OHSU - ANNUAL REPORT ON ASSESSMENT

2017-2025

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Educational Improvement and Innovation

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past year, OHSU has made notable progress in refining academic assessment processes and aligning reporting practices with institutional goals. This report presents the results of key academic indicators, and a series of structural changes designed to strengthen data stewardship, equity, and program-level accountability. Recent milestones include:

- Full adoption of the proposed academic indicators of excellence
- Retirement of legacy institutional indicators
- Development and deployment of an improved academic program assessment data application
- Full adoption of revised graduation core competencies
- Creation and implementation of new programmatic equity in assessment questions
- Alignment of the reporting structure to the academic year

This report outlines the evolution of institutional assessment at OHSU since 2017, detailing the development of current indicators and highlighting pilot initiatives and key achievements.

CONTEXT AND EVOLUTION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Over eight years, the assessment infrastructure at Oregon Health & Science University evolved from a decentralized, compliance-driven process to one that is increasingly integrated and is based on a strategic framework that supports academic quality, transparency, and continuous improvement. Through the sustained work of the Assessment Council and a series of targeted initiatives, OHSU has systematically embedded assessment into the academic core of its programs while also responding to institutional priorities and accreditation requirements.

The focus in the earlier years (2017-2020) was to strengthen our foundational practices. Program faculty and staff were guided through the development of structured assessment plans, with emphasis on articulating clear student learning outcomes (SLOs), establishing performance benchmarks, and documenting evidence-based improvements. The Assessment Council played a facilitative role by providing templates, exemplars, and feedback to program stakeholders. With faculty playing a central role, stakeholder engagement broadened to include students, alumni, employers, and administrative partners. Meanwhile, the Council introduced recognition programs such as the "Excellence in Assessment" designation to highlight innovation and effectiveness.

Institution-wide efforts matured alongside program-level improvements. Events such as the spring [Symposium on Educational Excellence](#) has become a key forum for faculty development and peer learning. As the university advanced beyond the foundational stages of assessment, we developed new tools to improve data quality and evaluation consistency—including data collection systems and rubrics for assessing institutional core competencies. At the same time, we increased emphasis on aligning program-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) with institutional outcomes.

By the 2020–2022 cycle, the groundwork laid in earlier years enabled OHSU to shift from building processes to evaluating the impact of those processes. Feedback loops were more clearly established, with programs regularly reporting how assessment results led to course redesigns, pedagogical adjustments, and restructured capstone experiences. Simultaneously, data began to inform more strategic decisions - both at the program and institutional levels. The Assessment Council also formalized a role in reviewing and refining institutional indicators, supporting a transition away from legacy metrics toward more meaningful, equity-oriented measures. The shift from "building process" to "evaluating impact" was driven by house-built web applications and a database where meaningful insights were used to promote impactful change.

In 2023, OHSU took another major step forward by establishing the Core Competency Task Force. Its charge was to review and update the [Graduation Core Competencies](#). Based on multiple years of feedback and analysis, the revised competencies emphasized clarity, measurability, and alignment with the practical needs of students and educators were used to develop a new competency framework. The adopted framework reflected a clearer understanding of OHSU's tripartite identity as a teaching, clinical, and research institution.

The 2024–2025 academic year marked a culmination of this long arc of development. We achieved several significant milestones: the full adoption of updated academic indicators of excellence, the retirement of outdated institutional indicators, the launch of a newly developed academic program assessment application, and the formal integration of revised graduation core competencies. In addition, new programmatic equity questions were introduced into assessment processes, reinforcing OHSU's commitment to inclusive excellence.

This year we enhanced the training and calibration of Assessment Council reviewers through structured norming sessions. These sessions focused on improving the consistency of feedback scores by training reviewers on the effective use of scoring rubrics. To address prior issues with inconsistent scoring and contradictory recommendations, reviewers were organized into groups with assigned areas of expertise. Each group focused on a specific dimension of assessment feedback, reducing the burden of having to evaluate all components and allowing for greater depth and consistency. Following the initial scoring, a smaller oversight team or "Super Reviewers" reviewed all submitted feedback to identify and resolve discrepancies before results were finalized and the database tables updated. Together, these changes reflect not just procedural improvements, but a substantive transformation in how academic quality is understood, enacted, and sustained across the institution.

