To: Rachel Boon, Chief Academic Officer, Iowa Board of Regents
From: Megan Vogt-Kostner, Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning
Re: Report on 2021-2022 Compliance with Continuous Quality Improvement Legislation
Date: May 23, 2022

The attached report provides information on course-level assessments conducted at the University of Northern Iowa in compliance with Iowa Code Section 262.9 (36). Faculty teaching courses enrolling 100 or more students during the 2021-2022 academic year were asked to respond to a survey, either individually or in collaboration with other faculty teaching the same course, to collect information on the ways they monitor and work to strengthen student learning in their courses. During the 2021-2022 academic year, 80% of courses were offered in-person/on-site or in a hybrid model, with only a small number of courses entirely online. For Spring 2022, 78% of courses at UNI were delivered in-person or using a hybrid format.

In addition to requesting information on the types of course-level assessments being implemented and the kinds of improvements made in response to what was learned from the assessments, the survey also requested information related to the ways in which learning outcomes were communicated to students. Data showed that 98% of the faculty responding to the survey included learning outcomes for their courses on the course syllabus. Learning outcomes were also communicated verbally (76%), on a course website and/or eLearning course web page (70%), in PowerPoint presentations provided during the course (49%), and presented with information for specific assignments for the course (44%).

The attached report provides information on the types of course changes faculty reported making as a result of what they learned from their assessments of student learning. It is worthy of note the top five changes reported all directly relate to the student learning experience — modifying assignments students are asked to complete, reconstructing student activities or experiences in the course, adjusting class time spent on specific course content, reviewing, revising and updating course texts or other classroom resources, and lastly, developing study materials with key concepts and practice exercises to provide students a better classroom experience.

In addition to multiple-response survey items, the 2021-2022 CQI faculty survey included an open-ended question asking faculty to provide more detailed information on changes they had made to their classes as a result of their assessment of student learning; over seventy percent of the survey respondents shared stories of their experiences. An examination of these personal narratives showed several reoccurring themes — departments (or teams) meeting weekly to discuss and assess better practices to facilitate student learning over key course material, enhancing the use of technology post-pandemic through new material or units, creating anonymous feedback surveys to better understand student learning and classroom engagement, creating understandable (and measurable) learning objectives with rubrics for student accessibility, providing additional online resources to enhance student engagement outside of the classroom, allocating additional in-class time to review and capture the importance of course goals and learning outcomes for each graded assignment, and encouragement of student meetings outside of class for supplemental one-on-one assistance. Selected examples of the narratives collected are included in the attached report.

At UNI we believe in the power and critical importance of good teaching. The Continuous Quality Improvement survey for this year again provides evidence of this belief in action.

