

Assessment of Assessment



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Diné College

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Executive Summary

In April 2023, the Higher Learning Commission, the accrediting body for Diné College, gave the college a “Met with Concern” designation regarding its assessment of student learning. Shortly after this, two critical administrative positions responsible for managing and overseeing assessment were vacated. With its next accreditation visit on the horizon in 2025, the college is working to address the concern and improve its assessment of student learning. It has filled the key positions that had been left vacant and contracted with a consultant to review its assessment processes and provide recommendations for improvement. This report provides a review and related recommendations in the following categories:

- Assessment of institutional academic assessment,
- Assessment of academic assessment and program review, and,
- Assessment of General Education assessment.

Assessment of institutional academic assessment. Submitted and unsubmitted academic program assessment reports indicate the institutional assessment plan may need to be revised to encourage compliance and sustainability.

Assessment of academic assessment and program review. The gaps between the intended and implemented academic assessment and program review, and the intended and actual hypotheses for assessment are opportunities for improvement. Along with the institutional academic assessment plan, the academic program review plan may also need revisions to support greater compliance and sustainability. Drawing clear connections between the two while highlighting how they support budgeting and resource needs can create transparency and buy-in from stakeholders.

Assessment of General Education assessment. The General Education Handbook, revised in the Spring of 2024, prescribes an assessment plan that mimics a double-blind drug trial. With the ongoing implementation of the college learning management system, Canvas, several components of this plan will rapidly become obsolete or burdensome. Revising the plan in light of Canvas’ capacities to be efficient and reduce faculty workload can increase compliance and sustainability.

Future Directions. The suggested revisions above and detailed further in this report can increase faculty understanding of assessment, help them draw connections between assessment and resource needs, contribute to a sustainable culture of assessment, and support student success.

Glossary of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Complete Term
1. ADS	Assessment Data Specialist
2. AGECE	Arizona General Education Curriculum
3. APR	Academic Program Review
4. CSLO	Course Level Student Learning Outcomes
5. DAC	Director of Assessment and Curriculum
6. DC	Diné College
7. DPAR	Degree Program Assessment Report
8. Gen Ed	General Education
9. HLC	Higher Learning Commission
10. IP	Interim Provost
11. PSLO	Program Student Learning Outcomes
12. SC	Sih Hasin Committee

What Led to This Report

Accreditation Findings

Diné College (DC) is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). During the recent accreditation review in 2023, the site review team found the college wanting on HLC Criteria for Accreditation 4.B which requires the college to demonstrate that it “engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students” (HLC policy, 2023; p. 14). DC was rated “Met with Concern” on this criterion and asked to demonstrate progress and analysis of assessment related to:

1. A uniform, college-wide assessment process.
2. Creating Program and General Education (Gen Ed) Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) and conducting ongoing assessment of student learning.
3. Identifying and assessing co-curricular activities and publishing data outcomes.
4. Establishing student success strategies, identifying at-risk students, improving their persistence and completion rates, and publishing data outcomes.

Staffing Changes in Academic Affairs

Within the institutional hierarchy, the Provost’s Office, which houses the assessment team (director of assessment and curriculum, and assessment data specialist) is responsible for addressing and rectifying areas of concern identified by the HLC. However, within the last five years, these critical leadership positions experienced turnover. The faculty wanted ownership of academic assessment and asked to dissolve the assessment director position during the 2020-21 academic year. Then, in June 2023, the provost left DC.

An Interim Provost (IP) assumed leadership for Academic Affairs in June 2023. The faculty realized an institutional need to have a person in charge of assessment and requested reinstating the director position. In response to the faculty request and to build institutional capacity for assessment, the IP retooled and advertised the position of Director of Assessment and Curriculum (DAC) and filled the role in March 2024. The DAC joined the existing Assessment Data Specialist (ADS).

Both the DAC and ADS have extensive experience with DC and higher education. Both are members of the Navajo Nation, have held positions of increasing responsibility within higher education, and are proud DC graduates. Both bring extensive data analytic expertise and, as members of the DC and Navajo communities, insiders’ understanding of institutional and community cultures.

A Consultant to Help with Institutional Capacity

With an HLC interim monitoring report due in Fall 2025 and time lost to staffing changes, the IP identified a need for an extra set of temporary hands to build institutional capacity for assessment. To support the Provost's Office in addressing HLC concerns 1 and 2, she invited the author of this report, an external consultant, to review and share insights and recommendations on the college's assessment and program review plans, processes, and outcomes.

What This Report Is About

The consultant reviewed DC assessment documents including the Diné College Institutional Assessment Plan, submitted Degree Program Assessment Reports (DPAR), Academic Program Review (APR) Guidelines & Criteria, and the Gen Ed Handbook. The review entailed harvesting information from those documents to determine DC's implicit hypothesis of assessment, implementation fidelity to intended assessment processes, assessment strengths and challenges, and any other lessons that could be learned. In collaboration with the IP and assessment team, the consultant organized the review, findings, and recommendations along the following categories:

- Assessment of institutional academic assessment,
- Assessment of academic assessment and program review, and,
- Assessment of Gen Ed assessment.

