

**To:** Rachel Boon, Chief Academic Officer, Iowa Board of Regents  
**From:** Megan Vogt-Kostner, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness  
**Re:** Report on 2018-2019 Compliance with Continuous Quality Improvement  
Legislation  
**Date:** June 18, 2019

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). Information for this report was gathered through a Qualtrics survey administered in April 2019. The survey was given to University of Northern Iowa faculty teaching courses enrolling 100 or more students in all sections over the 2018-2019 academic year. Faculty were invited to respond to the survey individually or in collaboration with other faculty teaching the same course.

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 93% of the faculty responding to the survey included learning outcomes for their courses on the course syllabus. Learning outcomes were also communicated verbally (75%), on a course website and/or eLearning course web page (47%), with information for specific assignments for the course (37%), and in PowerPoint presentations delivered throughout the course (37%).

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 that, of the top five changes reported, four deal directly with the student learning experience—the assignments they are asked to do, their activities and experiences in the course, the class time spent on specific course content, and to review or revise course texts and other learning resources. The fifth most frequently recognized course change noted by faculty was to change the assessment strategies to gain more accurate insight into what students are learning.

In addition to multiple-response survey items, the 2018-2019 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 half of the survey respondents shared stories of their experiences. An examination of these personal narratives showed several repeated themes— instructors reassessed and recreated coursework to provide a stronger connection between academic learning and real world experiences, instructors worked to become more transparent with students by emphasizing the connection between coursework, lectures, and student learning outcomes, instructors continuously assessed students' learning in the classroom and obtained feedback through in-class discussions, reflection papers, and course presentations, and instructors provided additional resources to support students by offering in-class time for discussion and coursework, individual meetings, and supplementary readings. 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 2018-2019

This page provides summary information on the types of assessment strategies used during 2018-2019; 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.

