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Mark J. Braun, Executive Director

**MEMORANDUM**

April 22, 2020

Mr. Charlie Smithson  
Secretary of the Senate  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines IA 50319

Ms. Meghan Nelson  
Chief Clerk of the House  
State Capitol Building  
Des Moines IA 50319

Re: Continuous Improvement Plan Report

Dear Mr. Smithson and Ms. Nelson:

In accordance with 2015 Iowa Code §262.9.36, (which was enacted in 2012 by SF 2284), the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, has prepared a report describing the implementation of continuous improvement of courses with a combined enrollment of 100 or more students in 2018-2019. Enclosed is the annual report.

The strategies used to assess student performance and quality of the learning experience include faculty review of student portfolios, student performance in subsequent courses, faculty review of scored term papers, comparing student learning outcomes across multiple sections of the same course, and faculty comparison of course syllabi across sections.

Some of the improvements made after review and analysis included integrating team-based learning activities, changing to a more effective textbook, improving connections between course content and professional/real-world experiences, and implementing additional student- and faculty-led discussion groups. Many of the courses reviewed implement multiple changes.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this report.

Sincerely,



Mark J. Braun  
Executive Director

\\Box Sync\Board of Regents Shared\BF\Legislative\2020 session\Reports\

Attachments

cc: Robin Madison  
Legislative Liaisons  
Legislative Log

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## 2018-2019 Annual Report to the Board of Regents Course-level Continuous Improvement Plans

### Executive Summary

For academic year 2018-2019, Iowa Code Section 262.9(36) required that all undergraduate courses typically enrolling 100 or more students annually have continuous improvement plans implemented. At Iowa State University, 692 different courses enrolled more than 100 students. Those continuous improvement plans were therefore in place during AY18-19 with a focus on student achievement of outcomes, assessment strategies used, plans for improvement, and impact of their plans on student success. Both summative and formative assessment strategies were used in the improvement plans. The most frequent changes planned to improve student learning in the courses are: changing student learning experiences and activities, modifying class assignments, modifying the time spent on specific course content, and changing course delivery methods and pedagogy. These changes are consistent with the other improvement plans developed from the prior academic year's implementation of the continuous improvement strategy.

### Findings

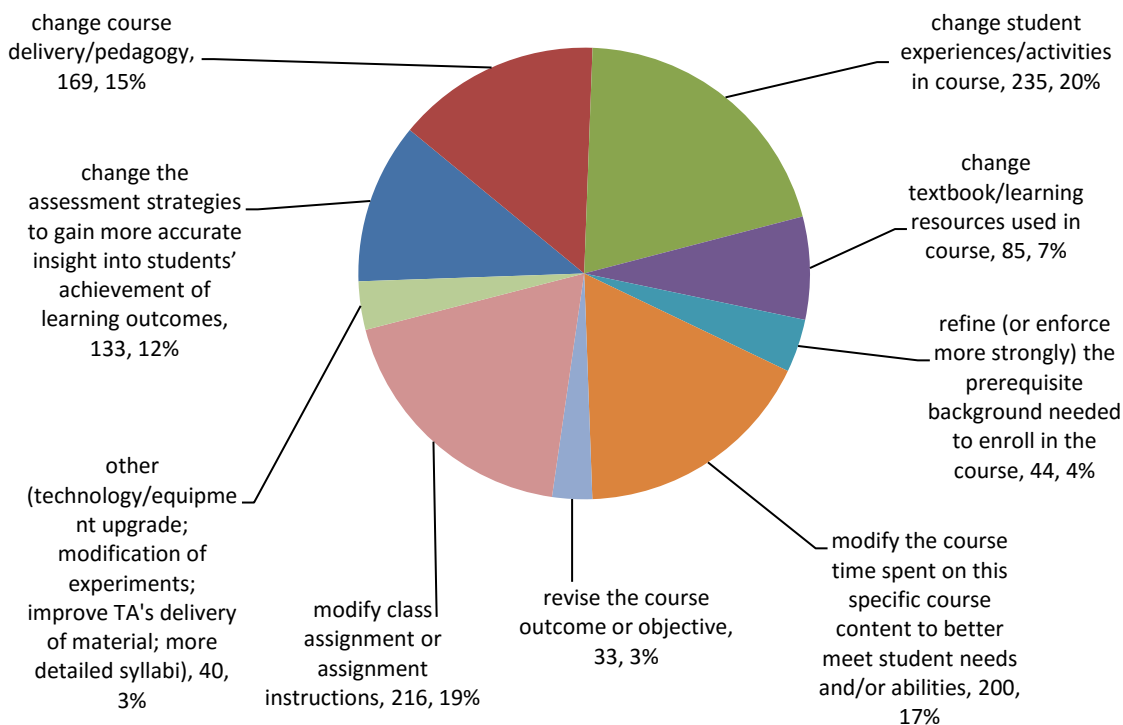
The survey instrument used in AY17-18 was again used for this year's data collection. The survey was completed by a single point of contact for each course, therefore establishing beneficial collaboration across multi-instructor courses. Of the 692 courses that enrolled 100 or more students, 675 had a respondent complete a survey. The results of the survey are shared with departments as a part of ISU's continuous improvement and course refinement process. The following two pages summarize the findings:

