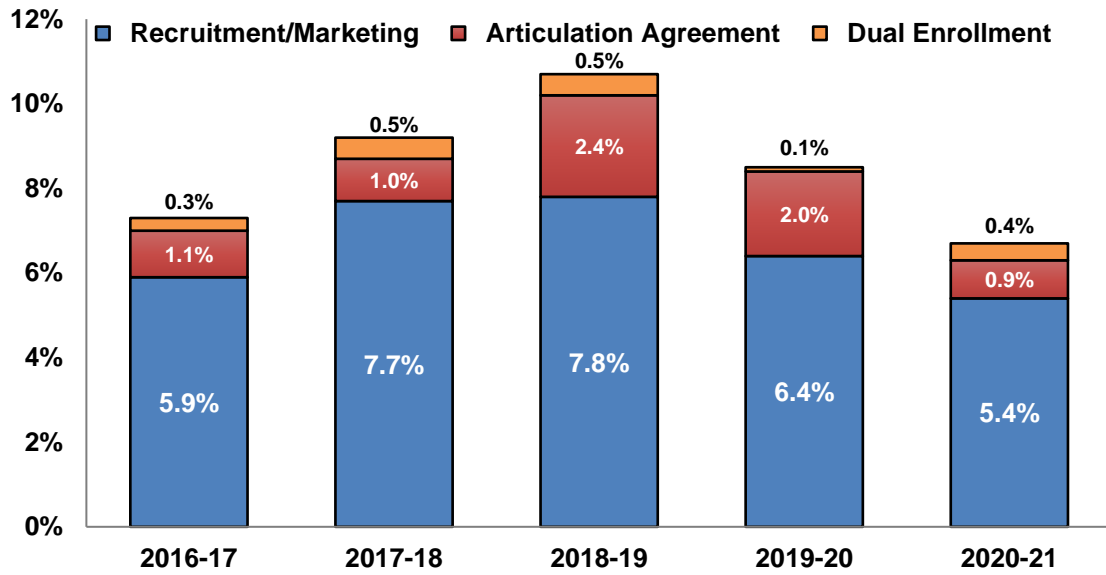
Increase Sample Size involves changes aimed at improving participation in assessments. Typically, this involves increasing the number of faculty conducting and reporting on assessments and/or including online and off-site dual enrollment sections in the assessment process. This subcategory comprised 2.4 percent of all actions in 2020-21. Because the culture of assessment at the College is well-established, programs already have a high participation rate in assessments and typically do not need to take many actions to improve this area.

Both Student Learning Outcome Changes and Target Changes were below one percent in 2020-21. Student Learning Outcome Changes involve the program revising or editing the official student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the program. It is anticipated that this subcategory will continue to represent a small number of actions each year because programs have established and stabilized the SLOs that students must achieve at the program level. Although programs regularly review their SLOs, major revisions do not occur on an annual basis but rather every few years as needed. The Target Change subcategory includes instances when the target is increased, decreased, or clarified/changed (e.g., changing the graduation target from a percent increase to calculating it as a percentage of program placed students).

E. College-Level

The College-Level category decreased again this year, along with its three subcategories. The three subcategories are: Recruitment/Marketing, Articulation Agreement, and Dual Enrollment. Recruitment/Marketing actions are outreach efforts that programs utilize for various potential populations of students, including local high school students, non-traditional students, and non-declared students. Articulation Agreements include increasing the number of agreements for pathways from NOVA to four-year institutions, including the Advance NOVA/Mason Partnership, as well as increasing the number of transferrable credits to specific four-year institutions. Dual Enrollment actions involve increasing the number of off-site, dual enrollment courses that take place at local high schools.

Figure 9. College-Level Changes: 2016-17 through 2020-21



In 2020-21, all three subcategories decreased in usage by programs. Recruitment/Marketing efforts remain the most utilized actions in this category, accounting for 5.4 percent of actions. Articulation Agreements and Dual Enrollment actions comprised less than one percent each in 2020-21.