This report contains the consultant's findings for each category and related recommendations. These findings are offered from the perspective of an external stakeholder, the same as that of a future HLC site reviewer. The recommendations herein are intended to help DC strengthen its existing assessment infrastructure in preparation for its next HLC self-study.

Assessment of Institutional Academic Assessment

Institutional Assessment Plan

DC stakeholders authored, vetted, and approved the *Institutional Assessment Plan* (DC, 2020). It defines assessment at DC as a “continuous cycle of self-evaluation and self-reflection” (p. 2) to improve student learning outcomes to determine how well DC fulfills its mission and strategic goals. The plan consists of measuring and assessing Institutional Learning Outcomes (also known as the Four Pillars), PSLO, Course Level Student Learning Outcomes (CSLO), Gen Ed Outcomes, and Co-Curricular Learning Outcomes.

The plan identifies CSLOs as course-embedded mechanisms for providing formative and summative feedback to students. Programs complete a DPAR1 every three years and a DPAR2 annually, with the former presenting a summary and analysis of data submitted in the latter. The DPAR2 includes a requirement for submitting student artifacts that are archived by the Provost’s Office. Academic program assessment is thus prescribed as an evaluation of all courses over three years. The Sih Hasin Committee (SC) uses a rubric to rate and provide feedback to programs on submitted DPAR1’s.

The plan includes a template for Co-Curricular program assessment reporting as well as a rubric for providing feedback on completed templates. Assessment of Gen Ed is not detailed in the plan.

Review of Submitted DPARs 1 & 2

Submissions. Four of 41 academic programs have never submitted a DPAR1 or DPAR2 (see Appendix A) and submissions across time and programs are inconsistent. It was difficult to get an annual submission count of either DPAR because faculty used a variety of dating conventions to fill the date field, ranging from entering the academic year of the data they were reporting (e.g. 2021-2022) to entering the semester during which the report was submitted (e.g. Fall 2021).

The ADS tracks whether and when a program submitted a DPAR, which yields a count of reports submitted during a specific period and indicates program compliance with DPAR submission guidelines. The ADS records do not solve the lack of consistency in dating conventions across DPARs.

Email reminders from the ADS are DC’s only mechanism for ensuring submissions. The SC provides feedback on submitted DPARs, but the committee does not appear to intervene and address non-submissions.

PSLOs and Program Goals. All programs that submitted a DPAR indicated PSLOs were in place. The PSLO statements, however, were not always easy to measure. Furthermore, PSLO statements were conflated with program goal statements. These two foundational concerns have reverberating implications for tracking student learning and program development, making it difficult to do either effectively or to detect the need for and implement improvements. This led to programs caught in a cycle of revising either their PSLOs or rubrics for better measurement. Without clear, measurable PSLOs and coherent assessment plans, programs may find it difficult to escape the cycle of revisions.

Curriculum Matrices. Like PSLOs, all programs that submitted a DPAR also shared a curriculum matrix to support their assessment efforts. And, like PSLOs, the curriculum matrices were not structured to support effective assessment of student learning. The Institutional Assessment Plan directs programs to assess every course over a few years to conduct program-level assessments of student learning. This guidance is likely to make assessment feel burdensome and alienate faculty from conducting meaningful assessment of student learning.

Data collection and analysis. It may be predictable from the concerns with curriculum matrices, that programs reported that cycles of collecting and analyzing PSLO data were burdensome or did not follow them. Programs reported wanting data from the Office of Institutional Research about their programs, such as enrollments, persistence, graduation rates, etc. and did not receive them when requested. They indicated that getting assessment data from adjunct faculty is difficult due to the various hurdles associated with a transient and temporary workforce, e.g. adjuncts not responding to emails when off-contract. This is particularly disruptive to assessment in programs and courses with low enrollments because it lends to a scarcity of data. These data concerns detract from meaningful assessment of student learning.

PSLO alignment to DC Pillars. 24 out of 41 programs have aligned their PSLOs to DC Pillars. The remaining either have not ($n = 1$) or the mapping is unclear ($n = 14$). One program, Secondary Education (Math and Science), reported PSLOs and alignment for both Education and Science. The mapping of Science PSLOs to the Pillars was clear while the same for Education PSLOs was not. Thus, the overall number of programs that reported alignment ($n = 38$) is greater than the total number of DPARs ($n = 37$) included in this report. This makes it difficult to determine how well DC fulfills its mission and strategic goals, as the Institutional Assessment Plan intends.

Online instruction. The COVID-19 pandemic forced DC, along with other institutions across the country, to implement online learning within a matter of weeks. This caused

disruptions in teaching, learning, and assessment and has yet to fully recover, programs reported in their DPARs. This may be an issue for DC to consider with regulatory agencies (such as HLC) in mind that require faculty to be appropriately trained in delivering programs online or need to approve online delivery of programs through appropriate channels.

Closing the loop. The DPAR templates ask programs to report on improvements based on their assessment findings. Four out of the 37 programs that submitted a DPAR suggested improvements. The improvements, however, were difficult to locate in the DPAR template, not consistently related to assessment findings, and often copied and pasted from year to year. This contributes to the pattern indicated above of assessment processes that do not yield meaningful information about student learning or how programs further the mission of the college.

