

Progress Report to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
from
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY
Annapolis, MD 21402

VADM Walter E. Carter, Superintendent

April 1, 2018

Subject of the Progress Report:

Documenting further development and implementation of (1) an organized, systematic process to evaluate the total range of programs and services (Standard 7); and (2) an organized, systematic process to assess general education student learning outcomes (Standards 12 and 14).

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I. Introduction

Commission's request for follow-up:

On June 23, 2016, to reaffirm accreditation and to request a progress report, due April 1, 2018, documenting further development and implementation of (1) an organized, systematic process to evaluate the total range of programs and services (Standard 7); and (2) an organized, systematic process to assess general education student learning outcomes (Standards 12 and 14). The date for the next accreditation review will be determined by the Commission when it revises the accreditation cycle.

Institutional overview:

The United States Naval Academy (USNA) is the undergraduate college of the Navy. The student body, referred to as the Brigade of Midshipmen, embody a broad cross section of the United States, representing every state and territory. USNA has a unique clarity of purpose, expressed in our mission, *“To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.”*

To achieve the mission of developing midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically, the Naval Academy is organized under the Superintendent, the chief executive officer of the institution, who is a Vice Admiral appointed by Congress. The Superintendent serves in a combined role that includes being both the commanding officer of a military installation and also a university president. Serving directly under the Superintendent are the Academic Dean and Provost, the Commandant of Midshipmen, and the Director of Athletics. These positions are most directly responsible for the mental, moral, and physical components of the mission, respectively; although, there is considerable overlap and integration between each of these roles and the three aspects of the mission. These three positions form the core of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), with other supporting members including the Chief of Staff, Dean of Admissions, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, Naval Academy Preparatory School Commanding Officer, Chief Diversity Officer, Director of the Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership, Command Master Chief, and the Executive Director for Strategy. The Academy Effectiveness Board (AEB), which is chaired by the Vice Academic Dean, Deputy Commandant, and Senior Associate Athletic Director, provides data, analysis and recommendations to the SLT.

The USNA program is generally completed in no more (and never less) than 47 months. The Academy offers undergraduate bachelor's degrees in 25 majors including the humanities and social sciences, foreign languages, mathematical and physical sciences, and engineering. All graduates regardless of major are required to complete core (general education) courses in English, history, political science, chemistry, physics, mathematics (including three semesters of calculus), electrical engineering, thermodynamics, fluid mechanics, and cyber security. Due to the technical content that is part of the core requirements for all students, all graduates receive a Bachelor of Science degree regardless of major. Additionally, students complete required

professional courses in areas including navigation, ethics, leadership, and naval law. The students also have military professional development and physical fitness requirements that must be met for graduation and commissioning. All midshipmen must maintain minimum acceptable academic and physical standards to remain at USNA. All graduates of the Naval Academy, with the exception of the handful of foreign nationals and a small number of cases involving rare and exceptional circumstances, are commissioned as officers in the naval service. For each graduating class of about 1,000, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ are commissioned as ensigns in the Navy, and $\frac{1}{4}$ are commissioned as 2nd lieutenants in the Marine Corps.

USNA has been continuously accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) since 1947. On June 23, 2016 the Commission acted:

To reaffirm accreditation and to request a progress report, due April 1, 2018, documenting further development and implementation of (1) an organized, systematic process to evaluate the total range of programs and services (Standard 7); and (2) an organized, systematic process to assess general education student learning outcomes (Standards 12 and 14). The date for the next accreditation review will be determined by the Commission when it revises the accreditation cycle.

In the period following our reaccreditation, the Academy has made substantial progress implementing assessment plans for both institutional assessment and holistic assessment of the general education (core curriculum) program. This report documents progress in these two areas. The first section, describes our development and implementation of an Institutional Assessment Plan, Standard 7. The second section of this report describes the implementation and actions taken as a result of completing the first annual comprehensive assessment of the general education (core) program learning outcomes, Standards 12 and 14.

II. Substantive Narrative and Analysis

A. Response to MSCHE request for further development and implementation of: an organized, systematic process to evaluate the total range of programs and services (Standard 7).

