



# Engaging Faculty in the Assessment of Learning Improvement: A Case Study of the Scholarship of Assessment Program at UNC Charlotte

*Presented by*

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Faculty Engagement Show and Tell

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# University Context

UNC Charlotte is an urban, research, public, 4-year university

## Fall 2023 Demographics

- Total Enrollment: 30,298
- Undergraduate Enrollment: 23,981
- Graduate Enrollment: 6,317
- 170 majors in 79 programs leading to bachelor's degrees, 64 master's degrees, and 24 doctoral degrees
- 8 Colleges, each with an Assessment Director



2018

## Office of Assessment and Accreditation

- Structure
  - 4 Assessment Directors
  - Academic Affairs Division
- Variety of Initiatives: Scholarship of Assessment

# Evolution of the Design

The UNC Charlotte Scholarship of Assessment is an initiative led and coordinated by the Office of Assessment and Accreditation which supports faculty seeking student [learning improvement](#) in University courses.

Scholarship of Assessment - Phase 1	Scholarship of Assessment - Phase 2
Began in 2017	Began Summer 2021
Faculty Scholarships for One Year of Support	Faculty Scholarships for Two Years of Support*
Open to any assessment-based project	Projects must fall into one of the tracks
Individualized support from OAA staff	Cohort model with Individualized Support

## *Observations from Phase 1:*

- No guarantee that participants received the same information
- Few opportunities to develop community
- Quality of reports varied
- Could not see the application and analysis phases of projects



# Marketing and Recruitment

Three primary strategies

1. Broad scale messaging
  - Assessment and Accreditation website
  - Academic Affairs newsletter
2. Leverage our partnerships
  - College Assessment Directors
  - Center for Teaching and Learning
3. Referrals
  - From former participants
  - From other summer faculty development programs

# Application and Selection

## 1. Application Process

Online application - available on the department website

- Track of interest
- Problem statement
- Proposed Plan
- Objectives / Outcomes
- Potential Impact
- Understanding of Program Requirements

## 2. Selection Process

- Assessment and Accreditation staff review applications

# Sample Notification Email (2023)



Dear

Thank you for submitting a proposal to conduct a learning improvement study through the Scholarship of Assessment. The Office of Assessment and Accreditation is pleased to inform you that your proposal has been approved for funding. Congratulations!

In the next few days, you will receive a Grant Recipient Agreement outlining the terms of this award, but for now, keep in mind that your official project funding period will be May 24, 2023 - June 30, 2023; during that time, you will be expected to participate in four one-on-one consultations with one of the directors. These interactions will help you further develop your research plan, which will be due at the end of summer.

Therefore, please reply to this email to accept your award. In that reply, indicate your best days and times (morning or afternoon) to meet. Also, if appropriate, include any times when you will not be available during the funding period.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email or phone. Once again, congratulations! My colleagues and I look forward to working with you this summer.

Sincerely,

# Program Benefits - Faculty View

- *Financial support* in the form of a \$1000 mini-grant for each summer
- *Assessment support:* Assessment directors hold at least 4 meetings with faculty to help them
  - refine the project scope (two tracks)
  - review student learning data,
  - develop targeted educational interventions,
  - implement interventions, and
  - collect and analyze data to investigate the impact of the intervention on student learning.
- *Publication support:* Assist them in submitting work for publication

# Phase 2 Assessment

*Observations from Phase 1 (one year):*

- No guarantee that participants received the same information
- Few opportunities to develop community
- Quality of reports varied
- Could not see the application and analysis phases of projects

*Evidence from Phase 2 (two year):*

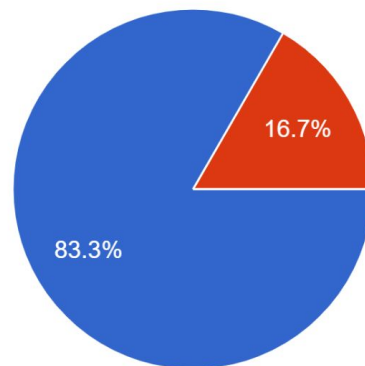
- Conducted an End of Program survey
- Engagement suffered
  - Workshop attendance was spotty
  - Did not submit final reports



# Outcome: Sustained Impact

During the program, you introduced a new activity into your teaching practice. Assuming you have a similar teaching opportunity in the future, how likely...nue this teaching practice over the next year or so?