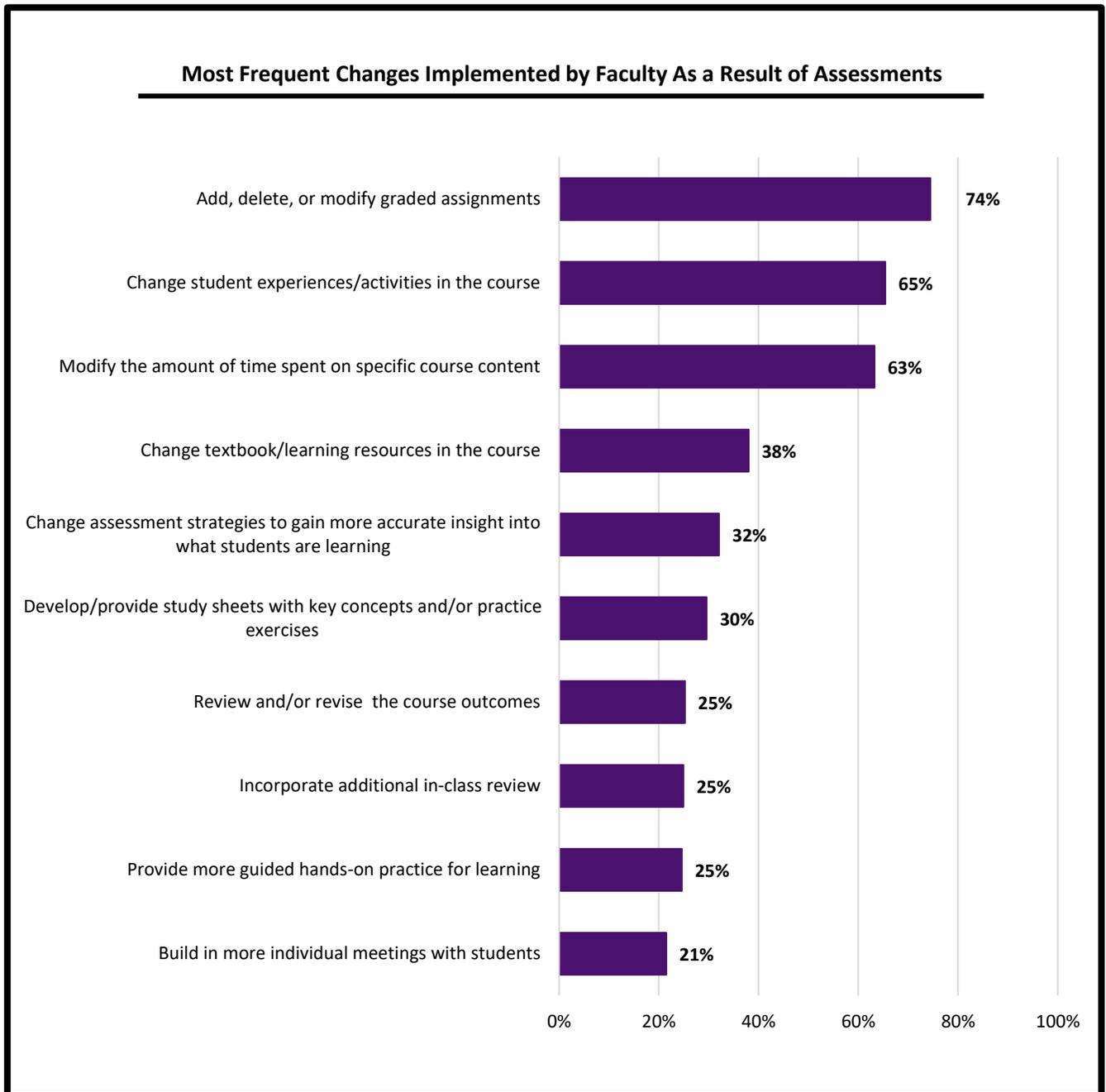
Continuous Improvement in University of Northern Iowa Courses	
<i>June 2019</i>	Report Date
<i>Fall 2018 - Spring 2019</i>	Report Period
Number of Courses, Students Enrolled	
<i>114 courses</i> <i>739 sections</i>	Total Number of Courses Offered (enrollment > or = 100 students) Total Number of Sections Offered in 2018-2019 (enrollment > or = 100 students)
<i>100,309</i>	Total Student Enrollment in Courses
Number of Courses <sup>1</sup> Utilizing Continuous Improvement Strategies and Percent of Respondents Reporting	
243	Locally-developed tests or quizzes (76%)
208	Graded homework assignments (65%)
193	Student understanding of content and concepts as revealed in class discussions (60%)
177	Observation of students doing in-class activities (55%)
133	Specific questions on tests or quizzes (41%)
126	Written or oral student reflections on their experiences and/or learning (39%)
110	Discussion in individual meetings with students (34%)
105	Rubrics or evaluation forms for individual project(s) (33%)
84	Faculty assessment of presentations or projects (26%)
71	Faculty review of mid-term and final grade distributions (22%)
66	Faculty discussion of student performance across sections of course (21%)
64	Journaling, discussion boards, blog (20%)
59	Comparison of course syllabi and/or assignments across sections (18%)
59	Peer assessment of presentations or projects (18%)
56	Formative (non-graded) assessments over the term (17%)
55	Survey of student perceptions of their learning (17%)
52	Rubrics or evaluation forms for culminating project(s) (16%)
31	Evaluation of student performance in simulations activities (10%)
27	Field experience evaluation forms (8%)
26	Pre- & post-tests (8%)
24	Student performance in subsequent courses (7%)

<sup>1</sup> 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: written lab reports, multiple public performances of course content, unit projects, analysis of responses to individual test items, analysis of the grade distribution on individual exams and how it relates to the item analysis, cooperating teacher observations, interactions with students during the end of course portfolio conferences, praxis scores, and the assessment of science teaching performances.

### Overview of CQI Activities at UNI

As part of the Qualtrics survey administered in April 2019 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.



## Selected Examples of Assessments

The Qualtrics survey responses for the 2018-2019 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.

**Children’s Literature (LITED:1044)** “Since Spring 2017, I have changed my primary method of instruction from lecture to discussion and inquiry. While our exploration will include some short lecture-oriented sessions, we will be including more in-class discussions and activities. As we read, probe, discuss, and synthesize, additional questions will tend to arise from our new understandings. So, our questions and discussions might lead us to different cultural, pedagogical, and theoretical pathways and therefore we may want to delve deeper into a particular topic. Through in-class dialogue, which involves respectful questioning of our and others’ stances, we expect to augment our knowledge base and our sense of competency and self-efficacy. To better prepare for an informative and engaging class, students are expected to illustrate their deep and critical thinking via class discussions and activities. Also, setting up peer-review sessions, I invite my students to provide feedback to their peers. I monitor their peer review sessions and give feedback on their discussions. My goal is to teach my courses in a way to provide a diverse learning environment, one that empowers my students in applying diversity to their future classrooms. I want my students to grow in their capability to read, analyze, respond to, and discuss children’s literature. Also, I want to expand my students’ access to and knowledge of diverse children’s literature. To assess student learning I examine the way they demonstrate their understanding of various ideological underpinnings associated with reading children’s literature. They will explore different ways to share their knowledge about multicultural children’s literature with others and unlearn the stereotypical single stories they might have created about other cultural groups.”