Figure 1 illustrates key milestones in OHSU's academic assessment journey from 2017 to 2025. The timeline highlights the progression from foundational practices and early expansion to national recognition, methodological refinement, and the full launch of a centralized assessment application—marking a clear evolution toward institutional innovation and system maturity.

These changes mark the culmination of a multi-year transformation—from building foundational practices to embedding assessment within the institution's academic core. To understand the current structure of OHSU's academic program assessment process, it helps to step back and examine how it is organized today.

OHSU - ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT MILESTONES

PHASE

2016-2017
Assessment practices standardized across programs. Introduced structured plans, clear SLOs, and increased stakeholder engagement.

FOUNDATION

EXPANSION

2017-2018
Built early tools and rubrics. Emphasized data-informed course improvements and formalized co-curricular learning outcomes.

2018-2019
Launched faculty development events and earned national attention. Embedded assessment more deeply into program review.

DEVELOPMENT

RECOGNITION

2019-2020
- NILOA Excellence in Assessment
- Published indicators, remapped SLOs, and launched an affective-impact framework (ELIM)
- Annual Academic Assessment Awards established.

2020-2021
Revised rubrics and scoring practices with a focus on clarity and equity. Integrated MySQL data views and introduced equity-focused reporting.

REFINEMENT

EXPERIMENTATION

2021-2022
Pilot indicators launched to test stakeholder engagement, alignment quality, and equity metrics. Began migration to a dedicated assessment platform.

2022-2023
Graduation Core Competencies revised – clarity, measurability, and alignment with clinical and research missions.

ALIGNMENT

IMPLEMENTATION

2023-2024
Full adoption of some new indicators – academic assessment application re-design and development begins, outdated indicators retired.

MATURITY

2024-2025 and...
System maturity – improved reviewer calibration, equity embedded, assessment fully integrated into academic culture. Launch of redesigned, full-feature assessment data application.

ABOUT ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

OHSU has been evaluating how academic programs meet educational goals through an annual assessment process since 2006. We restructured this process in 2017 to align with NWCCU recommendations of emphasizing faculty-led improvements tied to core competencies. We restructured in 2017 to align with NWCCU recommendations, and the process now emphasizes faculty-led improvements tied to core competencies. Program faculty and staffs submit updated plans and performance reports by November 1, which are reviewed by the OHSU Assessment Council each January using an institutional rubric. Council feedback supports continuous improvement and aligns assessment efforts with NWCCU's student learning indicators.

TABLE 1: ASSESSMENT PLANNING RUBRIC

Plan Dimension	Plan Definition of Excellence
Communication of SLOs	Student learning outcomes statements have been prominently posted on the program or department website and made available to students.
Progression/ Differentiation (if applicable)	The difference between unique degree/certificate levels is clearly defined in the SLOs. (i.e., There is a difference between certificate and terminal degree SLOs)
Clearly Written SLOs	SLOs are clearly written (e.g., non-experts can understand what the learner will learn in the program)
Alignment of Core Competencies to SLO's	The program demonstrates clear alignment of SLOs to each of the OHSU Core Competencies
Evidence of Learning and Impact Framework Alignment	Evidence Framework Levels are appropriately aligned.