- Data on student enrollment in courses covered under the legislation,
- Data on the types of assessment approaches used within the continuous improvement plans,
- Data on the types of changes faculty are planning to make based on the results of the plans, and
- Summaries of selected open-ended responses from instructors on the impact of the continuous improvement plans.

Questions related to data contained in this report or the implementation of the continuous improvement plans at Iowa State University should be directed to Dr. Julia LaBianca ([labianca@iastate.edu](mailto:labianca@iastate.edu)) in the Office of Institutional Research or Dr. Karen Zunkel ([kzunkel@iastate.edu](mailto:kzunkel@iastate.edu)) in the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost.

Summary of Continuous Improvement in Iowa State University Courses	
Report date	July 2019
Report period	AY2018-2019
Number of courses, enrollment, and students	
Total number of courses	692
Total student enrollment in courses (duplicated enrollment)	258,702
Number of unique students enrolled in courses	31,398
Number of courses utilizing various continuous improvement assessment strategies	
Faculty review of exam or quiz grades	522
Faculty review of scored term paper	140
Faculty review of juried exhibit or performance	22
Faculty review of student portfolio	40
Faculty review of presentation or project	238
Faculty review of licensure or standardized tests scores	7
Faculty review of student survey/evaluation of course outcomes	101
Faculty evaluation of student performance in subsequent courses	42
Faculty monitoring of course grades and D/F/W rates	8
Faculty discussions across multi-section courses	1
Formative assessments such as clicker and quizzes	630
Other (lab reports, homework, discussions, observations)	139

**Types of Changes Planned Based on CIP Results, Number of Courses**



## Summaries of Continuous Improvement Plan Impact

**AER E 294X** (*Make to Innovate*) – Through continuous assessment and improvement plans, the instructors have further refined the program to allow students to learn professional development skills in addition to learning hands-on engineering skills.

**BUSAD 250** (*Introduction to Business*) – The instructors' continuous improvement efforts in BUSAD 250 have been directed at linking together lecture/text material, with real world business examples and completion of a collaborative business simulation where students can develop a solid introduction to business. This approach incorporates team based activities, analytics, exams, presentations and peer evaluations to assess student performance. The results of this approach have been well received by students and is reflected in favorable student performance.

**DSN S 102** (*Design Studio I*) – As the faculty strategically think about students' education, a continuous improvement plan allows them to modify course material and develop pedagogical strategies to engage students in the various design principles they need for their designated majors. Qualitatively, the impact was shown this year in a wearables design show that not only pinpointed various principles but created a space for the exhibit of these wearables in relation to the project briefs.

**HD FS 486** (*Administration of Human Services Programs*) – In listening to feedback from former students, the instructor has been able to hone in on specific topical areas that they feel are most beneficial. Each semester the constructive feedback gives the instructor the opportunity to ensure that they are creating a course that meets the needs of their students as those students move to their internships and graduation. More practical application and focus on professionalism are two things that have come from continuous improvement of the course.