In the summer of 2016, USNA implemented the USNA Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP); an organized, systematic process to better assess the total range of programs and services at the Academy. With a clear [mission](#)

To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.

and [vision](#)

To be the premier educational institution for developing future naval officers from across the nation to serve and lead in an increasingly interdependent and volatile world.

well in place, and a great deal of assessment already being performed, the IAP was established to measure and evaluate intended mission outcomes and subsequently make appropriate adjustments to programs, practices and, if necessary, resource allocation.

In the months following the last Middle States visit, members of the Academy Effectiveness Board (AEB) developed the IAP with the support and collaboration of administration, faculty, staff and other key stakeholders; many of whom contributed to the decennial self-study. With a charter to advise the Academy's SLT, the AEB was the logical location for developing and maintaining an effective and robust institutional assessment process and monitoring and reporting the Academy's overall effectiveness to the SLT and the entire organization. The AEB is co-chaired by representatives from the major mission areas (moral, mental, and physical) and membership also includes functional entity heads from mission-support functions including Institutional Research, Admissions, and Diversity. It meets at least monthly to provide oversight and feedback on assessment activities. The AEB has existed since 2006, with a record of completing assessment projects that span the mission areas of the Academy.

As groundwork for development of the IAP, AEB members hosted an institutional assessment planning seminar by Dr. Jodi Levine Laufgraben (Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Assessment and Institutional Research at Temple University) in fall 2016, conducted a thorough inventory of all ongoing assessments, and reviewed best practices from other academic institutions' assessment plans. The resultant [USNA Institutional Assessment Plan](#) (Appendix A) charges each major mission/support area with developing annual plans to assess their contributions to institutional effectiveness, midshipman developmental outcomes and/or service

to the Academy (Figure 1). Under the IAP, the AEB is responsible for institution-wide assessment that crosses mission/support areas.

In the first year of the IAP’s execution, the AEB established a dashboard of key institutional metrics across the following key areas:

- Graduation and Attrition
- Admissions
- Professional and Moral Development
- Academics
- Physical Mission
- Post-graduation Performance