University of Northern Iowa CQI Report for 2021-2022

This page provides summary information on the types of assessment strategies used during 2021-2022; the following pages provide an overview of the types of course improvements undertaken by faculty and examples of assessments and related activities in selected courses.
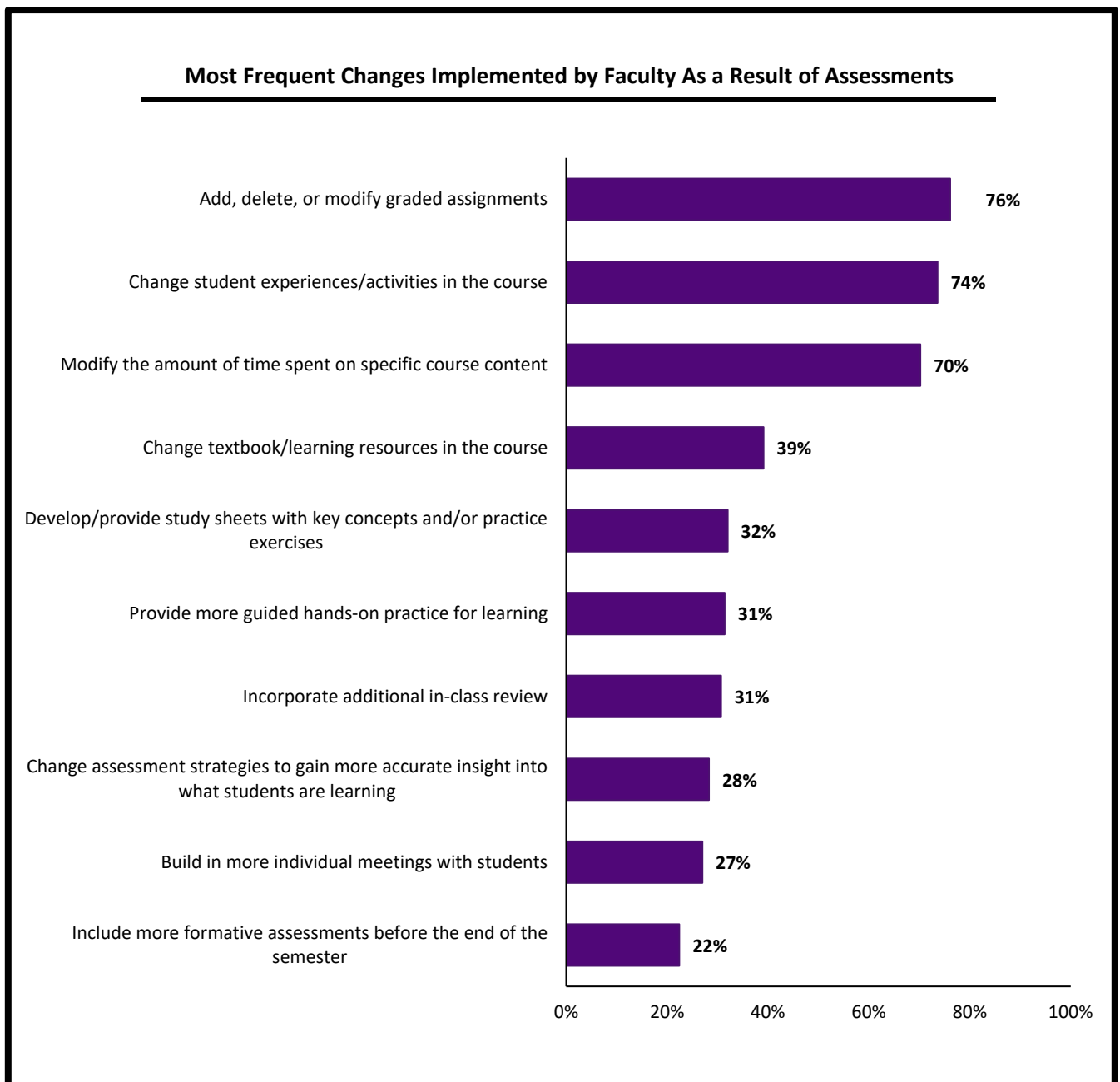
Continuous Improvement in University of Northern Iowa Courses	
May 2022	Report Date
Summer 2021 – Spring 2022	Report Period
Number of Courses, Students Enrolled	
107 courses *579 sections*	Total Number of Courses Offered (enrollment > or = 100 students) Total Number of Sections Offered in 2021-2022 (enrollment > or = 100 students)
87,676	Total Student Enrollment in Courses
Number of Courses[1] Utilizing Continuous Improvement Strategies and Percent of Respondents Reporting	
218	Locally-developed tests or quizzes (68%)
217	Graded homework assignments (67%)
184	Student understanding of content and concepts as revealed in class discussions (57%)
174	Observation of students doing in-class activities (54%)
142	Specific questions on tests or quizzes (44%)
140	Written or oral student reflections on their experiences and/or learning (43%)
109	Rubrics or evaluation forms for individual project(s) (34%)
108	Discussion in individual meetings with students (34%)
95	Journaling, discussion boards, blog (30%)
92	Faculty assessment of presentations or projects (29%)
75	Formative (non-graded) assessments over the term (23%)
67	Faculty discussion of student performance across sections of course (21%)
65	Faculty review of mid-term and final grade distributions (20%)
65	Rubrics or evaluation forms for culminating project(s) (20%)
64	Comparison of course syllabi and/or assignments across sections (20%)
59	Peer assessment of presentations or projects (18%)
56	Survey of student perceptions of their learning (17%)
42	Evaluation of student performance in simulations activities (13%)
36	Field experience evaluation forms (11%)
24	Pre- & post-tests (7%)
22	Clicker questions or polling (7%)

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[1] **Total number of strategies in use is greater than the total number of courses because many courses employ more than one continuous improvement strategy.**

Other responses included the following methods for assessing student learning: student's performance in subsequent courses, review of course or program student portfolios, department/program monitoring of DFW rates, comparison of performance with professional licensure requirements, the use of Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID), external reviewer assessments of presentations or projects, juried exhibits or performances, full-semester course/research papers, small group session involvement, and student teaching observations.

Overview of CQI Activities at UNI

As part of the Qualtrics survey administered in April and May 2022 to faculty teaching courses serving 100 or more students per academic year, one question asked faculty what kinds of changes they were making as they gathered assessment information and worked on continuous improvement. The table below summarizes their responses.

Most Frequent Changes Implemented by Faculty As a Result of Assessments

Change	Percentage
Add, delete, or modify graded assignments	76%
Change student experiences/activities in the course	74%
Modify the amount of time spent on specific course content	70%
Change textbook/learning resources in the course	39%
Develop/provide study sheets with key concepts and/or practice exercises	32%
Provide more guided hands-on practice for learning	31%
Incorporate additional in-class review	31%
Change assessment strategies to gain more accurate insight into what students are learning	28%
Build in more individual meetings with students	27%
Include more formative assessments before the end of the semester	22%

<h1 style="text-align:center">Selected Examples of Assessments</h1>

The Qualtrics survey responses for the 2021-2022 academic year included many examples of the efforts made by faculty to keep their courses current and engaging and to support student learning. The examples below are just a very small sample of those provided.