TABLE 2: ASSESSMENT REPORTING RUBRIC

Report Dimension	Report Definition of Excellence
Targets Met/Not Met	The program met all their targets.
Interpretation of Targets Not Met	Program demonstrates reflection on targets not met or partially met by providing possible explanations and whether any changes will be made as a result. Interpretations of targets not met/partially met should center students and student learning when relevant.
Engagement of Stakeholders in Program Assessment Planning & Review	Representatives from at least five of the following groups are engaged regularly in program assessment planning and review: a) faculty; b) staff; c) students; d) alumni; e) external stakeholders; f) employers
Closing the Loop: Course Improvement or Course Evaluation Feedback	There is evidence that the program collected, analyzed, and used course level assessment data, not limited to course evaluation data, to inform student learning improvement.
Closing the Loop: Program Improvement	Assessment data have been analyzed and used for program improvement
Closing the Loop: Equity Considerations	Program response: 1) Identifies an assessment activity they are interested in exploring using an equity lens 2) Describes an equity lens/approach/data source to analyze data from the activity (e.g., participation, satisfaction, achievement)

* *Indicates Pilot Item or item paused for the last data collection cycle*

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC INDICATORS

As OHSU's assessment practices have matured, the original set of institutional indicators has begun to show its limitations. In response, the Assessment Council initiated efforts to refine how academic effectiveness is measured - leading to the development and piloting of new indicators that better reflect the university's current goals and capabilities.

The success of OHSU's institutional assessment efforts since 2017 has led to the university outgrowing some of its original indicators. In response, we drafted four new pilot indicators were and tested them during the 2022–2023 assessment cycle:

1. Internal Pilot Indicator 2.1.5 (Overall Competence in Assessment)
2. Internal Pilot Indicator 2.1.6 (Stakeholder Engagement)
3. Internal Pilot Indicator 2.1.7 (SLO-to-Core-Competency Alignment)
4. Internal Pilot Indicator 2.1.8 (Equity)

During the 2023–2024 cycle, data for these indicators were compiled and presented to the Assessment Council, leading to the following changes:
- Indicator 2.1.1 (SLO to Core Competency Alignment) was replaced by Internal Pilot Indicator 2.1.5 (Overall Competence in Assessment).
- Indicator 2.1.2 (Assessment Improvement) was eliminated and replaced by Indicator 2.1.3 (Student Learning Outcomes Improvement).
- Indicator 2.1.4 (Central Student Support Services) was renumbered as Indicator 2.1.3.
- Internal Pilot Indicators 2.1.6 and 2.1.8 will remain in pilot status until clearer measurement methods are established.

INDICATOR 2.1.7

Clear Alignment of SLOs to Core Competencies, now includes three years of data and reflects a shift toward evaluating whether each SLO substantively aligns with the intent of its corresponding core competency. The Assessment Council will review this data during the 2025–2026 cycle to determine whether the indicator should be formally adopted into the University's Institutional Efficacy Report.

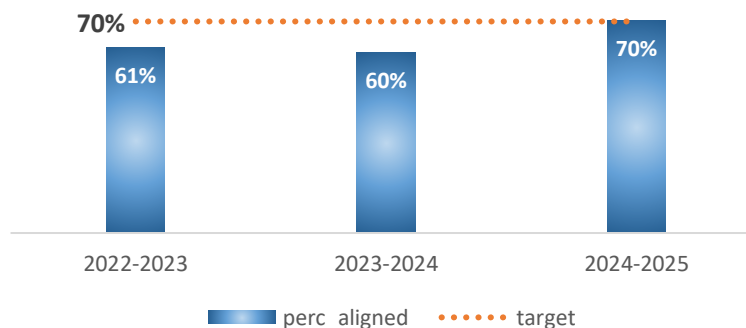**FIGURE 2: INDICATOR 2.1.7 - CLEAR ALIGNMENT OF SLOS TO CORE COMPETENCIES**

Figure 2 tracks the percentage of academic programs that have aligned at least one student learning outcome (SLO) with each of OHSU's Graduation Core Competencies over three academic years. In 2022–2023, 61% of programs demonstrated alignment. Rates held steady in 2023–2024 at 60%, before rising to meet the 70% target in 2024–2025. Although progress plateaued in the second year, the increase in 2024–2025 suggests stronger substantive alignment with core competencies.

INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVENESS

While the pilot indicators represent OHSU's efforts to refine and evolve its assessment framework, the university continues to track performance using its established institutional indicators of effectiveness. Approved by the OHSU Board in 2020, these indicators remain a foundational component of annual reporting and provide a consistent baseline for evaluating student learning across programs and support services.

