

NMJC Institutional Assessment Summary 2018-2023

NMJC's mission, success through learning, is measured in how well graduates communicate, critically think, problem solve, and interact within their communities as they pursue education and career goals after attending NMJC. Assessment of student learning is a means of providing evidence of value in courses, programs of study, and degrees earned at NMJC. This report summarizes assessment efforts for the last several academic cycles as well as responsive initiatives.

Detailed data and analysis can be found in department and program level reports. This document provides combined results of applicable outcomes from department and program reports for an internal look at the overall institutional state of student learning relative to the three institutional outcomes.

The state of student learning at NMJC could be described as resilient. Challenges posed by Covid in 2020 did not diminish the overall average standing of student learning at NMJC. The state of student learning at NMJC could also be described as ready for improvement, at least in terms of connectivity and reporting. Often assessment activities are not the sole reason for change or improvement, but they do help track, document, and communicate change correlated to actions. NMJC's assessment process provides guidance and intentionality from year to year amid institutional change.

Essential points presented in this summary:

- ✓ Process of assessment covers all levels but focuses engagement at the course level with reporting at the department/program level.
- ✓ Data collected under current process show very stable results internally and externally.
- ✓ Assessment functions alongside multiple other processes and influences such as program review, faculty evaluation, organizational changes, state higher education department compliance duties (New Mexico Higher Education Department, NMHED), and regional accreditation expectations (Higher Learning Commission, HLC).
- ✓ The work of faculty in assessing student learning has led to various improvements.
- ✓ Goals and initiatives are being integrated campus wide at all levels.

	Fall 2018- Spring 2019	Fall 2019- Spring 2020	Fall 2020- Spring 2021	Fall 2021- Spring 2022	Fall 2022- Spring 2023
COMMUNICATION	83% 3204/3876 ETS: 110.30	79% 2655/3348 ETS: 110.78	80% 693/866	78% 3047/3896 ETS: 109.91	84% 3432/4076
CRITICAL THINKING and PROBLEM SOLVING	74% 3660/4919 ETS: 108.03	81% 6280/7766 ETS: 108.19	77% 1773/2300	87% 6227/7166 ETS: 107.30	86% 6818/7928
SELF AND COMMUNITY	76% 4621/6064	83% 4191/5050	80% 567/712	79% 4296/5464	87% 4791/5537
ETS	427.37	428.01		424.98	

ETS summary for <u>all</u> cohorts through 2022	NMJC	All (43 Associate's colleges, 2017-2022)
Number of students	1147	25,529
Overall mean (interval of one standard deviation)	425.90 (411.11,440.69)	434.4 (429.5,439.3)
Communication (writing) (interval of one standard deviation)	110.11 (105.17,115.05)	112.1 (110.9,113.3)
Critical Thinking (interval of one standard deviation)	107.55 (102.68,112.42)	109.4 (108.2,110.6)

Internal data indicates NMJC's students are demonstrating proficiency. Our students seem to be meeting expected standards. Simply stated, instructors consider approximately 8 out of 10 students successful with subject area or program goals that correlate to broader institutional goals. These results have been stable across approximately 10 years of the current process.

External comparison shows NMJC below, or on the low end of, average for 43 other associate's degree colleges. NMJC does not focus ETS testing on certain student groups. The process for selecting students allows for students at all levels of progress, entering freshman through 60 or more credit hours. If focused on students with at least 60 credit hours, the overall average for NMJC students goes up to 432.4 (n=135), which is much closer to the overall average of comparison schools.

Basic facts of the process are that internal measures show NMJC students are above average while the external measure (ETS-PP) shows students are below or on the low end of average. There is an undeniable impression among faculty that a deficit in students' abilities in the areas of communication, critical thinking, and self and community exists. For example: students may earn a good grade on a writing assignment, but fail to address the professor professionally in email or discussion posts; students may do well on a test, but fail to apply similar skills in a hands-on activity in the same course on the same material; students may demonstrate a skill in lab, but fail to document the completion of the task as required. Recognition of the gap between quantitative and qualitative observations led to plans for addressing it.

The following are examples of instructor led, course level efforts to improve student learning with respect to department and program goals.