6 responses

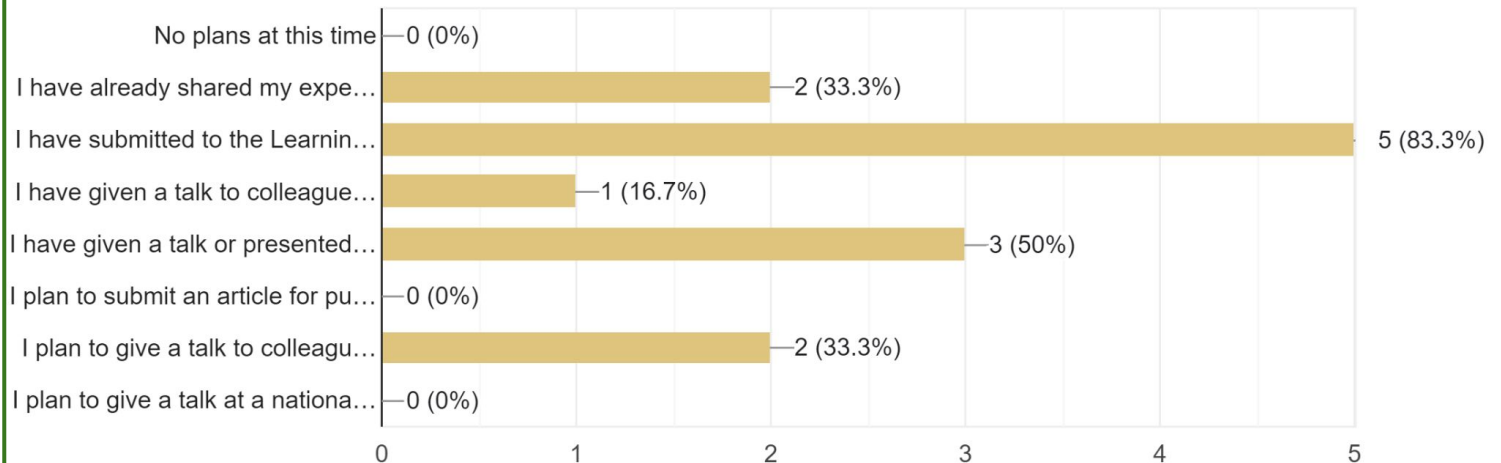


- Very likely I will continue with this practice, in some form
- Somewhat likely I will continue with this practice, in some form
- Unlikely that I will continue this practice
- Very unlikely that I will continue this practice
- I'm not certain

From Summer 2022 Cohort

# Outcome: Dissemination of Results

Do you have plans to share your knowledge and experiences with others? Choose all that apply.  
6 responses

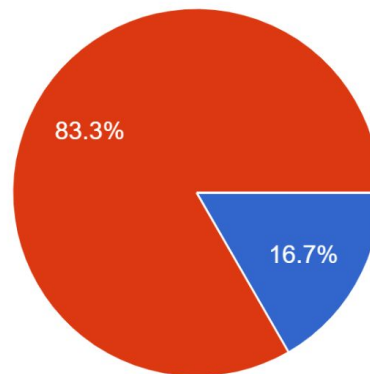


From Summer 2022 Cohort

# Outcome: Increased Capacity

Compared to two years ago, how would you describe your motivation and ability to conduct research on the assessment of learning improvement?

6 responses



- My motivation and ability have increased significantly.
- My motivation and ability have increased somewhat.
- My current motivation and ability is about the same as it was two years ago.
- My motivation and ability have decreased compared to two years ago.
- I'm not sure.