**SP CM 312** (*Business and Professional Communication*) – The CIP for this course has helped us to reevaluate our learning outcomes each semester, and to collaborate between sections on how we are measuring our learning outcomes, improving consistency across multiple sections of the course. It has also aided us in having important conversations about our textbook selection for the course and how it supports the course outcomes, and has led to us exploring new options for a textbook, which we hope to change going into Fall 2019.

**U ST 101D** (*First Year Seminar I: Student Athlete Experience*) – Continuous improvement plan efforts have led to the addition of a core values and goal setting workshop in UST 101D. This lesson provides students with the opportunity to self-reflect on what they believe, why they believe it, and who/what has shaped their beliefs. Following the core values self-assessment, students are asked to create goals for the semester in the areas of academics, athletics, and their personal life, and then reflect on if/how their core values are related to those and to what capacity.

**WGS 160** (*Gender Justice*) – After a full overhaul of the class last Spring, the instructors used the Fall 18/Spring 19 semesters to refine their approaches and activities to match the new content trajectory for the class. In both semester, the instructors noticed increased student engagement during lecture on Mondays and small group discussions on Wednesdays. They have also seen the overall scores for the class on the end of semester evaluations go up and students' comments have trended far more positively, particularly with regard to the book being used and the real-world kind of knowledge they are taking away from a short 8-week class. The instructors also noticed a reduction in backlash when confronting privilege, particularly from white, cis, straight, male students who enroll in the second half semester section out of desperation for credits.



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DATE: July 26, 2019

TO: Rachel Boon, Chief Academic Officer, Iowa Board of Regents  
FROM: Wayne Jacobson, Assessment Director, University of Iowa

RE: Update on Compliance with Continuous Quality Improvement Legislation

I am attaching a two-page report of the University of Iowa's compliance with Iowa Code Section 262.9(36). This document is based on the reporting structure that was originally established at the July 2013 meeting of project coordinators for each of the three Regents universities. It presents the total number of courses, the total number of student enrollments in those courses, the number of courses using each of the identified continuous improvement strategies, and one page of selected examples illustrating ways in which these strategies have contributed to course improvements.

This information was collected from academic departments by colleges during Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. The report shows that in the majority of courses, decisions about improving course quality are based on the review of student learning demonstrated through the work they do for the course. In addition, just as we learned with last year's report, most courses consider multiple streams of information when reviewing course quality. An average of 4.4 distinct continuous improvement strategies per course were identified for courses with annual enrollments of 100 or more students.

As in previous years, the reports also includes one page of brief representative examples provided by faculty members to illustrate the types of course improvements they have made based on information gained through these CQI strategies.

## UI CQI Strategies 2018/19

Continuous Improvement in University of Iowa Courses	
<i>June 2019</i>	Report Date
<i>2018-19</i>	Report Period <sup>1</sup>
Number of Courses, Students Enrolled	
<i>490</i>	Total Number of Courses
<i>166,989</i>	Total Student Enrollments in Courses
Number of Courses <sup>2</sup> Utilizing Continuous Improvement Strategies <sup>3</sup>	
<i>453</i>	Faculty review of student work during the course
<i>113</i>	Faculty evaluation of student performance in subsequent courses
<i>83</i>	Faculty review of student cohort in multiple courses
<i>258</i>	Faculty review of multiple sections of same course
<i>335</i>	Faculty review of student ratings items related to course outcomes
<i>111</i>	Faculty Course Assessment Report
<i>398</i>	Faculty review of midterm and final grade distribution
<i>264</i>	Department monitoring of DFW rates
<i>153</i>	Other - <i>Examples of other continuous improvement strategies cited by departments:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “Mid-semester course feedback to ensure that student learning is meeting course objectives and adjust planned course activities as necessary.”</li> <li>○ “All the department’s undergraduate offerings are individually discussed at faculty meetings on a rotating schedule”</li> <li>○ “Regular meetings with teaching assistants to discuss student progress and effectiveness of assignments, tests, and in-class learning activities”</li> <li>○ “Faculty in this program meet at least once per semester to discuss the program and student success.”</li> <li>○ “Meet with other faculty members who teach more advanced and related coursework to see if the students have a proficient understanding of foundational concepts”</li> <li>○ “Department reviews course content at the end of each semester to ensure student learning is meeting course objectives and adjusts content as necessary</li> </ul>

Following are selected examples, provided by faculty, which illustrate ways that information collected through continuous improvement has been used to develop or improve courses:

<sup>1</sup> Legislation requires Regents Universities to report on continuous improvement in all courses with enrollment greater than 300 during 2013/14. Courses with enrollment greater than 200 are added to the reporting requirement during 2014/15, and courses with enrollment greater than 100 are added during 2015/16.