Appendix

Note: The numbers in each table below are rounded to one decimal place. Therefore, some columns and rows do not sum to the exact number in the “Total” column/row due to rounding.

Table A1. Submission Rate of Annual Planning and Evaluation Reports for Educational Programs: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Academic Year	# of Annual Reports to be Submitted	# of Annual Reports Submitted	% of Annual Reports Submitted
2020-21	59	54	91.5%
2019-20	58	58	100.0%
2018-19	57	57	100.0%
2017-18	59	58	98.3%
2016-17	55	55	100.0%

Table A2. Average Number of Actions Per Program: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Academic Year	Annual Reports Submitted	Total # of Actions	Average # of Actions per Program
2020-21	54	2,000	37.0
2019-20	58	2,234	38.5
2018-19	57	2,422	42.5
2017-18	58	2,053	35.4
2016-17	55	1,740	31.6

Table A3. Use of Results by Major Category: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Year	Curriculum-Specific		Program Resources		Co-Curricular Resources		Assessment Process		College-Level		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
2020-21	939	47.0	92	4.6	439	22.0	397	19.9	133	6.6	2,000
2019-20	867	38.8	109	4.9	544	24.4	524	23.5	190	8.5	2,234
2018-19	992	41.0	160	6.6	442	18.3	569	23.5	259	10.7	2,422
2017-18	886	43.2	133	6.5	397	19.3	446	21.7	190	9.2	2,053*
2016-17	691	39.7	128	7.4	312	18.0	480	27.6	129	7.3	1,740

*There was one action in 2017-18 that was coded into the “Other” category and is not reflected in this table.

Table A4. Use of Results by Subcategory in Descending Order: 2020-21

Subcategory	Number of Actions	% of Total
Course Revision	463	23.2
Academic Support/Advising	395	19.8
Pedagogy Change	301	15.1
SLO Assessment Change	151	7.6
Curricular Change	136	6.8
Communication on the Assessment Process	135	6.8
Recruitment/Marketing	108	5.4
Data Analysis Method Change	52	2.6
Increase Sample Size	47	2.4
Co-Curricular	44	2.2
General Resources	42	2.1
Human Resources	41	2.1
Subject Matter Expert Feedback	39	2.0
Articulation Agreement	18	0.9
Financial	9	0.5
Student Learning Outcome Change	8	0.4
Dual Enrollment	7	0.4
Target Change	4	0.2
Total	2,000	100.0

Table A5. Top Five Subcategories: 2018-19 through 2020-21

Rank	2018-19	% of Total	2019-20	% of Total	2020-21	% of Total
1.	Course Revision	19.7	Academic Support/Advising	22.6	Course Revision	23.2
2.	Academic Support/Advising	16.0	Course Revision	19.2	Academic Support/Advising	19.8
3.	Pedagogy Change	12.7	Pedagogy Change	10.7	Pedagogy Change	15.1
4.	SLO Assessment Change	8.8	SLO Assessment Change	9.3	SLO Assessment Change	7.6
5.	Recruitment/Marketing	7.8	Curricular Change	6.8	Curricular Change	6.8
Total		65.0		68.6		72.5

Table A6. Curriculum-Specific Actions: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Curriculum-Specific	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Course Revision	421	24.2	514	25.0	478	19.7	428	19.2	463	23.2
Pedagogy Change	129	7.4	145	7.1	307	12.7	240	10.7	301	15.1
Curricular Change	112	6.4	141	6.9	127	5.2	151	6.8	136	6.8
Subject-Matter Expert Feedback	40	2.3	86	4.2	80	3.3	48	2.1	39	2.0
Total	702	40.3	886	43.2	992	41.0	867	38.8	939	47.0

Table A7. Program Resources Actions: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Program Resources	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
General Resources	91	5.2	62	3.0	115	4.8	82	3.7	42	2.1
Human Resources	28	1.6	52	2.5	40	1.7	23	1.0	41	2.1
Financial	9	0.5	19	0.9	5	0.2	4	0.2	9	0.5
Total	128	7.3	133	6.5	160	6.6	109	4.9	92	4.6