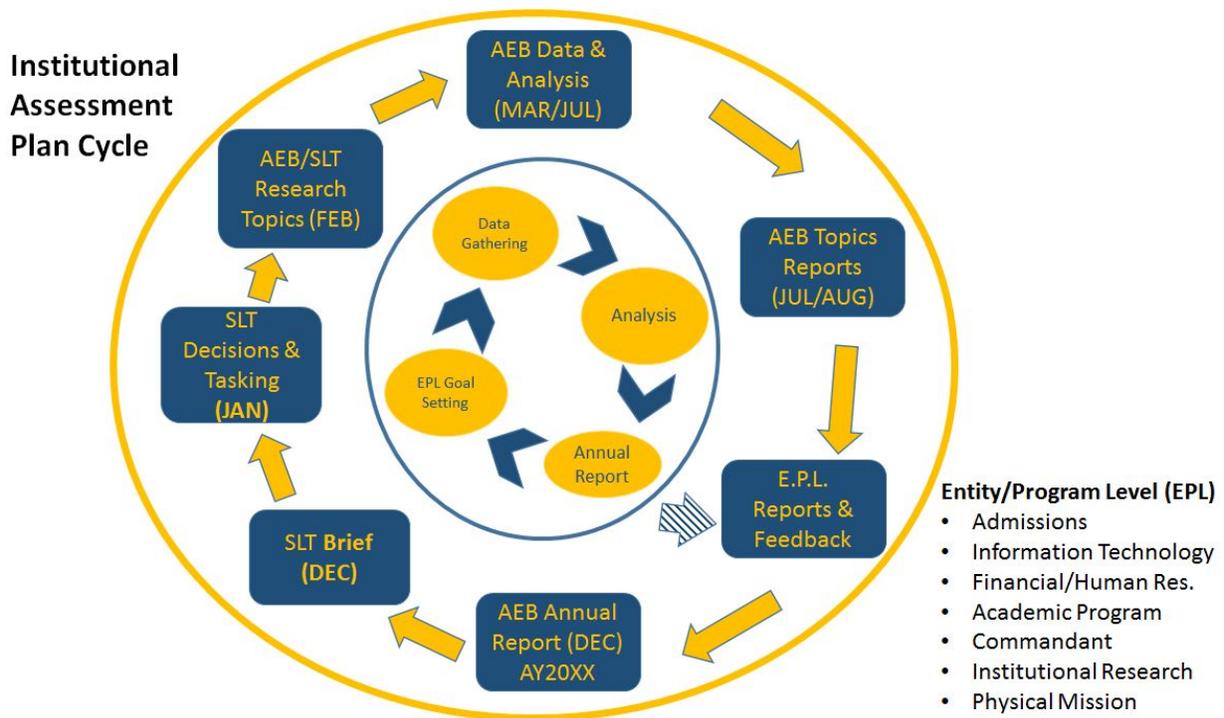


Figure 1: Schematic of the annual cycle for the IAP. The inner ring represents the annual assessment of support entities and programs within the Academy, and the outer ring, the institutional level cycle.

Where available, the metrics include goals provided by the Department of the Navy and the Department of Defense. These dashboard metrics were discussed among AEB members and included in the AEB’s [AY2015-16 Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Report](#) (Appendix B) to the Superintendent and SLT. Subsequently, the assessment report was [posted online](#) and shared with the entire USNA constituency. Based on the assessment and recommendations included in this inaugural report as well as internal mission/support area goals implemented as part of the AY2016-17 IAP process, numerous initiatives were introduced in an effort to improve institutional effectiveness. As examples, these efforts and results included:

- Improve Midshipmen Professional Core Competencies. Representing the approved [training requirements](#) for all officer accession programs within the Naval Service (Officer Candidate School, Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps, and USNA), proficiency in many of these core competencies is evaluated through a Professional Competency Assessment (PCA). Due to historically poor PCA performance in students' sophomore and junior years, several measures were implemented to improve performance:
 - Opportunities for professional development, mentoring and improved communication were created in the midshipmen daily schedule, including requiring midshipmen to have lunch with their squad and adding required morning meal twice/week with company leadership. Implementation of this initiative required successful coordination between the Commandant, Academic Dean & Provost, and Athletic Director's Cost Centers to deconflict competing requirements.
 - Improved messaging to emphasize Midshipmen Qualification Standards as a preparation for Fleet accession and service assignment.

The above measures were instrumental in decreasing PCA failures 20% in the past academic year.

- Develop metrics to better assess midshipmen professional and moral development. While assessment of student academic and physical development and performance is well established at USNA, proficiency in the leadership and moral mission of the Academy has historically been assessed via the lack of honor or significant conduct offenses...but this absence of a negative provides a poor measure of achievement in this mission area. At the direction of the Superintendent, a cross-functional team (including officer staff and faculty, recent graduates and current midshipmen) was assembled to review the current Aptitude for Commissioning System, the system meant to assess overall professional development, and provide recommendations for improvement. A subsequent six-month effort, including surveys and focus groups with midshipmen and staff, resulted in recommendations to improve the Aptitude for Commissioning System that were presented and accepted by the Commandant of Midshipmen and the Superintendent. Among the recommendations being implemented in the spring 2018 semester for 1/6th of the student body and expanded to the full Brigade in the fall of 2018:
 - Adoption of a Midshipman Development Report to assess performance of each midshipman every semester across five clearly defined areas of development: leadership, character, professionalism, teamwork, and judgement and tact.
 - Requirement for every midshipman to successfully execute a leadership position at the Academy during their junior or senior year as a requirement for graduation and commissioning.
- Refine the Service Assignment process to better optimize talent. The service assignment process involves assigning midshipmen, during their senior year, to the major warfare communities in which they will serve upon graduation and commissioning as an officer. These communities include Surface Warfare, Submarines, Aviation, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, SEAL and Marine Corps. The process attempts to make a best fit of Navy and

Marine Corps requirements, individual desires and aptitude. Over the past several years, approximately 80-85% of midshipmen received their first choice, but for certain hard-to-fill communities (Submarines and Naval Flight Officer) individuals were essentially “drafted” into their third or fourth choice to meet the needs of the Naval Service. In an effort to improve results, a deliberate campaign (including increased formal and informal informational sessions and 4-week submarine experiences as examples) was initiated to better educate midshipmen on the value and opportunities of these hard-to-fill communities and refine pre-selection screening processes to better inform midshipmen for which communities they had the most aptitude. These changed practices produced dramatic improvements for the Class of 2018 service assignment results (announced in Nov 2017):