From Summer 2022 Cohort

# Other Feedback

I really liked the model where I was paired with someone from the Assessment office to work on my project. I would highly recommend a paired set up, as I found the one-on-one meetings most impactful for setting up what I wanted to do.

Setting aside dedicated time for writing was a stroke of genius, and extremely helpful in supporting the hardest part of these sorts of projects: finishing up.

The workshops were some of the best I've had on campus.

I got really discouraged because I wasn't able to pull the data we wanted from Canvas. I think that challenge was more specific to this cohort

# Phase 2.5

## Scholarship of Assessment Overview - 2023

	Meeting #1	Meeting #2	Meeting #3	Meeting #4
PREPARATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the application</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation Fidelity PPT</li> </ul>
OBJECTIVES OR TOPICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orient the instructor to the goals and structure of the program</li> <li>Establish rapport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing Learning Interventions</li> <li>Establishing the Context and Current State</li> <li>Points of Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Methods of Assessment</li> <li>Properties of a Method (Validity, Reliability)</li> <li>Designing for Implementation and Evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize the research plan and timeline</li> </ul>
ACTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to establish the problem statement, course, learning dimension, etc.</li> <li>Provide info about learning best practices</li> <li>Request syllabus or course learning outcomes</li> <li>Collect contact information</li> <li>Develop meeting schedule</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss research related to the topic</li> <li>Discuss and refine the proposed intervention</li> <li>Brainstorm about related interventions</li> <li>Identify the data you will need to establish the current state (and future state)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and discuss the data about current state</li> <li>Discuss relevant research</li> <li>Establish the methodology in greater detail (what, when, how)</li> <li>Will this method tell us what we want to know?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the plan and provide feedback</li> <li>Discuss impact and anticipated learning change</li> <li>Discuss implementation fidelity &amp; strategies for recordkeeping</li> <li>Review expectations for the final report</li> </ol>
EXPECTED OUTPUT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refined problem statement or research question</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Requests to Mitch</li> <li>Description of Context and Current State</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary timeline &amp; data needs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Report</li> <li>Plan for AY Follow up</li> </ol>

### Additional Components:

Sustained engagement during the academic year

No formal assessment yet



# Challenges and Lessons Learned

## 1. Challenges

- ✓ Recruiting participants (45 faculty have completed thus far)
- ✓ Identifying new participants
- ✓ Designing for Accountability
- ✓ Timing
- ✓ Staff capacity

## 2. Lessons Learned

- Divide the grant stipend into two distributions.
- Require some form of dissemination of results.
- Offer a variety of incentives to motivate participants.
- Collecting faculty feedback is important.


# Incentives

Publish the names and abstracts on our website.

Announce recipients in campus-wide publications.

Assist them in getting their work published in learning improvement online publications.

Encourage them to present at conferences

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT**  
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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**LEADERSHIP FOR ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT**

- Excellence In Planning and Assessment
- Faculty Showcase
- Grand Challenges in Assessment Project
- Scholarship of Assessment Grant Recipients
- Scholarship of Assessment Faculty Learning Community Grants
- 2021-2022 Recipients**

## 2021-2022 RECIPIENTS


**Equity in Assessment Track**

**Angela Mitchell - Writing, Rhetoric and Digital Studies**  
Project Title: Equitable Assessment Practices for First-Year Assignments



Project Description: Institutional data indicate underrepresented minorities (URMs) received Ds and Fs at a higher rate than other students in First-Year Writing courses. We seek knowledge with what different races/ethnicities struggle or succeed on the program's writing assignments, and are interested in pursuing recent research on aspirational criteria for assessment that is being use to create equity in writing evaluation. As a gateway course, we believe that this work will serve to increase overall retention from the first-to second year for underrepresented minorities.

**Ellen Wisner - Biological Sciences**  
Project Title: Creating Self-reflective Assessment Designed to Reduce the Achievement Gap



# Other Initiatives to Encourage Leadership for Assessment



Learn more at:

<https://assessment.charlotte.edu/leadership-assessment-and-improvement/>



# Questions?



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