Table A8. Co-Curricular Resources Actions: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Co-Curricular	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Academic Support/ Advising	269	15.5	350	17.0	388	16.0	505	22.6	395	19.8
Co-Curricular Opportunities	43	2.5	47	2.3	54	2.2	39	1.7	44	2.2
Total	312	18.0	397	19.3	442	18.3	544	24.4	439	22.0

Table A9. Assessment Process Actions: 2016-17 through 2020-21

Assessment Process*	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
SLO Assessment Change	N/A	N/A	112	5.5	214	8.8	207	9.3	151	7.6
Communication on Assessment Process	N/A	N/A	118	5.7	145	6.0	134	6.0	135	6.8
Data Analysis Method Change	N/A	N/A	138	6.7	101	4.2	90	4.0	52	2.6
Increase Sample Size	N/A	N/A	22	1.1	79	3.3	68	3.0	47	2.4
Student Learning Outcome Change	N/A	N/A	46	2.2	20	0.8	9	0.4	8	0.4
Target Change	N/A	N/A	3	0.1	4	0.2	16	0.7	4	0.2
Total	480	27.6	446	21.6	569	23.5	524	23.5	397	19.9

*Assessment Process only had one subcategory before 2017-18 ("Assessment Methodology"). In 2017-18, six subcategories were added, and Assessment Methodology was removed (see Section I). Thus, no data exists before 2017-18 for the current subcategories.

Table A10. College-Level Actions: 2016-17 through 2020-21

College-Level	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Recruitment/Marketing	103	5.9	159	7.7	188	7.8	142	6.4	108	5.4
Articulation Agreement	20	1.1	21	1.0	59	2.4	45	2.0	18	0.9
Dual Enrollment	6	0.3	10	0.5	12	0.5	3	0.1	7	0.4
Total	129	7.3	190	9.2	259	10.7	190	8.5	133	6.6

Table A11. Descriptions and Examples of Actions by Major Categories and Subcategories

Major Category	Subcategory	Description and Examples
Curriculum Specific	Curricular Change	Curricular change to degree program, e.g., added a course or other requirement; changed sequence of courses, paradigm shift—i.e., change in program focus based on industry standards and evolving technology; change in time schedule (when classes are offered); added courses online or in hybrid format; added/increased number of sections of a course to accommodate more students; coordinated course scheduling with other campuses, designing a common course syllabus, competitive admission, designing a common course curriculum; changed entrance requirements/prerequisites to program, e.g., require completion of MTH 151 or ENG 111 before entering program, changed GPA requirement; requirement of computer competency test before program placed.
	Course Revision	Revised existing course or courses; added or revised assignment, tests, readings, projects; modified assignment; modified course content, changed textbook; added or modified study guides, checklists, or other course handouts; revisited course topics for greater comprehension; emphasized/improved content; posted material online; added rubric; added review session or practice test; revised time spent on topic, remediation; posted additional resources/materials to Canvas.
	Pedagogy Change	Revised methodology of delivering course material, e.g., less lecture, more student involvement, more interactive or experiential activities (lab) ; integrated learning technology (video, Blackboard), smaller class size, added or replaced some in person courses with on-line or hybrid courses (differs from offering entire degree program on-line); added peer learning methods.
	Subject Matter Expert Feedback	Sought recommendations from external and internal stakeholders, e.g., employers, on-site clinical coordinator/supervisor, program advisory board/committee, accreditation body, faculty cluster, program review.
Program Resources	Financial	Requested additional fiscal resources; allocated funds from other budget area to focus on achieving SLO.
	Human Resources	Provided faculty or adjuncts with development or training, e.g., faculty attend teaching workshops or conference to keep current with industry changes; hired new faculty.
	General Resources	Utilized external partners as guest speakers or resources for students; physical resources, e.g., new software, computers, open lab time, expansion of physical space.
Co-Curricular Resources	Co-Curricular Opportunities	Coordinated opportunities to engage in learning outside classroom: e.g., faculty and students interaction outside classroom; optional field trips; internships (if not a part of course), social gatherings, career fairs, speakers, study sessions, participation in professional or student organizations, open house(s).
	Academic Support/ Advising	Connected students with peer tutors; referred to NOVA Academic Support Resources like Writing Center, Science Lab, Math Lab; referred student to see academic advisor, counselor; improved or increased faculty advising and guiding students on degree related topics; program placement, transfer info sessions for 4-year colleges; orientation activities.