- 92.7% of midshipmen received their first choice and 99.9% received their first or second choice. Only 1 out of 1,049 midshipmen didn’t receive their first or second choice.
- A “draft” was not required for either the Submarine or Naval Flight Officer communities.
- Realignment of resources dedicated to Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) exposure for midshipmen. With governmental funding essentially flat-lined and labor accounting for an increased percentage of USNA’s appropriated (Operations and Maintenance, Navy) budget, available funding for material, travel and professional development has decreased and is projected to decrease further in the future. Based on the associated analysis and the risk to effectively achieving USNA’s mission in the future, the SLT identified areas where non-essential funding allocations could potentially be decreased. LREC exposure overseas for midshipmen, while highly valued, is not a requirement for graduation or commissioning. Accordingly, the SLT recommended to reduce and subsequently eliminate \$2.3M of governmental funding for LREC travel. In conjunction with this decision, the Naval Academy Foundation (a 501(c)(3) organization chartered with raising philanthropic support for USNA margin of excellence priorities) increased their philanthropic goals supporting USNA International Programs.

The AEB’s [AY2016-17 Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Report](#) (Appendix C), with the addition of individual mission/support area assessment reports, reflects a maturation of USNA’s IAP implementation. Over the last two years the AEB has developed a sustainable cycle of providing feedback on assessment reports and plans in the fall of each academic year for each entity head, combining and collating these individual reports into an institutional report, presenting to the Superintendent and the SLT in the winter, and focusing on assessments that span mission/support areas in the spring. The briefing of the AY16-17 report to the SLT provided a good discussion of current trends with the AY15-16 report as a backdrop. While the process did not reveal any major surprises, it provided an opportunity to discuss changes expected over the next few years, including a major renovation project affecting all spaces in our primary engineering building that will require the consolidation of space across campus and result in larger class sizes during AY2018. This continues to be an all-hands effort to provide the best possible learning environment while maintaining all teaching, laboratory, and support functions for the core and majors engineering curriculum.

An abbreviated version of the AEB's AY2016-17 Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Report was forwarded to Navy leadership, including the Chief of Naval Operations. In addition to serving as an informative depiction of USNA performance trends, it highlighted fiscal challenges that are impeding continued performance improvements.

Going forward, the IAP will continue to serve as an organized, systematic process to better assess the total range of programs and services at the Academy facilitated by members of the AEB. The Superintendent and SLT see value in this approach to process improvement, both in terms of aiding decision making to maximize institutional effectiveness, but also in educating the entire USNA constituency on progress in achieving the Academy's strategic priorities.

B. Response to MSCHE request for further development and implementation of: an organized, systematic process to assess general education student learning outcomes (Standards 12 and 14).

In the spring of 2017, USNA successfully implemented an organized, systematic process to assess the general (core curriculum) education program that reaches, and is enriched, by all levels of the academic enterprise. Since 2006, assessment of student learning outcomes has been collected from individual courses that make up the Naval Academy's required core (general education) program. As part of the annual assessment process, maintained and supported by the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee (FSAC), departments collect, analyze, and use information to improve student learning at the departmental/program level. The 2017 academic year was the first time that USNA systematically expanded the assessment of course level learning outcomes within each core course to the assessment of the Naval Academy's *overarching* core curricular learning outcomes (CLOs) and hence its core curriculum.

The foundation was laid for this process by the Core Learning Outcome Task Force (CLOTF)¹ created in winter of 2013-14. CLOTF articulated the overarching learning outcomes of the Naval Academy core curriculum using a combined grassroots and top down methodology. The task force qualitatively analyzed existing course level outcomes developed by faculty from all core courses and obtained, via focus groups, input from officers with fleet experience serving at USNA. Through these two processes, overarching outcomes for the core curriculum were formulated by qualified professionals. These outcomes were shared with the Faculty Senate², department chairs, and departmental assessment coordinators; refined; and ultimately accepted in 2015. Following is the list of the nine core curriculum learning outcomes:

¹ The task force consisted of civilian and military officers from all academic divisions representing a broad swath of those who teach at USNA and the Chairs of the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee.