Feedback on DPAR1. The SC uses a rubric to provide feedback to programs on completed DPAR1. Thus, programs get feedback on their assessment processes and reporting every three years. The rubric contains information that could be interpreted as contradictory to the institutional assessment plan. For example, the plan recommends assessing every course while Area 2 in the rubric rates “Commendable” those programs that identify targeted assessment within the program. Faculty may find this conflicting information confusing and hard to follow and feedback from the SC lagged or outdated and thus difficult to implement in a timely manner.

Recommendations for Improvement

The review of submitted DPARs 1&2 reveals numerous challenges in following the intended institutional academic assessment plan. This includes low submission rates, difficult-to-measure PSLOs that are not aligned to DC Pillars, curriculum matrices that do not support effective program assessment, challenges with data collection and analysis, suggestions for improvement that are not implemented, lack of accountability for non-submissions, and feedback on DPAR1 that either conflicts with the institutional assessment plan or is delayed.

These significant challenges at every step of the assessment plan suggest the plan itself may need to be revised so it can be implemented as intended. For the plan to be sustainable, DC needs a supporting infrastructure the foundation for which is a DAC who is now on staff.

In revising the Institutional Assessment Plan to be meaningful, effective, and sustainable, consider the following:

1. **The Institutional Assessment Plan.** Revise the institutional assessment plan and remove all redundancies, simplify information so it is easy to follow, and resolve conflicting directions. Consider consolidating DPAR1 and 2 into one reporting template, providing an opportunity for programs to connect assessment to resource needs, and structuring it such that it contributes to meaningful assessment at the program level and can be consolidated at the school or institutional levels to determine how academic programs contribute to DC's strategic goals.
2. **Submissions.** Track DPAR submissions longitudinally by the program to ensure that all programs have the support they need to conduct meaningful assessments and successfully submit reports on time.
3. **PSLOs and Program Goals.** Review each unit's PSLOs and program goals and work with them to ensure that the two are separate, measurable, and can meaningfully contribute to programmatic self-reflection and improvement.
4. **Curriculum Matrices.** Review each program's curriculum matrix to ensure it supports an effective curriculum and assessment plan. Rather than assessing every course, guide programs in selecting key courses for assessing one or more PSLO to make assessment sustainable. Consider including only those courses that are taught by full-time program faculty, at least until DC's new learning management system, Canvas, has been fully implemented across all programs.
5. **Data collection and analysis.** With revised PSLOs and curriculum matrices, concerns with data collection should naturally subside. The President of DC indicated that the Office of Institutional Research is working to create data dashboards to democratize data access for program faculty. The DAC has significant data expertise that can contribute to creating dashboards that give faculty the information they need to monitor their programs.
6. **PSLO alignment to DC Pillars.** PSLOs may be aligned to DC Pillars during the revision of curriculum matrices. This will facilitate assessment of the Pillars, which currently is not feasible due to the absence of necessary infrastructure. If the alignment between PSLOs and Pillars is implemented within Canvas, it will ease the burden of data collection and analysis to determine student achievement of the Pillars.
7. **Online instruction.** To bring online instruction into compliance with regulatory agencies like the HLC, support faculty in acquiring the necessary training, and ensure programs have the appropriate approvals for online delivery.
8. **Closing the loop.** In revising assessment processes and DPAR templates consider providing an opportunity for programs to report on the outcome of previously implemented changes. This will allow programs to have a longitudinal perspective on assessment and program development. Furthermore, it will contribute to the APR

and allow programs to highlight any changes – and their effectiveness – in the improvement of student learning and program development.

9. **Feedback on DPARs.** Consider providing DPAR feedback annually, so programs have a chance to implement suggested changes and monitor their impact. In revising the assessment plan, the SLC feedback rubric can also be modified to speed up SLC's review process.
10. **The Assessment Committee.** The recommendations above require an institutional point-person in charge of overseeing their implementation and follow-up while coordinating necessary details with faculty. Given their existing faculty duties, neither the SC nor its chairperson is positioned to occupy that role. Thus, consider restructuring the SC, reviewing and revising the committee's charge and bylaws, and positioning the DAC as its chair or co-chair. The DAC may co-chair with either the IP or the current SC chair. Such an arrangement can help ensure optimum institution-wide coordination in the vast undertakings suggested above.

Assessment of Academic Assessment and Program Review

Academic Program Review

The *Academic Program Review Guidelines & Criteria* (DC, 2021) describes a comprehensive APR undertaken by each degree-granting program every four years, although stakeholders in private conversations indicated they thought the APR occurred anywhere from three to five years. The APR process is a program-level self-study that engages faculty in examining holistic program health including the strengths and weaknesses of program curriculum, pedagogy, faculty scholarly and service activity, student learning outcomes, resource needs, and strategic areas for development.

The APR is intended to be relevant to and address the DC Strategic Plan and HLC Criteria for Accreditation. It is driven by program faculty and involves evaluation by an external reviewer and stakeholders across the institution, including non-academic units. The program self-study and review culminate in reviewers' feedback on the program, a minimum 3-year action plan to address areas of concern, and follow-through by the Deans to ensure implementation and monitoring of the action plan.