To strengthen the relationship between course and institutional level assessment, the Assessment Council implemented institutional indicators of effectiveness to track institutional student learning. These indicators were approved by the OHSU Board in September 2020. Results for the last assessment cycle are shown in **Table 3**.

TABLE 3: STUDENT LEARNING INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVENESS (CURRENT)

Objective 2.1: Engage in student learning outcomes assessment to evaluate quality and use results for improvement of academic programs and student services.

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION	TARGET	OHSU %
2.1.1	The percentage of academic programs that demonstrate proficiency in evaluating student learning by aligning with the annual institutional assessment process.	80%	71%
2.1.2	Percentage of academic programs that use assessment data to improve or maintain the achievement of student learning outcomes.	60%	91%
2.1.3	Percentage of Central Student Services units who create, follow, and report on continuous assessment plans that are mapped to meaningful OHSU and/or professional standards.	70%	100%

The 2024–2025 assessment indicators reflect strong overall performance, with two of the three targets exceeded and one falling slightly short. Ninety-one percent of academic programs reported using assessment data to improve or maintain student learning outcomes, well above the 60% target and suggesting broad engagement with evidence-based improvement. Central Student Services achieved 100% compliance with continuous assessment planning and reporting, exceeding the 70% target for multiple years - an outcome that may warrant a more rigorous or differentiated metric to continue promoting growth. Meanwhile, 71% of academic programs demonstrated full alignment with the institutional assessment process, just below the 80% goal, indicating a need for continued support to ensure consistent participation and documentation.

INDICATOR BREAKDOWN

While the proposed indicators represent OHSU's forward-looking efforts to refine and deepen assessment practices, existing institutional indicators continue to provide a baseline for measuring effectiveness. These indicators, approved by the OHSU Board in 2020 and updated in 2023, remain a critical part of the assessment landscape and offer insight into ongoing performance across programs and support units.

The following section presents detailed performance results for OHSU's three primary institutional indicators of effectiveness. These indicators assess how well academic programs and central student support services engage with key elements of the university's assessment process: aligning with institutional expectations, using data for improvement, and mapping outcomes to core competencies. Together, they provide a longitudinal view of institutional progress and highlight areas of strength as well as opportunities for continued refinement.

INDICATOR 2.1.1:

Percentage of academic programs that demonstrate proficiency in evaluating student learning by aligning with the annual institutional assessment process

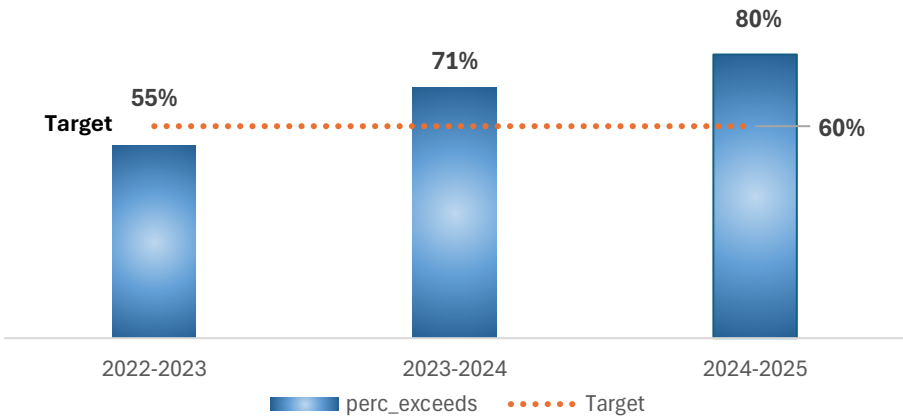**FIGURE 3: INDICATOR 2.1.1 – OVERALL PROFICIENCY IN ASSESSMENT**

Figure 3 tracks the percentage of academic programs that demonstrate proficiency in evaluating student learning through alignment with the annual institutional assessment process. Performance steadily improved over three years: rising from 55% in 2022-2023 to 71% in 2023-2024 and reaching the target of 80% in 2024-2025. This upward trend suggests growing institutional consistency and engagement with the established assessment processes.