² The Faculty Senate is composed of elected representatives from the military and civilian faculty of all departments. Its committees work on issues generated both by the faculty and requested by the administration. It provides advice and recommendations to the Academic Dean.

- apply leadership skills;
- reason morally and ethically;
- apply principles of naval science and the profession of arms;
- solve technical problems;
- communicate effectively;
- critically reason;
- understand American heritage;
- interpret past and current world events; and
- demonstrate intellectual curiosity.

A detailed statement for each outcome is posted [online](#) (Appendix D) articulating how midshipmen are expected to demonstrate the outcome. In March 2016, each department contributed to a [curriculum map](#) (Appendix E) that shows the relationships between each core course, the applicable nine core learning outcomes, and the general education requirements indicated by MSCHE.

With this groundwork in place, members of the Academic Assembly³, Faculty Senate Assessment Committee, and the CLOTF held an off-site on 06 JUN 2016 in which criteria for a systematic general education assessment process were articulated and several possible ways forward were discussed. Key to progress was that assessment not be overly burdensome, that it keep faculty at the center of the discussion, and that it provide a bigger picture of student learning at USNA. Equally important was that assessment support an open dialogue and that it not be used simply for its own sake or to support an agenda other than improving the educational experiences of midshipmen. Tightening budgets led to an additional criterion of not requiring additional financial resources to implement and maintain new assessment activities. In September 2016, as part of its [assessment report to the AEB](#) (Appendix F), the Academic mission area committed to reporting on progress toward the assessment of the Naval Academy's Core Learning Outcomes as part of the institutional assessment process.

From these inputs, a plan was developed that built on the embedded, direct assessments⁴ already occurring in all academic departments. The focus is on using information collected as part of ongoing core course assessment activities that are clearly aligned with the nine core curriculum outcomes. In this way, we built on our existing strengths while creating the fewest possible redundancies and minimally stressing limited resources. This [plan](#) (Appendix G) was shared in the fall semester of 2016 and vetted in an Academic Assembly on 13 DEC 2016. Department chairs and those responsible for assessment indicated that the plan was manageable and sustainable. The component of the plan in which academic divisions facilitate discussions between departments was seen as necessary to provide opportunities to address the big picture meaning of student learning at USNA. [Instructions, a template, and examples](#) (Appendix H) were provided to departments and divisions on 15 FEB 2017 for immediate implementation. The

³ The Academic Assembly consists of the academic deans, division directors, senior professors, chairs of the academic departments, and other Academic Dean staff members and serves as an advisory board as well as a conduit for communicating information to the faculty.

⁴ Primarily student performance on exam items aligned with learning outcomes and outcomes based rubrics linked to appropriate assignments.

differences between the 2017 assessment instructions and those provided in previous years are that:

1) Divisions (administrative units similar to a college that encompass departments/majors aligned with areas such as Engineering & Weapons; Humanities & Social Sciences; and Mathematics & Science) provide a report that includes information regarding the

- a) effectiveness of the core educational program
- b) improvement/action plans,
- c) communication strategy, and
- d) when appropriate information about working across divisions.

2) Additionally, departments with core courses:

- a) explicitly align one or more of their course student learning outcome(s) with the appropriate USNA core learning outcome(s) and indicate the level of proficiency obtained; and
- b) provide an interpretation of satisfaction with core learning outcome results and additional lessons learned or actions recommended at the level of the department, division, or academic enterprise.

The faculty who serve as members of the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee consulted with departments upon request and also provided drop-in assessment assistance at the Naval Academy's Annual Teaching & Learning Conference in May 2017. Assessment reports for major and minor programs and core courses were submitted to the Associate Dean for Planning and Assessment (ADPA) by 15 JUN 2017. Division assessment reports were submitted to the ADPA by 31 OCT 2017.