Intended Elements of DPARs and APR

DPARs and APR share connections and commonalities that are evident when tabulated based on shared elements of their intended implementation (see Table 1). Both are intended to engage key stakeholders in identifying, implementing, and monitoring program improvements, to contribute to student and institutional development.

Table 1. Intended Elements of DPARs and APR

Report	Intended Schedule	Report Focus	Unit of Analysis	Key Stakeholders	Overseen by	Closing the loop
DPAR 2	Annual	PSLOs/ Student Learning	Degree program: Certificate, Assoc, BA, MA/MS, or Minor	Program Faculty	Sih Hasin Committee	Programs identify areas of improvement and implement changes. Report the outcome of changes in the next reporting cycle.
DPAR 1	3 YR aggregate summary of DPAR 2	PSLOs/ Student Learning	Degree program: Certificate, Assoc, BA, MA/MS, or Minor	Program Faculty	Sih Hasin Committee	SC evaluates DPAR 1 and provides suggestions for improvement. All else is the same as DPAR2.

Report	Intended Schedule	Report Focus	Unit of Analysis	Key Stakeholders	Overseen by	Closing the loop
APR	Every 3-5 years	Overall Program Health	Degree program: Certificate, Assoc, BA, MA/MS, or Minor	Program Faculty, Evaluation Team, External Reviewer, and Board of Regents.	Deans	Evaluation Team members identify areas of improvement. Program faculty devise an Action Plan to include areas of improvement and associated resource / fiscal implications.

Actual Implementation of DPARs and APR

The previous section of this report, Assessment of Institutional Academic Assessment, surfaced challenges with the design of the assessment plan, its implementation, and the data it yields. The concerns have reverberating effects on the APR. The APR is a retrospective 5-year review of program data, including those related to PSLOs. In the absence of meaningful PSLO assessment, it appears difficult for programs to conduct meaningful APR. Submitted DPAR and APR data indicate both are submitted irregularly and deviate from the intended plan for each (see Table 2). APR data could not be aggregated because, between 2017 – 2023, only seven programs submitted an APR.

Table 2. Actual Elements of DPARs and APR

Report	Actual Schedule	Report Focus	Unit of Analysis	Key Stakeholders	Overseen by	Closing the loop
DPAR 2	Irregular	Program Goals and/or PSLOs	Inconsistent or unclear	Program Faculty	Assessment Committee (SLC)	No accountability for unsubmitted reports. Because data are flattened, programs are unable to identify areas for improvement. Caught in cycles of revising PSLOs and rubrics. Program improvements are cut and pasted from year to year, and there is no report on the effectiveness of changes made in the previous cycle.
DPAR 1	Irregular	Program Goals and/or PSLOs	Inconsistent or unclear	Program Faculty	Assessment Committee (SLC)	SLC evaluates submitted DPAR1. All else is the same as DPAR 2.
APR	Appears Irregular	Program Goals and/or PSLOs	Appears to be Degree program: Certificate,	Program Faculty, Evaluation Team,	Deans	Because Program Goals and PSLOs are conflated with each other, it may be difficult to prioritize and

Report	Actual Schedule	Report Focus	Unit of Analysis	Key Stakeholders	Overseen by	Closing the loop
			Assoc, BA, MA/MS, or Minor	External Reviewer, and Board of Regents.		close the loop on areas for improvement.

DC's Implicit Hypothesis for Assessment and Program Review

The APR directly links program health and resource allocations to student achievement of learning outcomes, as examined in DPAR 1 & 2. This linkage implies an assumption in the DC assessment plan and APR process which, expressed in an If... then... format, could be articulated as IF students regularly and successfully achieve intended learning outcomes (PSLO) THEN an academic program has adequate resources and is healthy (as measured through Program Goals). Within this elegant, implied framework, regular monitoring of PSLOs through DPARs can provide early indicators of program health or resource needs rather than waiting five years for an APR.

Actual Implementation of Implicit Hypothesis for Assessment

Although the implicit hypothesis seems straightforward when articulated in an if...then statement, the direct connections between DPARs and APRs appear to get lost. This may be due to a variety of reasons. Because programs conflate PSLOs with Program Goals it may not be easy to distinguish between achievement of student learning and program health or draw meaningful connections between the two. A DPAR process that does not connect PSLOs to resource needs, combined with a staggered 5-year APR cycle provides ample opportunities for information to get lost, become fragmented, or get separated from assessment findings. This may contribute to stakeholders not understanding the relationship between DPARs and APR.

Recommendations for Improvement

The gaps between intended and implemented DPARs, APR, and intended and actual hypothesis for assessment point to opportunities for improvement in DC's ongoing work to self-reflect and improve.

The irregular submissions of DPARs and APRs are telling. Non-compliance is a loud indicator of faculty misunderstanding and lack of buy-in to the entire assessment and improvement process at DC. To reinvigorate interest, consider the following in the order expressed.

1. Review and revise the assessment and program review handbooks, reporting templates, and timelines with emphasis on creating clarity, reducing workload,

eliminating redundancies, and creating efficiency. Specify and clarify the separate reporting timelines for DPARs and APRs.