<sup>2</sup> Total number of strategies in use is greater than the total number of courses because many courses employ more than one continuous improvement strategy.

<sup>3</sup> The list of strategies identified for the Regents Summary may be extended as additional common strategies are identified by colleges and departments.

## **Political Science**

POLI 1501 : Introduction to American Foreign Policy

“The goal of the discussion section is to provide a small group format for students to discuss the class material, develop their critical thinking skills, and work on their oral presentation ability. Based on student evaluations, TA evaluations, and my own observations, I restructured the sections to promote more active learning in the classroom. All three evaluations indicated that 25-50% of the students were engaged and meeting the learning goals of the section. To increase this percentage, sections were changed to ... student centered learning approaches. Each week, I designed a learning activity based on the learning goals for that week. These activities put students in small groups, where they work cooperatively ... [including] simulations, research, presentation, debate, and experiments. Evaluation from students and TAs and my own observations indicate that this change has produced a substantial increase in student engagement and learning in the discussion sections. Every student is engaged and they often continue to discuss the activity outside of class. These activities also more directly promote critical thinking and oral presentation skills.”

## **Engineering**

ENGR 2110 : Statics

“Statics is the third required course for all undergraduate engineering students. Approximately 400-500 students take it each year. It is offered in both semesters. The findings are reported in a Course Assessment Report (CAR) and published for college use. The CAR includes the following information: 1) the course learning goals; 2) the student learning outcomes; 3) the specific learning outcomes required by our accreditation agency ABET; 4) a cumulative log of improvements, recommendations and comments about the most recent course offering; 5) Results from all quantitative assessments performed for this course; 6) the current syllabus including topics covered, exam dates, and classroom policies. The following is a sample assessment from a recent course offering “... some fairly poor results were observed on the final exam for the problem involving the calculation of the moments of inertia of rigid bodies and the parallel axis theorem. This topic is covered in the last lessons in the course and was only slightly covered as part of the discussion section. One solution would be trying to cover more such problems as part of the final review session and cover some of the solutions to the sample final exam as part of the discussion hour.” The Statics Coordinator will monitor the situation in coming semesters.”

## **University College**

CCP 1005 : Internship in Liberal Arts and Sciences

“Internship in Liberal Arts and Sciences is a zero credit internship registration available in fall, spring, and summer terms with a variable enrollment. Students complete an internship self-evaluation based on competencies developed through their internship, and employers also complete evaluation of their interns based on those same competencies. This information is compared semester to semester and monitored for any red flags. The information is summarized (without identifying individual students) and shared with campus partners who support experiential education. A few ways campus partners have used this information in the past include attempting to address students' competency gaps in their advising, courses, or programs. As a form of continuous quality improvement, this year, the evaluations are being redesigned to align with the UI 11 student leadership competencies.”

**To:** Rachel Boon, Chief Academic Officer, Iowa Board of Regents  
**From:** Megan Vogt-Kostner, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness  
**Re:** Report on 2018-2019 Compliance with Continuous Quality Improvement  
Legislation  
**Date:** June 18, 2019

The attached report provides information on course-level assessments conducted at the University of Northern Iowa in compliance with Iowa Code Section 262.9 (36). Information for this report was gathered through a Qualtrics survey administered in April 2019. The survey was given to University of Northern Iowa faculty teaching courses enrolling 100 or more students in all sections over the 2018-2019 academic year. Faculty were invited to respond to the survey individually or in collaboration with other faculty teaching the same course.