In the summer of 2017, core learning outcome data was received for 51,634 cases from 31 courses. In all, 13 departments, and 4 divisions representing near total coverage of the USNA core curriculum contributed to the overall picture. However, to create a snapshot of student achievement in the core it was decided to use a subset, 28,874 cases from the 4 divisions and 13 courses. The subset is weighted by department and division and contains data reported for the final course in a course series (for example calculus III, in the calculus I, II, and III series) in which a core learning outcome was assessed by the reporting department. This provides a snapshot of student achievement for 8 of the 9 outcomes and all of the essential skills indicated by the revised standard 3 and the previous standard 14.⁵

⁵ General education outcomes were not chosen for assessment, rather the outcomes assessed were a result of the existing annual assessment activities and schedules in place at the department level for core courses. As a result not all general education outcomes were the focus of academic year 2017 assessments, however, departments generally assess a subset of outcomes on rotating basis with a goal of assessing all outcomes within a reasonable period of time (about 4 years).

AY 2017 Core Curricular Learning Outcomes Assessment		
Core Curricular Learning Outcome	Total Departments / Divisions Contributions for AY17	% Midshipmen Met or Exceeded Department / Faculty Expectations*
Apply Leadership Skills	1/1	93%
Reason morally/ethically	1/1	83%
Apply Principles of Naval Science and the Profession of Arms	2/1	85%
Solve Technical Problems	8/2	73%
Communicate Effectively	7/4	78%
Critically Reason	6/4	84%
Understanding American Heritage	--	--
Interpret World Events	1/1	93%
Demonstrate Intellectual Curiosity	2/1	64%

* Calculated using data from each department's final course(s) in their sequence; e.g, Physics II data used not data for both Physics I and II for demonstrating intellectual curiosity. Each division receives equal weight as Mathematics & Science and Engineering & Weapons often use entire populations; whereas, Humanities & Social Sciences and Leadership Education & Development generally use samples. Total number of cases from the final course in the sequence that addresses the core curricular learning outcome: 28,927.

The leadership within each academic division was provided with assessment reports from their departments and a spreadsheet with results disaggregated to the department and course level in order to examine contributions to each of the nine core learning outcomes. Further, the ADPA provided and discussed draft and final versions of the [2017 annual report to the Academy Effectiveness Board](#) (Appendix I) documenting both significant progress in the overarching assessment of the core curricular learning outcomes and the continued commitment to assessment of the core program.

In the fall of 2017, the Divisions of Humanities & Social Sciences; Engineering & Weapons; and Mathematics & Science each held meetings with faculty members from departments delivering courses required in the core/general education program to discuss assessment findings from across departments and find ways to collaborate where multiple departments contribute to the same outcomes. The division meetings complement the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee annual meetings that include department chairs and department assessment committee members with their faculty peers from the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee and the Associate Dean for Planning & Assessment. These meetings are held with every academic department in December and focus on maintaining and supporting ongoing departmental assessment activities (both in the majors and the core) and facilitating the use of assessment results to improve programs locally and across departments.

While the previous table includes results from the most advanced core course within a department that contributes to a core curricular learning outcome, the division reports indicated that faculty members made a closer examination of the integration of the core/general education program outcomes across courses. The division reports (Appendix J) noted that faculty teaching courses in departments that have different approaches to assessing these overarching outcomes led to challenges (and also engaging conversations) about integrating results. For example, it was noted that across the technical core courses, the average percentage of

midshipmen meeting or exceeding expectations increased as they progressed from year to year in the core curriculum. Specifically, the percent that “met or exceed” expectations for the *solve technical problems* outcome was 45% in chemistry, 65% in mathematics, and 81% in physics. This progression follows student progression across their required courses with chemistry courses taught during the freshman year, mathematics in both the freshman and sophomore years, and physics in the sophomore year. It was further discussed that the “met or exceed” percentage for this learning outcome remained high within the Division of Engineering & Weapons (82%) whose core courses are taught in the junior and senior years, which is after students have selected into STEM (~70%) and non-STEM (~30%) majors--the core outcomes remain the same regardless of major. In the Humanities & Social Sciences Division it was decided to invite a representative from the library to be included in conversations about working together to introduce and reinforce skills across the curriculum. The library is viewed as a possible unifying location for a narrative of learning in the humanities and social science core courses.