2. In the revised handbooks, make explicit the currently implicit hypothesis for assessment.
3. Distinguish the purpose of APRs as separate from DPARs. Conduct workshops on writing program goals that are separate from student learning outcomes.
4. Explicitly connect DPAR, APR, and budgetary or resource needs for all stakeholders, including faculty and administrators.
5. Actively engage faculty in the handbook review and revisions, while making explicit why revisions are necessary. This will start to create the necessary transparency and buy-in.
6. Build capacity for assessment by conducting targeted training for deans, so they can effectively champion assessment in their schools.
7. Build capacity for assessment amongst faculty by having one-on-one listening meetings with each program. Although programs may share similar hurdles, the expression and impact of those hurdles are likely unique in each program. Individualized meetings create safe spaces for conversations to help expose and remedy those barriers.
8. Create dashboards to enable faculty to view their program data including enrollment, retention, graduation rates, and other elements necessary for APR.
9. Celebrate assessment wins by highlighting faculty and program achievements on the DC website or an assessment newsletter.
10. Monitor the impact of any institutional changes that are implemented to determine their effectiveness and modify as needed.

Assessment of The General Education Assessment Plan

The Gen Ed Handbook (DC, 2024) defines a Gen Ed mission statement and assessment plan. The handbook describes the Gen Ed curriculum as a “bridge to the broader world that is built upon a foundation of Diné history, language, and culture... [consisting] of the student’s ability to write clearly, think critically, speak effectively, reason mathematically, and creative self-expression that promotes social and personal responsibility, ethical reasoning, and civic knowledge and engagement to address local and global issues” (p. 3). A Gen Ed committee is assigned the responsibility for overseeing and implementing the Gen Ed program.

The Gen Ed core curriculum consists of coursework in five areas at the freshman and sophomore levels. Assessment is described as focused at the course level, only on artifacts of students who passed the course, and on an assignment that occurs towards the end of the course. The assessment process is structured similarly to a drug or medical trial with a double-blind randomized sampling of artifacts. Artifacts of students who passed the course are archived by the ADS, stripped of any identifying information, and assigned a number. A random sample of artifacts is drawn from this archive for program assessment. Faculty in each area of Gen Ed use an Association of American Colleges and Universities VALUE rubric (2009), or an adapted version thereof, to rate student work on each criterion (or, row). Row-level scores are added to get a total and then averaged by the number of rows in the rubric to gain an overall rubric score. The average cutoff scores are used to determine whether a Gen Ed area receives further evaluation. All Gen Ed areas in which 80% of the passing artifacts score a 3.0 or better do not receive further scrutiny. An area with 60-79% artifacts with a 3.0 score is monitored for remediation if scores do not exceed 80% the following year. Areas where 60% or fewer artifacts score 3.0 receive immediate intervention.

Recommendations for Improvement

The Gen Ed assessment plan has yet to be implemented because it was authored in Spring 2024. As it currently stands, parts of the Gen Ed plan – e.g. random sampling – are well-suited for courses with very high enrollments of 500 or above. However, because DC is a small institution, assessment of student learning is not suited for experimental or quasi-experimental research design. Rather, social science methods for smaller sample sizes are better suited for Gen Ed assessment. Thus, the following suggestions are offered for faculty and administrators’ consideration before implementing the current intended plan. All suggestions are offered to yield data that might contribute to meaningful Gen Ed assessment at DC.

1. **Bridge or Stepping Stones.** The Gen Ed curriculum is referenced in the handbook as a program, yet its assessment is structured around courses and Gen Ed areas. The handbook describes the curriculum as a “bridge,” which paints a picture of Gen Ed as a singular cohesive program. Yet, in intended delivery and assessment, the term “stepping stones” serves as a better descriptor. This model leaves students with the responsibility of interpreting the role of each stone in the transition from their education at DC to their future professional journey. The image of a bridge, on the other hand, brings to mind an architect, intentional planning, and a crew that builds the structure. This singular structure demonstrates to students how the various parts of the Gen Ed curriculum (Diné Perspective, Writing Clearly, Thinking Critically, Speaking Effectively, Reasoning Mathematically, and Self-Expressing Clearly) comprehensively contribute to their future professional success. As such, the faculty are responsible for demonstrating comprehensive coherence to students. If DC intends Gen Ed to be a bridge, the ideal assessment plan ought to reflect that. It currently does not.

DC stakeholders report that the college is currently aligning its Gen Ed curriculum with the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC). AGEC is an articulation agreement among Arizona public community colleges and universities for a common Gen Ed core structure, allowing students to transfer across institutions without loss of credit provided they achieve a minimum GPA. Students complete one of three AGEC blocks based on their choice of major within the Liberal Arts, Business, or Science and Math.

DC’s Gen Ed curriculum alignment with AGEC might be a natural pivoting point for its assessment plan to follow suit. Each AGEC block is structured around a core of courses to include First Year Composition, Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Physical and Biological Sciences. The Gen Ed assessment plan could be centered around this core with courses specific to each block forming a separate branch. This assessment structure will allow DC to gain a comprehensive understanding of its Gen Ed curriculum and delivery.