In addition to requesting information on the types of course-level assessments being implemented and the kinds of improvements made in response to what was learned from the assessments, the survey also requested information related to the ways in which learning outcomes were communicated to students. Data showed that 93% of the faculty responding to the survey included learning outcomes for their courses on the course syllabus. Learning outcomes were also communicated verbally (75%), on a course website and/or eLearning course web page (47%), with information for specific assignments for the course (37%), and in PowerPoint presentations delivered throughout the course (37%).

The attached report provides information on the types of course changes faculty reported making as a result of what they learned from their assessments of student learning. It is worthy of note that, of the top five changes reported, four deal directly with the student learning experience—the assignments they are asked to do, their activities and experiences in the course, the class time spent on specific course content, and to review or revise course texts and other learning resources. The fifth most frequently recognized course change noted by faculty was to change the assessment strategies to gain more accurate insight into what students are learning.

In addition to multiple-response survey items, the 2018-2019 CQI faculty survey included an open-ended question asking faculty to provide more detailed information on changes they had made to their classes as a result of their assessment of student learning; over half of the survey respondents shared stories of their experiences. An examination of these personal narratives showed several repeated themes— instructors reassessed and recreated coursework to provide a stronger connection between academic learning and real world experiences, instructors worked to become more transparent with students by emphasizing the connection between coursework, lectures, and student learning outcomes, instructors continuously assessed students' learning in the classroom and obtained feedback through in-class discussions, reflection papers, and course presentations, and instructors provided additional resources to support students by offering in-class time for discussion and coursework, individual meetings, and supplementary readings. Selected examples of the narratives collected are included in the attached report.

At UNI we believe in the power and critical importance of good teaching. The Continuous Quality Improvement survey for this year again provides evidence of this belief in action.



## University of Northern Iowa CQI Report for 2018-2019

This page provides summary information on the types of assessment strategies used during 2018-2019; the following pages provide an overview of the types of course improvements undertaken by faculty and examples of assessments and related activities in selected courses.