**Educational Technology & Design (INSTTECH:1031)** “As part of an ongoing review of the course, the six instructors and two graduate assistants meet weekly to make modifications on the language of the assignments, clarity of instructions, and currency of information, technology tools, and apps. Since all Iowa public schools are Google schools for this semester we aligned our course with Google Certified Educator (Level 1) Training and encourage our students to complete additional self-paced training and take the exam to obtain the Google Educator certificate. This is a pilot assignment. If successful, we may incorporate Google certification as a required part of our course. By obtaining the certificate students will have a proof of their proficiency in using Google tool for education and boost their self-confidence as future educators.”

**Elementary Teaching (TEACHING:3134)** “Elementary Teaching sections have a common assignment that is done across all sections of the course. This assignment is called the UNI Signature Video Assignment. The purpose of the assignment is for student teachers to receive individualized feedback from a group of peers, a self-assessment and observational feedback from us as instructors to help inform and guide their professional growth during student teaching. As students complete the Video Signature Assignment Process, I review their identified SMART GOALS resulting from the assignment to provide additional resources, seminar lessons and individual teaching to student teachers to help support their growth towards their SMART GOALS. Based on this individualized feedback, support and additional resources student teachers growth in that area, in most cases, improves on the their final evaluation assessment from student teaching.”

**First-Year Cornerstone: Integrated Communication I/II (UNIV:1000/1010)** One major goal/outcome of this course is student success: helping students recognize and utilize academic resources and support programs. These are not only discussed in class throughout both semesters of this course, but, as an example, I took my class to the Academic Learning Center and they were able to attend a workshop on study strategies. Within this goal, students are also expected to participate and engage in campus and community activities. Besides specific community engagement assignments required in the fall semester, my students did a group project this spring semester in which each group chose an on-campus organization and conducted informative research on that organization, and then from that research created a 8-10 minute video to teach the rest of the class about that particular campus organization. From the videos and the in-class presentations, several students committed to getting more involved in some of the organizations independent of any class requirement (i.e. volunteering at the new Panther Pantry, signing up for Camp Adventure, joining Dance Marathon).

**Humanities II: The Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment (HUM:1022)** “Humanities is a set of required classes that all students need to take before they graduate UNI. It is my opinion that the Humanities represent the courses which students have the least exposure to in high school. It is also my opinion that the things students learn in Humanities are qualities directly related to successful employment and lifetime happiness. Because of these things, I direct my classes as such. I have made the actual lectures more accessible to a greater number of students by keeping the slides enjoyable and uncluttered. I revise exams in this class each semester based on the lectures and the successes and failures from the semester before. I have also added items that are completed online at the student's leisure (within a time frame) that help to enforce understanding of the material while boosting grades. Finally, to assist critical thinking in a class so large, I use a discussion board and instituted a "discussion reflection" over literature sources which required each student to participate in discussion with me and their classmates over the material. Feedback from student's at the end of last semester suggested a growth in the number of students who felt engaged in the class and confident with what they learned.”

**Level 2 Field Experience: Teacher as a Change Agent (TEACHING:3128)** “Through watching students work in the classroom as early field experience students I have gained an understanding of what students go through as they move from a teacher candidate to teacher. As their confidence grows in the classroom the apprehensions they have about teaching disappear and the more risks they are willing to take as they assume a role as a teacher. This growth is the outcome of the Tasks we ask students to complete during the experience. Teacher candidates look at their mentor teacher's classroom from a 30,000-foot view then balcony view and then a close-up view as they experience teaching in the classroom. The evaluation of teacher candidates through this process provides me as well as the student a picture of the student's strengths and weaknesses as they move through the teacher education process. The experience teacher candidates gain through taking TEACHING 3128 allows them to have a blueprint for future areas of focus in teaching that can't be taught in the typical university classroom.”

**Physical Geography (GEOG:1210)** “I use a number of approaches to assessment, most of them with the purpose of learning how interested the students remain in the course material. It is not so important to me to determine how much of the specific material students retain, but how well they understand how the different course materials relate in a systematic way. It is difficult to 'test' this in a course this large as the tests and quizzes are all online. To overcome this, I allow the students to earn back 1/2-point on the questions they mark wrong by identifying WHY they gave the 'incorrect' answer and WHY the correct answer was more appropriate. I then use these explanations to find areas of the course where I should spend either more or less time.”