2. **Archiving student work.** With DC’s implementation of Canvas well underway, student artifacts will be automatically archived within the technology, making this step rapidly obsolete. Indeed, pulling artifacts out of Canvas to be archived elsewhere might become burdensome. If there is no mandate by HLC or another regulatory agency to archive student work, this step may be eliminated.
3. **Passing work only.** Including only passing student work in assessment will only yield information about what is working for those students who pass. Yet,

assessment is intended to discover information holistically – who is helped, who is not helped, what elements are effective, etc. By eliminating the work of students who do not pass the course, faculty lose the opportunity to learn how the program may be contributing to student failure. This unwittingly places the burden of improvement on students, without giving them any information about what they need to change to pass a course. That responsibility ideally belongs to faculty who use assessment data to learn how they can help students succeed. Additionally, assessing passing work only compromises DC's efforts to address the fourth HLC concern to identify students at risk and improve their retention and graduation rates.

4. **Random Sampling.** Canvas, after implementation, will allow faculty to view all students' performance on an assignment for each criterion on the rubric used to assess it. This will eliminate the need for random sampling. This comprehensive criterion-level view that includes both passing and failing students will provide faculty with greater insight into what curricular, pedagogical, measurement, or other improvements might support student success.
5. **Overall rubric score.** An overall rubric score will collapse the finer-grained row-level information that rubrics are intended to yield. Canvas can support a comprehensive faculty review of row-level information to determine how small shifts in a course might improve student learning. This is preferable to reviewing overall rubric scores which dissolve information about which changes might contribute to improvement.
6. **Canvas and the assessment plan.** In light of how Canvas can ease the burden of Gen Ed assessment, it may be worthwhile to revise the plan with Canvas' capacities in mind. A revised plan that leans on what Canvas can do could reduce faculty workload, allowing them to focus on making meaning of assessment data rather than generating it.

Future Directions

DC has a strong commitment to self-reflection and improvement of its assessment processes and outcomes. This is reflected in its hiring key staff and administrators as well as contracting with a consultant to increase assessment capacity. Furthermore, DC is actively implementing Canvas, a learning management system that has tools to ease the burden of program assessment. This report and the suggestion herein are offered with these resources in mind.

The suggested revisions of all academic assessment and program review plans may seem daunting at first but are offered to reduce faculty workload related to program assessment. Canvas can ease the workload related to collecting, archiving, and rating assessment artifacts, leaving faculty to make meaning of data, identify areas for improvement, and create solutions to improve student outcomes.

The assessment expertise the IP, DAC, ADS, and the consultant offer can increase faculty understanding of assessment, help them draw connections between assessment and resource needs, contribute to a sustainable culture of assessment, and support student success.

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Appendix A: Inventory of Submitted DPARs and APRs

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to Principles & Values	Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
Certificates						
1. Cert. Computer Technology	No/2021-22 No/2023-24 2021 APR^	4 PSLOs	Yes	No	21 & 23: Assess all PSLOs each year via Final Exams. Gather data continuously, assess when n=12/course.	2021-22: Set a threshold of n=15/course. 2023-24: Lowered threshold to n=12/course for assessment.
2. Cert. Geographic Information System	No DPAR 2021 APR^	-	-	-	-	Program not being offered. Retool program as a minor.
3. Cert. Navajo Nation Leadership	No/2019-20 2020-21/No No/2022-23	9 PSLOs	2019: Only SLO2 in CM 2020: Only SLO2 in CM 2022: Only SLO2 in CM	Unclear	2019: SLO2 2020: SLO2	2019-20: Difficulty with getting assessment data from adjunct faculty. 2020-21: Due to low enrollments, several planned courses were not taught. Program relies on adjuncts, due to few dedicated program faculty. Due to low course enrollments, use virtual platforms to enhance services and student recruitment. 2022-23: Low enrollments inhibited data collection. A Faculty Lead will manage tasks and schedules for collecting artifacts from all instructors.
4. Cert. Public Health	No/2021-22 No/2022-23 No/2023-24	4 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	2022: Assess all b/c of grant. 2023: Periodic, based on courses in which SLO is	2021-22: Assessment plan changed due to student enrollment in PUH 290/297. PUH 220 added to curriculum.

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs		Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to Principles & Values		Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
		Goals	PSLOs		Principles	Values		
5. Cert. Navajo Cultural Arts	2018-19/No	2	PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	2018-19: End of each semester.	2018-19: Lack of assessment plan and data not collected since program inception in 2015. Data collection begun in 2018-19. Low course enrollments. Lack of communication with adjuncts. Other issues noted as well, and faculty outlined resolutions for all of them.	2022-23: Same as 2021. 2023-24: SLO4 artifact revised from exit survey to graduate survey due to student progression through program.
6. Cert. Medical Assistant	No/2020-21 No/2021-22 No/2022-23	4	PSLOs	Yes	Yes	2020-21: SLO1&3; n = 25 Unclear when SLO2&4 are analyzed.	2020-21: Program started. First cohort (n=10). 2021-22: Continue plan. 8/10 in First Cohort passed national certification exam; 2/10 will retake. 2022-23: Continue plan. 10/10 passed cert exam within 1 st or 2 nd attempt. Collecting data for program accreditation.	
Minor Programs								
7. Native American Studies	2021-22/No Fall 2023/No	5 1	PGs PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Systematic, periodic assessment for each core course. 4-yr cycle for courses in collaborating schools.	2021-22: AACU VALUE rubric edited to include Tribal Critical Thinking Stages. Plan to reassess baseline for NAS classes, based on data collected. Start data collection in non-NAS courses after assessment stabilized within NAS. 2023: Data collection difficult in non-NAS courses. Create an Minor Exit Survey for completion prior to graduation.	