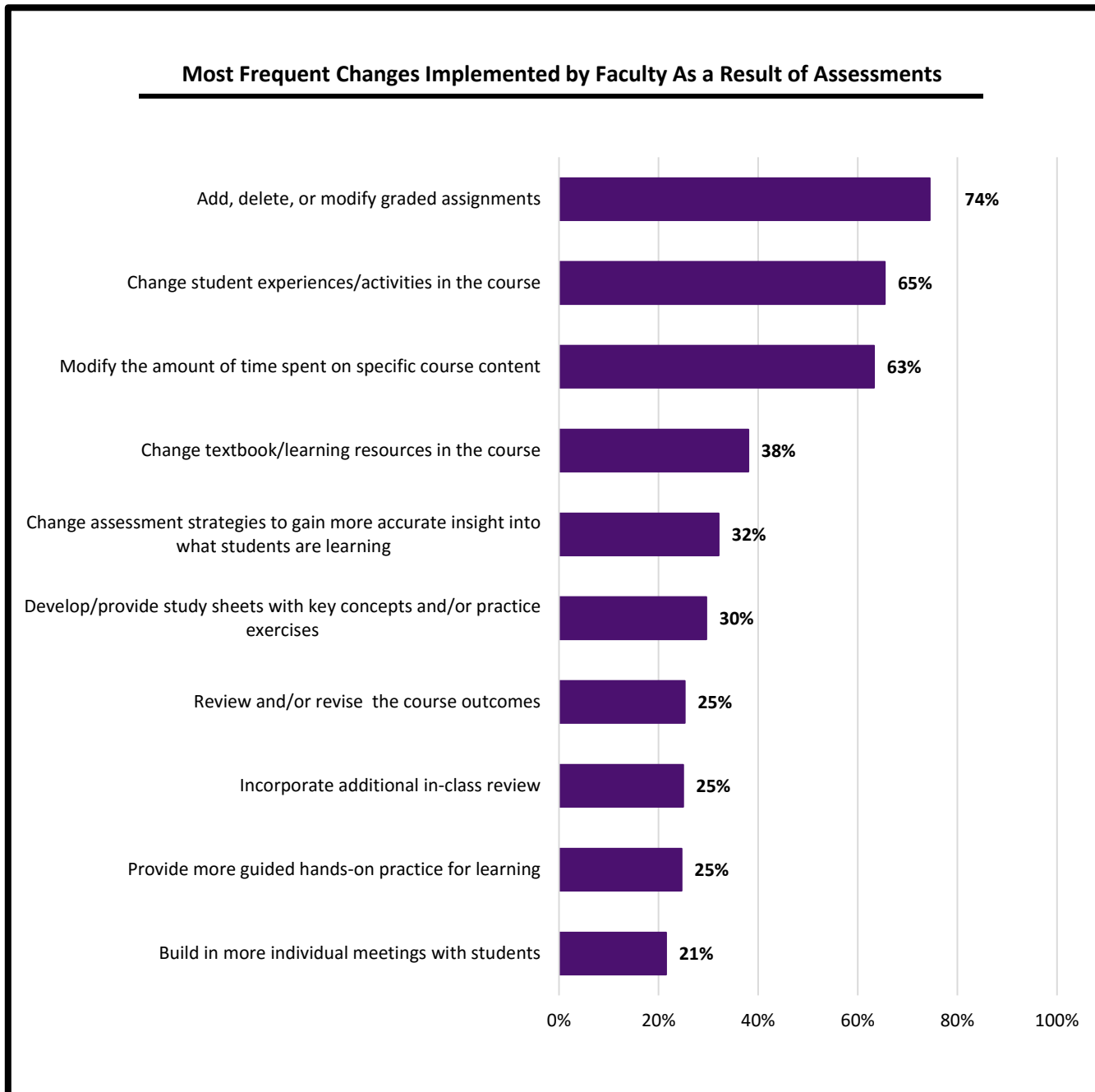
Continuous Improvement in University of Northern Iowa Courses	
<i>June 2019</i>	Report Date
<i>Fall 2018 - Spring 2019</i>	Report Period
Number of Courses, Students Enrolled	
<i>114 courses</i> <i>739 sections</i>	Total Number of Courses Offered (enrollment > or = 100 students) Total Number of Sections Offered in 2018-2019 (enrollment > or = 100 students)
<i>100,309</i>	Total Student Enrollment in Courses
Number of Courses <sup>1</sup> Utilizing Continuous Improvement Strategies and Percent of Respondents Reporting	
243	Locally-developed tests or quizzes (76%)
208	Graded homework assignments (65%)
193	Student understanding of content and concepts as revealed in class discussions (60%)
177	Observation of students doing in-class activities (55%)
133	Specific questions on tests or quizzes (41%)
126	Written or oral student reflections on their experiences and/or learning (39%)
110	Discussion in individual meetings with students (34%)
105	Rubrics or evaluation forms for individual project(s) (33%)
84	Faculty assessment of presentations or projects (26%)
71	Faculty review of mid-term and final grade distributions (22%)
66	Faculty discussion of student performance across sections of course (21%)
64	Journaling, discussion boards, blog (20%)
59	Comparison of course syllabi and/or assignments across sections (18%)
59	Peer assessment of presentations or projects (18%)
56	Formative (non-graded) assessments over the term (17%)
55	Survey of student perceptions of their learning (17%)
52	Rubrics or evaluation forms for culminating project(s) (16%)
31	Evaluation of student performance in simulations activities (10%)
27	Field experience evaluation forms (8%)
26	Pre- & post-tests (8%)
24	Student performance in subsequent courses (7%)

<sup>1</sup> Total number of strategies in use is greater than the total number of courses because many courses employ more than one continuous improvement strategy.

Other responses included the following methods for assessing student learning: written lab reports, multiple public performances of course content, unit projects, analysis of responses to individual test items, analysis of the grade distribution on individual exams and how it relates to the item analysis, cooperating teacher observations, interactions with students during the end of course portfolio conferences, praxis scores, and the assessment of science teaching performances.

### Overview of CQI Activities at UNI

As part of the Qualtrics survey administered in April 2019 to faculty teaching courses serving 100 or more students per academic year, one question asked faculty what kinds of changes they were making as they gathered assessment information and worked on continuous improvement. The table below summarizes their responses.