INDICATOR 2.1.2:

Percentage of academic programs that use assessment data to improve or maintain the achievement of student learning outcomes.

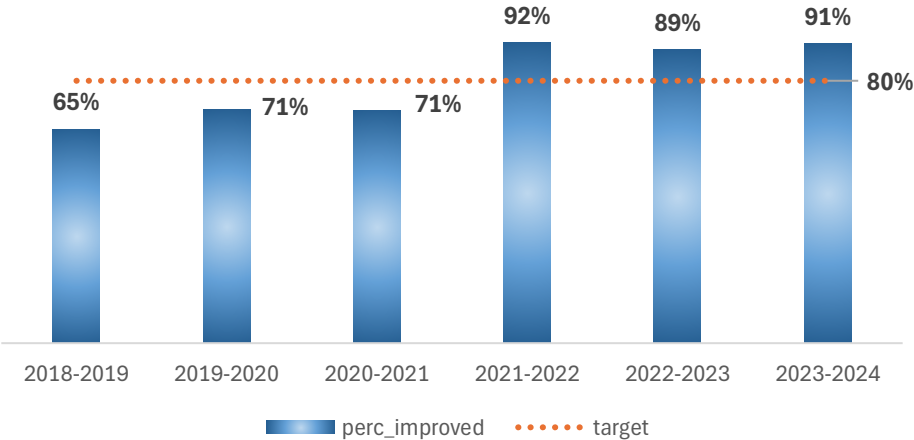**FIGURE 4: INDICATOR 2.1.2 – STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT**

Figure 4 measures the percentage of academic programs that use assessment data to improve or maintain student learning outcomes. Performance has steadily increased since 2018–2019, rising from 65% to 91% in 2023–2024. After reaching 92% in 2021–2022, results have remained consistently strong and above the 80% target for three consecutive years. This indicates sustained integration of assessment data into program improvement efforts – suggesting an increase in the target may be warranted.

INDICATOR 2.1.3:
Percentage of central student support services that map their assessments to an OHSU Graduation Core Competency.

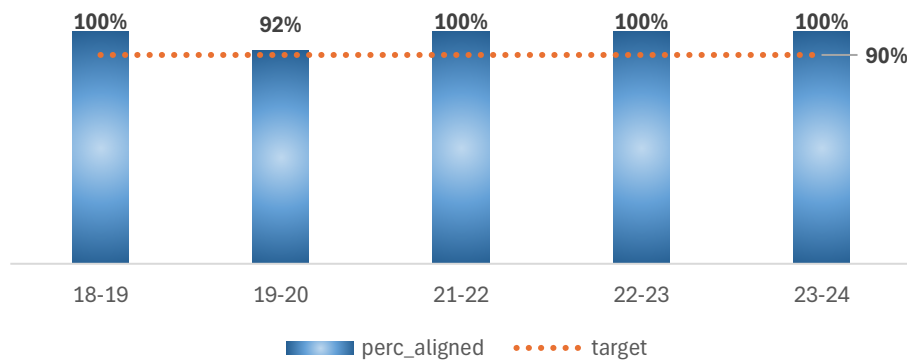**FIGURE 5: INDICATOR 2.1.3 – CENTRAL STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Figure 5 shows the historical performance of central student support services in mapping assessments to an OHSU Graduation core competency.

2024-2025 OUR TRANSFORMATIVE STORIES OR STORIES OF TRANSFORMATION?

One of the major drivers of this transformation has been the development of the Academic Program Assessment web application. Based on needs identified during the 2017 assessment cycle, the application was designed to collect more meaningful, consistent, and usable data in response to growing demands for institutional reporting and accreditation compliance. This story is well documented in previous annual assessment reports and stands as a cornerstone of OHSU's evolution from an institution given recommendations of improvement by accreditors to one now recognized for its excellence in academic program assessment.