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to		Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
				Principles & Values	Values		
Associate of Applied Science							
8. AAS. Business Management	2019-20/No No/F2022	3 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2019-20: Course delivery revised. 2022: Pre- and post-tests in business and personal finance. Special assignments in Navajo Nation business and personal finance.	
9. AAS. Office Administration	No/2022-23 No/2023-24	2 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2022-23: Students not submitting pre- and post-tests in keyboarding. Tech issues with Cengage, thus reverting to Zoom and Blackboard for retrieval of student work. 2023-24: Revise timing of pre-test to collect better data.	
Associate of Arts							
10. AA. Business Administration	2019-20/No No/F2022	3 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2019-20: Change course delivery modality. F2022: Pre- and post-tests in business and personal finance. Special assignments in Navajo Nation business and personal finance.	
11. AA. Diné Studies	2018-21/No 2020-21/ 2020-21 2023-24/ 2023-24	1 PG 2 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	2018-21: Small n, validation not possible, revised assessment schedule. 2020-21: Hard to get program data from OIPR, faculty, and adjuncts. Low enrollments – want to do random sampling. 2023-24: Hard to collect artifacts from all faculty. Low enrollments. Inconsistent assessment.	

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs		Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to Principles & Values		Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
		PSLOs	PSLOs		Yes	Unclear		
12. AA. Early Childhood Education	2012-17 APR^ No/2019-20 No/F2020	7 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2019-20: Revised program assessment matrix. F2020: Revise course descriptions to meet AZ DOE cert reqs.	
13. AA. Education	No/F2016 No/F2017 No/F2018 No/2019-20 No/F2020	5 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	F2016: Assign faculty lead for assessment. F2017: Ascertain student learning styles. F2018: No program changes. 2019-20: Revised assessment assignment and reassigned PSLO. F2020: None.		
14. AA. Social Work	2018 APR^ No/F2019 2020-21/No	2 PGS 5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	F2019: Create program matrix, rubrics, and PSLOs. C19 disruptions in enrollments and assignments completion. 2020-21: C19 disruptions in enrollments and assignments completion.		
15. AA. Social & Behavioral Science	No/2019-20 2020-21/ 2020-21 No/2021-22 2023-24 /2023-24	5 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2019-20: None applicable. 2020-21: Several for each PSLO, including rubric norming, curricular adjustments, remedial instruction, and grading adjustments. 2021-22: Revise program assessment cycle from 4 yr to align with institutional 3 yr cycle. 2023-24: Several for each PSLO, including improving communication with students, restructuring assignments, tech training for students, revised assignment guidelines.		

Associate of Science

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to		Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
				Principles & Values	Program PSLOs		
16. AS. Agroecology	2015-16/No No/F2019	5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	2015-16: Reset target because of data issues. 2019: New instructors. Need to identify improvements.	
17. AS. Biology	2019-21/ 2019 2019-22/No No/2020-21 No/2021-22 No/2023-24	3 PGs 5 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2019-21: Revise assessment measure. 2020-21: Measure all PSLOs each semester. 2021-22: Same as 2020-21. 2023-24: Same as 2020-21.	
18. AS. Environmental Science	2016-17/No 2017-18/No No/F2019 No/2022-23	6 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	2016-17: Rewrite PSLOs to differentiate learning. 2019: Add Env Sci course. New instructors. 2022-23: Rewrite PSLOs to broaden focus beyond Bio.	
19. AS. General Science	2016-17/No No/2018-19 No/2019-20	5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	2016-17: None. 2018-19: None. 2019-20: All assessments done in all areas: bio, phy, and chem.	
20. AS. Health Occupations	No/2019-20 2018-21/No No/2021-22 No/2022-23	4 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	2019-20: Change assessment prompt. 2018-21: Wrote PSLO. Revised measures. 2021-22: None. 2022-23: None.	
21. AS. Mathematics	No/2018-19 No/2019-20 No/2022-23	4 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2018-19: None. 2019-20: None. 2022-23: Identified 6 program assessment improvements.	
22. AS. Public Health	No/F2016 No/2019-20 No/2020-21	4 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Yes	2016: Yes, see the DPAR. Plus, developing core competencies for a Bachelor's degree in indigenous public health.	

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2		Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to Principles & Values		Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
	2021-22/ 2021-22 No/2023-24							2019-20: Changed PSLO assessment cycle due to program modifications. 2021-22: Tech issues noted and plans to rectify with IT outlined. Unable to collect artifacts due to C19, plan to rectify. 2021-22: Removed a PSLO. 2023-24: None made.
23. <u>AS. Physics</u>	2019-20/ 2019-20 No/2021-22 2023-24/ 2023-24	3 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes			2019-20: None. 2021-22: None. 2023-24: None.
24. <u>AS. Pre- Engineering</u>	No/2018-19 No/2019-20 No/2021-22	3 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Every PSLO assessed			2018-19: None. PSLOs focus on program requirement courses. 2019-20: Same as 2018-19. 2021-22: Same as 2018-19.
Bachelor of Science								
25. <u>BS. Biology</u>	2019-20/ 2019-20 2019-2022 No/2020-21 No/2021-22 No/2022-23 No/2023-24	4 PPSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear			2019-20: Faculty left mid-year without submitting assessment data. PPSLOs listed on the Office of Assessment Bio page are different from those listed in the DPAR. Need to be corrected. 2019-22: Epigenetics is culturally sensitive topic and difficult to navigate due to students' lack of background knowledge. Final papers required multiple drafts and back-forth with students. 2020-21: Faculty want all PSLOs measured each semester. 2021-22: Same as 2020-21.

