



Southern Connecticut State University



Summary of Assessment Activities July 2008

Dr. Cheryl J. Norton, *President*

CSUS Board of Trustees
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A culture of assessment is growing at Southern. In 2007–08, assessment activities informed a number of major university initiatives, including new student orientation, the First-Year Experience program, faculty development, and strategic planning. Assessment of student learning will be an integral part of our recently approved 5-year academic program review process and our new general



education program which is currently under review. At the program level, an increasing number of academic departments are actively collecting program-level data about student learning in the major and beginning to use program-level data analyses to make curricular and other departmental changes to better serve our students.

Institutional-Level Assessment

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)

- Participation since 2004–05
- In majority of areas, Southern is similar to peer institutions, although it has consistently lower scores on supportive campus environment
- Relatively stable responses over 3 years; will be used to gauge effects of major initiatives currently underway (e.g., FYE)



- Results shared with campus community; informed strategic planning, enrollment management, FYE
- NSSE results analyzed by major or special classification (e.g., Honors College, Disability Resource) and provided to relevant departments
- Can tie BCSSE and NSSE results to academic record
- Longitudinal study ongoing—cohort of 354 students who completed BCSSE and NSSE in 2004–05; persistence related to cumulative GPA and score on items that measure supportive campus environment.

Assessing the Effectiveness of the First-Year Experience Pilot Program

- Used BCSSE, 3 internally developed self-assessments, faculty feedback, and academic records to assess the pilot First-Year Experience program
- Higher rate of persistence, lower rate of academic probation for pilot group
- Results used to revise the FYEP for 2008–09, including modification of learning outcomes for seminar, learning communities for all first-year students, modification of academic advisement, and ongoing faculty development and support



Noel-Levitz Adult Priorities Survey

- Administered since 2003; mostly stable results
- Academic programs, faculty knowledge, and quality of instruction rated highly
- Parking, safety, and administrative “runaround” continue as challenges
- Results shared with campus community; followed up with graduate student focus groups
- Changes made include enhanced lighting in parking areas and increased patrols, food service added to Davis Hall, plans for construction of parking garage
- Departments examining course offerings and schedules (e.g., new weekend Social Work program, increased online offerings)



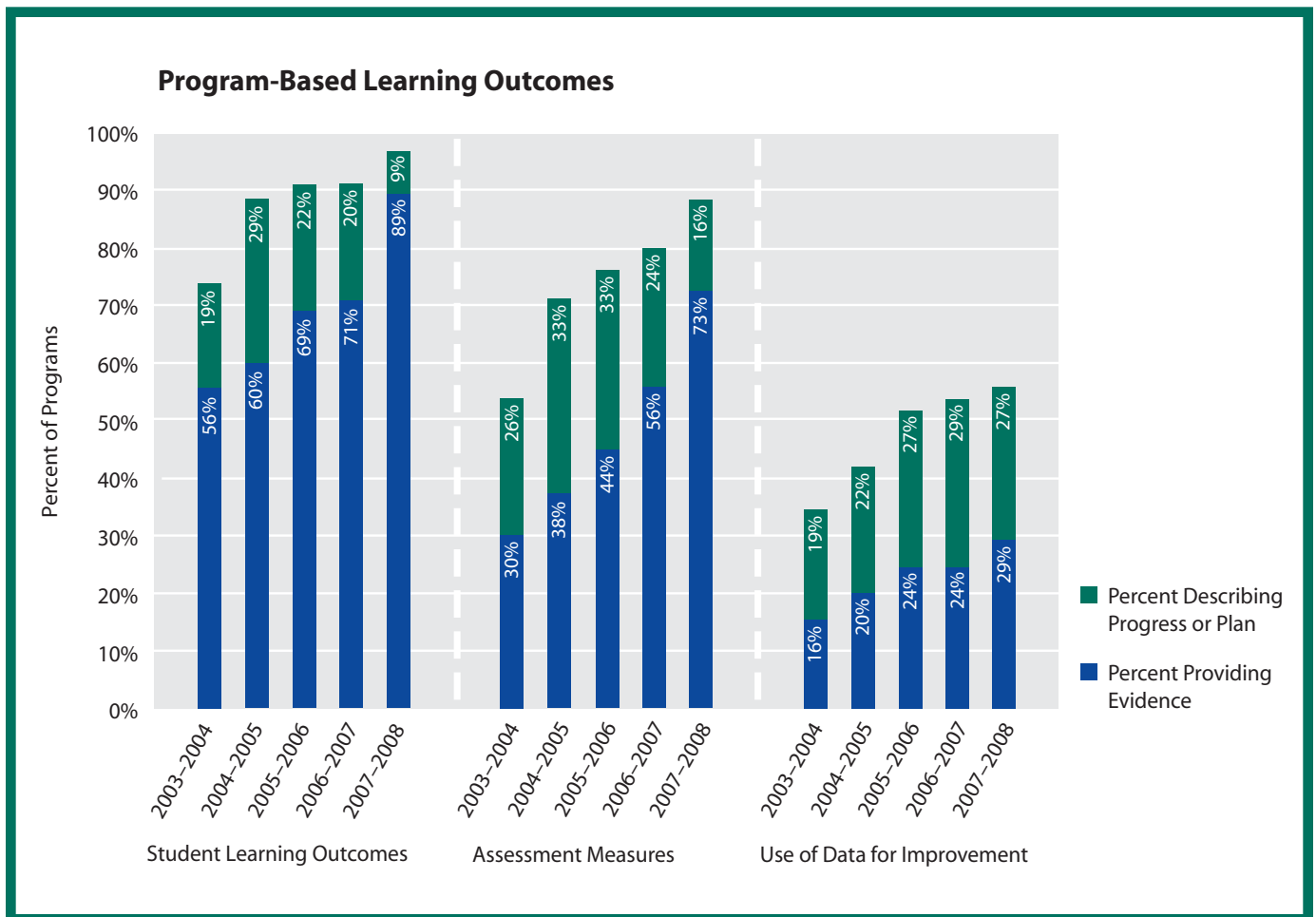
Program-Level Assessment

All departments have identified an assessment coordinator or liaison, and many departments are establishing assessment committees. Currently,

- 89% of academic programs (40 of 45) have identified program-based student learning outcomes for their majors (including undergraduate and graduate); an additional 9% (4 of 45) have commenced work to identify program-based student outcomes.
- 73% of programs (33 of 45) have clearly identified assessment measures at the program level; an additional 16% (7 of 45) have commenced work on identifying program level measures. Most of these programs are now collecting and analyzing program-level data.

- 29% of programs (13 of 45) have provided evidence that they are actively using assessment data to inform departmental decision making and program improvement; an additional 27% (12 of 45) have provided plans for doing so.

Change in Assessment Activities 2003–04 to 2007–08



Five-Year Academic Program Review

A process for the review of undergraduate programs on a 5-year rotation has been approved. The process is based on the successful program review process at the graduate level. Each department will complete a self-study and provide evidence that it meets the 17 standards.

Assessment of student learning and the use of data-based decision making are emphasized throughout the process. The process includes

external review and will be phased in over the next three years. The Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC) of the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum will implement the program reviews with technical assistance from the Office of Assessment and Planning.