- NMJC's Quality Initiative (QI) was to use professional development to improve student engagement campus-wide. We believe the QI is showing results. Faculty across general education areas and career training areas will continue to strive toward maximizing student engagement by preparing materials and activities that engage multiple learning styles and create meaningful connections between students and instructors.
- Widespread concern about academic dishonest using translation tools and generative AI has led to faculty finding tools and adopting strategies to guide students in use of approved resources.
- English and math faculty have returned to placement testing as the primary means of placing students. The high school transcripts process was not working well.
- NMJC invested in Dropout Detective during the fall of 2022. This allows faculty an easy way to provide early and frequent alerts for at risk students. Many general education faculty have committed to a departmental goal of using Dropout Detective at key points in each semester.
- English faculty have agreed to departmental expectations for having students use NMJC library databases over basic internet searches. The common policies include responses to incidents of academic dishonesty.
- English faculty continue to make widespread effort to use *common terminology* in communication courses (Credibility; Hypothesis, thesis, antithesis, Rhetoric, Research paper, Plagiarism, and Evidence).
- Math faculty plan to use general assignment titles for Canvas gradebook tracking to make the expected learning outcomes visible to students, and to provide a measure that students can understand. Faculty hope this will help students associate the core skills common to each math course (Graph Functions, Solve Equations, Use Proper Notation, Solve Real World Applications).
- Math faculty are researching better course titles for the developmental courses.
- Lab Science faculty developed departmental templates and implemented a departmental requirement for at least two proctored exams in online courses to better align with face to face class requirements.
- Several Lab Science faculty members have created labs and lab manuals in place of publisher materials to directly address learning outcomes.
- Social and Behavioral Science faculty plan to work on forming a consensus on what each student learning outcome means and how to measure each for consistency across the department.

- Humanities faculty worked with the library director to redesigned the library website and add the Films on Demand Database. These efforts by the library have aided professors in presenting significant cultural artifacts to students.
- Humanities and Fine Arts faculty continue use of consistent terminology related to the learning outcomes which has helped students recognize the broad application essential skills (Primary and Secondary Sources; Compare and Contrast; Diversity; Relevancy).
- Humanities faculty are considering new courses to offer from the NMHED common course system. They are also working to offer students greater access to culturally significant materials within existing courses.
- The reintroduction of theater and digital arts has allowed Fine Arts faculty to explore local opportunities to showcase student work. Public performances and displays will create expanded practice, rehearsal, and feedback opportunities.
- College Success faculty are emphasizing job seeking skills and goal setting. Professors use situation or role play for practice during class time to highlight practical application in real world situations, to communicate transferable skills with students, such as effective communication and time management skills.
- Career training programs continue to work specifically on the Self and Community outcome through their emphasis on professionalism within each field. Automotive, Cosmetology, Nursing, and Welding all have an ongoing focus on safety and professionalism as defined by the career field.
- Business and Computer Information Systems department faculty have edited their learning outcomes to be more relevant across the variety of courses within the department. This will help with managing assessment with adjuncts in the department.
- Nursing faculty have initiated several strategies to improve retention and success. They have reviewed the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS test) requirements for program admission, implemented a mandatory orientation and summer “boot camp” for students at the start of the program, and have implemented group and one-on-one tutoring and learning contracts for at risk students.

Department and program reports provide additional narrative regarding methods and plans.

Along with the various department/program/course level initiatives SLOAC began considering how it could unify and support faculty in improving student learning at the institutional level. The committee took up the widely recognized concern and frustration of poor communication. During the spring of 2018 a subcommittee was formed to develop a minimum campus standard all faculty could implement and enforce with their students. The subcommittee (made up of faculty) developed a four-point standard and hosted a workshop to sell all faculty members on the idea of teaching the standard and holding students accountable to it:

- No text language (For example do not use i, BTW, LOL, IDK...)
- Correct spelling and proper capitalization
- Complete sentences (Start a sentence with a capital letter and end it with a period.)
- Logical organization

Feedback was overwhelming. During the spring semester of 2023 SLOAC began work on defining similar minimum standards for Critical Thinking and Self and Community outcomes.

Discussion about minimum, teachable, measurable standards quickly evolved into the idea of establishing a list of expectations for what is expected of NMJC students. It was presented to Faculty Senate at the end of fall 2023 and was well received. Upon approval, the list will be added to the syllabus template. This initiative is a significant step in bringing NMJC's broad institutional learning goals prominently before students in a student friendly. The list is shown below:

What it means to be an NMJC student:

- Use appropriate written and verbal communication based on situation. For example, do not use text or slang language, do use correct spelling, proper capitalization, complete sentences, and logical organization of thoughts.
- Clearly define or identify an issue or concern that requires communication with a professor, an academic coach, or a peer.
- State what efforts or resources could be used to address an issue.
- Articulate a logical request or solution to an issue or concern presented.
- Demonstrate personal responsibility in all academic and non-academic activities.
- Use mature, proper, respectful language and behavior in all academic and non-academic activities.
- Adhere to academic honesty standards.
- Determine the quality of information and resources available to solve problems.
- Analyze personal biases or assumptions that may interfere with decision-making.