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to		Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
				Principles & Values	Principles & Values		
26. <u>BS. Public Health</u>	No/2019-20 2020-21 /2020-21 No/2021-22 No/2022-23 No/2023-24	5 PPSLOs	Yes	Yes	All PSLOs are assessed each year.	2019-20: Needs assessment for rubrics for several upper level courses. Indirect measures to capture mentor and employer perspectives. 2020-21: Same as 2019-20 2021-22: Added artifacts collected to improve SLO measurement. 2022-23: Added SLO5 2023-24: PPSLOs revised.	2022-23: Same as 2021-22. 2023-24: Same as 2022-23.
27. <u>BS. Secondary Education (Math & Science)</u>	No/2019-20 No/2021-22 No/2022-23 2018 APR^	8 PSLOs	Yes for: EDU and SCI	EDU: Unclear SCI: Yes	Unclear	2019-20: Identify...students within program to indicate proficiency levels. 2021-22: Faculty want to assess all PSLOs each semester. 2022-23: Same as 2022-23.	
28. <u>BS. Agriculture (General Agriculture, Plant Science & Animal Science)</u>	No/2022-23	5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	2021-22, the reported year of data, was the first implementation of assessment. No adjustments suggested.	
29. <u>BS. Biomedical Science</u>	No/2021-22 No/2022-23	4 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear – Perhaps annual	2021-22: New program. No improvements needed. 2022-23: Same as 2021-22.	
Bachelor of Fine Arts							
30. <u>BFA. Creative Writing</u>	None	4 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	None reported.	
31. <u>BFA. Graphic Arts</u>	F2023/2022- 23 2023 APR^	5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	2022-23: Revise assessment for SLO 4&5.	
32. <u>BFA. Painting</u>	No/F2021	4 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	None reported	

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to Principles & Values	Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
33. <u>BFA. Photography</u>	No/F2020 No/F2021 2023 APR^	5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes		2020: Review and revise assessment matrix to align with curricular revisions. 2021: Creating new rubrics and curriculum map.
34. <u>BFA. Rug Weaving</u>						
35. <u>BFA. Silversmithing</u>						
Bachelor of Arts						
36. <u>BA. Business Administration</u>	No/2019-20 No/2021-22 No/2023-24	3 PSLOs	Yes	Unclear	Yes	2019-20: Align lower-level Courses (100-200) with upper division business courses to improve BA Program. Revise the mission, purpose and goals to align with this new focus. Produce an incubator plan that promotes/develops business plans (PSLO 4). 2021-22: Based on the Spring 2021 degree program assessment report, the School of Business assessed two senior level courses for three academic years. With this new assessment cycle, more artifacts could be archived for review. 2023-24: Same as 2021-22
37. <u>BA. Education (Multicultural)</u>	None	9 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	None reported.
38. <u>BA. Elementary Education</u>	F2018 No/2018-19 2019-20/ F2020	8 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	Unclear	F2018: No improvements planned to overall assessment plan or tools, but each faculty may revise within their courses.

Program	DPAR 1 / DPAR 2	Program Goals & PSLOs	Curriculum Matrix	Mapping to Principles & Values	Cycle of Collecting and Analyzing PSLO Data	Recommendations for Improvement
39. BA. Diné Studies	No/2019-20 No/2022-23 No/2023-24	6 – 9 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	All classes are assessed.	2020: Review and revise course descriptions to meet AZ DOE cert requirements. 2019-20: Developed assessment prompts and rubrics. 2023-24: Small Ns in courses and assessments are a hurdle to meaningful analysis.
40. BA. Psychology	2018-19/ 2018-19 No/2019-20 No/2020-21 No/2021-22 No/2022-23	5 PGs 5 PSLOs	Yes	Yes	4-year cycle	None reported in previous years. 2022-23: Revised assessment schedule to 5 year cycle. Assessment plan revised to assess a scheduled class and one in which difficulties arose.
Master of Science						
41. Master of Science in Biology	No/2022-23 No/2023-24	4 PGs 8 PSLOs	Yes Nothing mapped to BIO 501	Yes	No	2022-23: Faculty want all PSLOS measured* each semester. 2023-24: Changed to systematic, periodic measurement for each course.
Programs NO LONGER OFFERED						
AS. General Science						
AA. Computer Information System						
AA. Liberal Arts						
Cert. Digital Arts						
Cert. Irrigation Tech						
Cert. Natural Resources						

^Although APR submissions are noted in this table, their content is not.

*It is unclear what “measurement” means within the program context.