Social Psychology (PSYCH:2203): During lectures I integrate examples and real-world applications drawn from current events or popular culture, but in an effort to further encourage every student to make these connections I created a series of small activities across the semester where students can engage with concepts directly outside of class and write about their experiences and thoughts regarding the demonstration. For instance, one activity asks students to identify a social norm they have observed in their everyday life (e.g., personal space within a grocery store checkout line). The activity then asks them to propose and actually engage in some form of norm violation for that situation. An important note here is that students are asked not to violate any norm that would cause themselves or others any direct harm and/or engage in any illegal activity. My students not only identify wonderful social norms-which would often be invisible to them-but their observations of these norms and the violations they invent clearly illustrate a sophisticated understanding and interest in social psychology.

Literacy for Intermediate Content Area (LITED:3116): This course is part of an embedded cohort model/PDS setting. The classroom connections are flexible because we are on site and the content was shifted to better meet the needs of the elementary classroom (4th grade) and the student learning outcomes around reading/writing and speaking/listening. We focused on small group instruction around vocabulary and literacy devices with the connection to state standards and the school curriculum. This was a shift from a previous semester where the focus was more broadly reading /writing. Students co-planned with me in the university classroom at the school, then implemented the lesson and returned to debrief. The growth UNI students demonstrated in planning over consecutive weeks was directly observed in conversation but also demonstrated in a culminating collaborative unit plan completed toward the end of the semester. A mix of formative assessment through discussion, observation, and rehearsal alongside more formal evaluation of the unit plans strengthened the connection of pedagogy and content specifically for literacy standards linked to reading or writing. Future versions of this embedded PDS course I teach will integrate this approach but also hope to build in a structured peer or self-reflection protocol for more comprehensive feedback beyond the instructor.

Abnormal Psychology (PSYCH:3403/5403): Due to conditions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and other student challenges (e.g., finances, work schedules), I broadened my face to face class to be more accessible to students. In the Fall semester, I provided all students previous recordings of my lectures to assist those unable to attend class. Furthermore, in response to a number of students not having access to the textbook in my Abnormal Psychology courses, I consulted with the library, carefully reviewed numerous textbooks, and adopted two open access textbooks in my face-to-face Abnormal Psychology course in the spring semester. In contrast to previous semesters, I have not had any concerns expressed about accessibility to the textbooks. Finally, I continued to revise a term paper focusing on movies portraying mental illnesses to provide a learning experience that is engaging and relatable to students, and facilitate critical thinking on a number of topics. Overall, these strategies have engaged students more into the course material.

Visual Perceptions (ARTHIST:1004): This year I incorporated a new presentation style called Pecha Kucha. This is a style of presenting that focuses on visual story telling by creating a fixed format of 20 image-based slides that show for 20 seconds each. Students must use this formula to present their final formal research on the relationship between course content and an Iconoclast of their choosing. Presentations may be pre-recorded or given orally in class. This 7-minute presentation guides student to stay on track with their ideas and provide only the most pertinent information to demonstrate their understanding of course objectives and learning outcomes. Also, students must include an aspect of their personal creative process discovered through course assignments and how they compare to the creative process found in their researched individual. This new presentation style has created a fun and fast means in which students learn about new topics and ideas from each other that are tied back to the course. Furthermore, this is discussed on the platform Packback where each student must name and discuss a presentation they found most compelling. The class provides support, insight, additional resources, and encouragement to each other on the discussion board. This has been one of the most exciting and fun new elements developed into Visual Perceptions!

Organizational Management (MGMT:3153): To give students a better application experience and to provide timely and improvement-oriented feedback, I modified an individual assignment and moved it from the end-of the course to the first part of the course. This way, students can use feedback to learn and grow while they are still in my course, and apply their learning in subsequent work. Noticing that students struggle with understanding the link between the organizational context and managerial practices, as well as making sense of motivation strategies, I created a team case analysis assignment where students are asked to apply knowledge of the course content to analyze a company and its motivation strategies. This assignment provides an opportunity for students to see how HR practices and motivation strategies are linked to the company's context and strategy. As a follow up to the team assignment, I ask students to reflect on teamwork processes while completing the team assignment. This individual assignment reinforces the managerial approach to teamwork and allows students to learn from experience. On a different note, participation in class discussions enhances learning. Some students choose not to engage in in-person class discussion. Assuming that reasons for this may vary (sometimes as simple as not enough time to listen to everyone willing to speak), I introduced options for ways of participating in class and sharing ideas. Students can participate in different modalities: in person or through blogs or journals on Blackboard. This is the second semester of giving students a choice, and I noticed that students who would otherwise keep silent are willing to share their perspectives on Blackboard. Some of the reflections and comments on Blackboard are exceptionally well thought-through and sharp. I would not know how deeply some students think about current topics if they didn't have the alternatives for participating.

Introduction to Sociology (SOC:1000): In the online sections of this course I have implemented the use of discussion boards to foster student engagement and assessment of the course learning objectives. I use a mixture of films/documentaries and popular readings as the topic of discussion boards and an opportunity to apply class concepts. Across sections of the course I have continued to refine the types of questions I ask in the discussion boards to focus more on critical thinking and application of concepts than lower levels of thinking such as route memorization of concepts or remembering of definitions. I have found that students are providing more in depth critical reflection on the films and content with critical thinking focused discussion boards. I have also found students engaging with one another much more on the discussion boards that require critical thinking.