Many initiatives contributed to this quality of assessment data, such as faculty training, internal reviews, and stakeholder discussions. The deliberate design and phased implementation of the web application has served as the engine behind that progress. Today, the system enables programs to submit and revise structured plans, report annually on outcomes, and receive targeted, normed feedback through a consistent rubric.

The application is not just a repository for documentation - it is the infrastructure that powers the entire assessment cycle. Plans are organized around core competencies, student learning outcomes (SLOs), assessments, and performance targets, which are revisited annually through end-of-year reporting, feedback cycles, and closing-the-loop surveys. All assessment data is collected in a centralized, searchable format that allows for longitudinal tracking, comparative analysis, and evidence-based improvement. Furthermore, the Assessment Council's use of the application facilitates meaningful discussion and review of programmatic efforts, making it a valuable tool for communication.

The maturity of the assessment infrastructure fundamentally changed OHSU's ability to identify gaps, improved feedback for academic programs, propose strategic solutions, and sustain a culture of continuous academic improvement. The following examples illustrate how enhanced data capabilities directly drove institutional innovation:

STORY 1: IMPROVING REVIEWER CONSISTENCY THROUGH SYSTEMATIC CALIBRATION

As OHSU's assessment system expanded, we found inconsistencies in how reviewers scored program assessment reports. Early cycles revealed that scoring varied widely, sending mixed messages to programs. In response, the Assessment Council 1) introduced structured norming sessions to train reviewers in rubric use and 2) organized reviewers into specialized groups focusing on specific assessment dimensions. A "Super Reviewer" team was also created to cross-check feedback before finalization. These changes - enabled by greater visibility into scoring patterns - enhanced the consistency, credibility, and fairness of institutional feedback.

STORY 2: STRENGTHENING CORE COMPETENCY ALIGNMENT THROUGH TARGETED INDICATORS

Deeper analysis of student learning outcome (SLO) data showed that many programs mapped SLOs to core competencies without demonstrating meaningful alignment. Furthermore, surveys and multi-year reviews confirmed that early mapping efforts often lacked depth. In response, OHSU launched Pilot Indicator 2.1.7 (Figure 2) to measure the quality of alignment, not just its presence. Supported by clearer, structured data collection, this indicator helped shift assessment from surface-level compliance to meaningful curriculum integration. Continued tracking showed improvement, with alignment rates rising to meet the 70% target in 2024-2025 - validating the impact of this data-informed approach.

STORY 3: REDEFINING INSTITUTIONAL CORE COMPETENCIES FOR GREATER CLARITY AND MEASURABILITY

Assessment data-including survey feedback, interrater reliability, and focus group input-revealed ongoing challenges in aligning program outcomes to OHSU's institutional core competencies. Respondents cited definitions as vague, overlapping, or difficult to measure. To address this, the Core Competency Task Force was launched in Fall 2023. Using input from over 30 faculty and staff engaged in assessment, the task force revised the competencies to improve clarity, measurability, and alignment with academic and professional standards. Key changes included shortening definitions, removing ambiguous language, and focusing on usability. These changes led to improved alignment across programs **(figure 2)** resulting in a 10% increase in substantive slo-to-core competency alignment, reduced reporting burden on program stakeholders, and better integration of core competencies into assessment practices. The observed improvements were largely facilitated through insights gained from institutional data systems - and ongoing monitoring using the same tools will ensure sustained effectiveness.

STORY 4: BUILDING THE ASSESSMENT APPLICATION TO SOLVE FRAGMENTED DATA COLLECTION

In the early years, fragmented reporting through the Xitracs system and manual spreadsheet compilation limited institutional insight and hindered improvement efforts. In response, OHSU developed its in-house assessment application, centralizing submissions, reviewer feedback, and indicator tracking. The application's evolving capabilities - such as built-in rubrics, feedback forms, and real-time dashboards. enabled deeper analysis of institutional strengths and weaknesses. This infrastructure was pivotal in identifying persistent gaps, accelerating the development of pilot indicators, and enabling a more strategic, evidence-driven approach to academic improvement.