The divisions indicated that the fall meetings were the beginning of conversations that will continue. While discrete core courses and individual departments are able to indicate their effectiveness at developing midshipmen, determining our collective effectiveness has its challenges. As a result of the division discussions in the fall, leadership from the divisions and the Associate Dean for Planning & Assessment met in January 2018 to discuss:

- working definitions for the core curriculum map to be created in consultation with divisions and socialized with departments (completed--Appendix K), and
- a plan to refine linkages between courses and scaffolding of skills across time and courses (in progress).

Divisions further indicated that they will continue to meet with members of departments that support the core/general education program; strive to support department assessment activities to ensure that they are meaningful, but not overly burdensome; and manage concerns that are to be expected when creating a new and more inclusive assessment process.

Specific actions identified in the division reports include:

- creating shared rubrics for core outcomes that span departments within a division;
- using end of course feedback forms for indirect assessment of student preparation and retention across courses;
- exploring the use of sampling vs populations and new assessment tools; and
- determining how parallel efforts can be further integrated.

Additionally, the Office of the Academic Dean & Provost has been working to broaden conversations about student learning and academic integration by sharing results from the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE). The Academy administers the NSSE every three years with the last administration conducted in the spring of 2017. Results for survey items related to the core learning outcomes were disseminated to the division leadership and the Naval Academy as a whole through its annual report to the Academy Effectiveness Board (Appendix I).

Previously NSSE data has been used to facilitate conversations with faculty and staff about student academic engagement and social integration as part of the Academy's Center for Teaching and Learning's annual conference. Finally, results of the most recent NSSE administration will be used at a Spring Academic Assembly to promote a dialogue among department and division leadership about student activity and faculty expectations.

Leadership for maintaining and supporting assessment practices that are meaningful, manageable, and result in actionable information is present at all levels of the academic enterprise: Faculty Senate, Dean, Divisions, and Departments that support the core. The annual assessment process with departmental and core reporting at the end of the academic year, formal follow-on conversations in the fall, and training/support activities offered in the spring represent a well-documented, sustainable process. The division reports, the conversations among faculty from different departments that informed those reports, and the follow-on actions are indicative of the evolution of a culture of assessment that permeates all levels of the academic program.

III. Conclusion

Since the 2016 action to reaffirm accreditation of USNA, significant progress has been made. This progress report provides clear assurance and documentation that USNA has implemented an organized and systematic IAP for evaluating the total range of programs and services and an organized and (through the core curricular assessment activities) systematic process for comprehensive assessment of the general education (core) student learning outcomes. The evolution of a culture of assessment is present for both institutional assessment and assessment of the general education program with leadership in place for maintaining and facilitating practices that are meaningful, manageable, and result in actionable information. The codification of practices within existing guidance and instructions and the use of existing structures has resulted in these assessment activities quickly being folded into the existing battle rhythm of the Naval Academy.

The IAP will continue to serve as a tool for assessing and facilitating improvement in programs and services across the Academy with the support of stakeholders who serve on the AEB. The value of this process for decision making and educating members of the USNA team on progress in accomplishing the Academy's strategic priorities has already been noted at multiple levels including the Superintendent and SLT. The transparency now present in institutional assessment activities, culminating in the annual release of the institutional assessment report, has led to our efforts becoming more systematic and higher profile.

Assessment of the individual core courses and use of results has been robust at the department level for at least 10 years prior to the 2016 site visit. With the encouragement of the visiting team, USNA successfully implemented a plan to assess the nine overarching core learning outcomes that span the entire core curriculum. This has led to some erosion of existing silos and improved discussions of the scaffolding of student outcomes and experiences across the curriculum. While challenges remain for integrating results, the existing framework allows departments to use embedded, direct assessments that appropriately reflect the academic cultures and disciplinary approaches of the contributing departments. The division leadership, Faculty Senate Assessment Committee, and Associate Dean for Planning & Assessment serve as resources to continue facilitating conversations and collaborations across departments. Ongoing discussions have been valuable in making progress to coordinate efforts, better comprehend the extent to which midshipmen are demonstrating the core learning outcomes, and fostering a team approach to understanding and improving student learning.

IV. Appendices

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