Major Category	Subcategory	Description and Examples
SLO Assessment Process	SLO Assessment Change	Changed or added to the assessment method for the SLO; broke out SLO components and assessed those individually.
	Data Analysis Method Change	Changed or modified data analysis method, e.g., developed a new rubric; added indirect measures such as surveys or student self-assessment.
	Student Learning Outcome Change	Refined or modified student learning outcome(s).
	Target Change	Increased target for success (e.g., increased the target number of students achieving a certain score on an assessment from 70% to 80%; increased the target assessment score from 60% to 70%); decreased target (e.g., decreased the target number of students achieving a certain score on an assessment from 90% to 80%; decreased the target assessment score from 100% to 90%); target was created/determined; target was revised or modified to be more clear or specific; target was changed (e.g., changing graduation target from percent/number increase per year to a percent of program placed students each year).
	Increase Sample Size	Improved/increased sample size, e.g., assessed more sections of a course; assessed more courses for the same SLO; increased faculty/campus participation in assessment.
	Communication on Assessment Process	Communicated with faculty to clarify or revise the assessment process; discussions/training about implementing the assessment (e.g., standardizing processes and procedures).
College-Level	Dual Enrollment	Allowed students to take program courses during high school.
	Articulation Agreement	Increased number of transferrable credits to specific 4-year institutions; Agreement with 4-year institution to accept NOVA graduates; change/update transfer requirements with transfer partners.
	Recruitment/Marketing	Efforts to increase access, e.g., outreach to high schools, non-traditional students, non-declared students.

Table A12. College-Wide Core Learning Outcome (CLO) Assessment Schedule: 2017-18 to 2022-23

CLO	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Civic Engagement		X			X	
Critical Thinking	X			X		
Professional Readiness			X			X
Quantitative Literacy	X			X		
Scientific Literacy			X			X
Written Communication		X			X	

PATHWAY TO THE AMERICAN DREAM—NOVA'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2023

THE NOVA COMMITMENT

As its primary contributions to meeting the needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Northern Virginia Community College pledges to advance the social and economic mobility of its students while producing an educated citizenry for the 21st Century.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To deliver on this commitment, NOVA will focus its creativity and talent, its effort and energy, and its resources and persistence, on achieving three overarching goals—success, achievement, and prosperity. It will strive to enable **Every Student to Succeed, Every Program to Achieve, and Every Community to Prosper**. These strategic goals are grounded in our college's commitment to equity, excellence, empathy, evidence, and economic and social mobility (NOVA's 5Es).

GOAL 1: Every Student Succeeds

- **Objective 1:** Adopt a college-wide approach to advising
- **Objective 2:** Achieve equity in student outcomes

GOAL 2: Every Program Achieves

- **Objective 3:** Establish comprehensive, fully-integrated, Informed Pathways (high school to NOVA to four-year college/university) for every program
- **Objective 4:** Sustain and, where needed, establish effective, equity-minded NOVA collegewide processes, protocols, policies, and accountabilities for services and programs
- **Objective 5:** Align NOVA's culture, structure, and talent management/development with its access and equity mission and commitment to inclusive excellence
- **Objective 6:** Stabilize, grow, and sustain resources required to support mission and innovation

GOAL 3: Every Community Prospers

- **Objective 7:** Elevate and empower NOVA as the region's leading workforce provider across all essential and high demand industry sectors

NOVA

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Community College**

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