Across all these efforts, a common thread emerges: OHSU's investment in building a robust academic assessment system was not just about streamlining reporting. It fundamentally changed the university's ability to uncover real gaps, propose targeted solutions, and sustain a culture of continuous academic improvement. Data collection was not the end goal, but rather, the driver of transformation.

Each component of the assessment process informs and strengthens the others. The database makes these relationships visible, measurable, and actionable - fueling a dynamic system where evidence drives change, and each step builds upon the next.

2024-2025 SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

The 2024–2025 academic year marks a pivotal moment for OHSU, as it continues a multi-year transformation of its academic assessment framework. Building on the foundation laid in previous cycles, OHSU finalized the adoption of new academic indicators of excellence, retired outdated metrics, launched a fully integrated assessment application, and formally aligned student learning outcomes to a revised set of Graduation Core Competencies.

At the center of these changes is the newly developed Academic Program Assessment web application, which now powers all facets of assessment reporting, analysis, and longitudinal tracking. This system has replaced fragmented manual processes with a centralized, evidence-driven platform, making assessment data more meaningful, actionable, and transparent. Alongside this technological upgrade, the university introduced structured reviewer norming sessions and created "Super Reviewer" teams to ensure greater consistency and credibility in program feedback, closing long-standing gaps in evaluation practices.

The 2024–2025 results demonstrate the impact of these initiatives. Ninety-one percent of academic programs reported using assessment data to improve or maintain student learning outcomes, far exceeding the institutional target of 60%. Central Student Support Services achieved 100% compliance with continuous assessment planning, maintaining this level for multiple consecutive years. While 71% of academic programs demonstrated full alignment with the institutional assessment process - falling just short of the 80% target - the overall trend reflects significant growth in institutional consistency and engagement.

OHSU deepened its commitment to inclusive excellence by embedding new equity-focused measures into program-level assessments. We piloted indicators for overall assessment competence, stakeholder engagement, SLO-to-Core Competency alignment, and equity. This reflects a forward-looking approach to institutional reporting, which positions the university to evolve beyond compliance and into a model of continuous academic innovation.

These developments showcase an institution that no longer views academic assessment as a checkbox exercise but as a critical, dynamic driver of educational quality, equity, and accountability.

ASSESSMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS:

The OHSU Assessment Council **(table 4)** is a standing committee charged with promoting campus-wide assessment activities to improve learning outcomes and align with university mission and strategic goals. The Assessment Council ensures that ongoing academic assessment and accountability are institutional priorities. The assessment council contributes to a culture that will stimulate the spirit of inquiry, initiative, and cooperation among students, faculty and staff to educate health care professionals, scientists, and leaders in top-tier positions. Thank you to the **2024-25** Assessment Council Members.

TABLE 4: 2024-2025 ASSESSMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

MEMBER NAME	
Adjoa Manu, Student Rep	Kevin Nguyen, Student Rep
Alex Breiding, SOM Grad Studies	Lawrence Williams, TLC
Amy Ross, SON	Lina Gomaa, TLC
Allison Fryer, SOM Grad Studies	Lydia Gillespie, SPH
Amber Sanchez, Student Rep	Maria Thompson, RT
Cherie Honnell, Provost Office	Mark Rivera, EII
Constance Tucker, Provost Office (Chair)	Meike Niederhausen, Faculty Senate rep.
Crystal Paredes, SOD	Michael Walsh, Student Affairs
Deb Messecar, SON	Quiana Harshman, PISP
Elias Cohen, Provost Office	Robert Halstead, Provost Office
Erinne Lubisich, Assoc Professor	Robin Champieux, University Librarian
Jessica Walter, Health Care Mgmt.	Ryan Patterson, APR
Julia Sniegowski, TLC	Sarah Drummond, PA
Julie McGuire, Human Nutrition	Tawyna Peterson, SPH
Kelly Caverzagie, SOM	Theresa Filtz, COP
Kelsi Nagle-Rowe, SOM Grad Studies	Yi Cao, SON
Cheryl Miller, EII	Kevin Nguyen, Student Rep