## Selected Examples of Assessments

The Qualtrics survey responses for the 2018-2019 academic year included many examples of the efforts made by faculty to keep their courses current and engaging and to support student learning. The examples below are just a very small sample of those provided.

**Children’s Literature (LITED:1044)** “Since Spring 2017, I have changed my primary method of instruction from lecture to discussion and inquiry. While our exploration will include some short lecture-oriented sessions, we will be including more in-class discussions and activities. As we read, probe, discuss, and synthesize, additional questions will tend to arise from our new understandings. So, our questions and discussions might lead us to different cultural, pedagogical, and theoretical pathways and therefore we may want to delve deeper into a particular topic. Through in-class dialogue, which involves respectful questioning of our and others’ stances, we expect to augment our knowledge base and our sense of competency and self-efficacy. To better prepare for an informative and engaging class, students are expected to illustrate their deep and critical thinking via class discussions and activities. Also, setting up peer-review sessions, I invite my students to provide feedback to their peers. I monitor their peer review sessions and give feedback on their discussions. My goal is to teach my courses in a way to provide a diverse learning environment, one that empowers my students in applying diversity to their future classrooms. I want my students to grow in their capability to read, analyze, respond to, and discuss children’s literature. Also, I want to expand my students’ access to and knowledge of diverse children’s literature. To assess student learning I examine the way they demonstrate their understanding of various ideological underpinnings associated with reading children’s literature. They will explore different ways to share their knowledge about multicultural children’s literature with others and unlearn the stereotypical single stories they might have created about other cultural groups.”

**Educational Technology & Design (INSTTECH:1031)** “As part of an ongoing review of the course, the six instructors and two graduate assistants meet weekly to make modifications on the language of the assignments, clarity of instructions, and currency of information, technology tools, and apps. Since all Iowa public schools are Google schools for this semester we aligned our course with Google Certified Educator (Level 1) Training and encourage our students to complete additional self-paced training and take the exam to obtain the Google Educator certificate. This is a pilot assignment. If successful, we may incorporate Google certification as a required part of our course. By obtaining the certificate students will have a proof of their proficiency in using Google tool for education and boost their self-confidence as future educators.”

**Elementary Teaching (TEACHING:3134)** “Elementary Teaching sections have a common assignment that is done across all sections of the course. This assignment is called the UNI Signature Video Assignment. The purpose of the assignment is for student teachers to receive individualized feedback from a group of peers, a self-assessment and observational feedback from us as instructors to help inform and guide their professional growth during student teaching. As students complete the Video Signature Assignment Process, I review their identified SMART GOALS resulting from the assignment to provide additional resources, seminar lessons and individual teaching to student teachers to help support their growth towards their SMART GOALS. Based on this individualized feedback, support and additional resources student teachers’ growth in that area, in most cases, improves on their final evaluation assessment from student teaching.”

**First-Year Cornerstone: Integrated Communication I/II (UNIV:1000/1010)** One major goal/outcome of this course is student success: helping students recognize and utilize academic resources and support programs. These are not only discussed in class throughout both semesters of this course, but, as an example, I took my class to the Academic Learning Center and they were able to attend a workshop on study strategies. Within this goal, students are also expected to participate and engage in campus and community activities. Besides specific community engagement assignments required in the fall semester, my students did a group project this spring semester in which each group chose an on-campus organization and conducted informative research on that organization, and then from that research created a 8-10 minute video to teach the rest of the class about that particular campus organization. From the videos and the in-class presentations, several students committed to getting more involved in some of the organizations independent of any class requirement (i.e. volunteering at the new Panther Pantry, signing up for Camp Adventure, joining Dance Marathon).

**Humanities II: The Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment (HUM:1022)** “Humanities is a set of required classes that all students need to take before they graduate UNI. It is my opinion that the Humanities represent the courses which students have the least exposure to in high school. It is also my opinion that the things students learn in Humanities are qualities directly related to successful employment and lifetime happiness. Because of these things, I direct my classes as such. I have made the actual lectures more accessible to a greater number of students by keeping the slides enjoyable and uncluttered. I revise exams in this class each semester based on the lectures and the successes and failures from the semester before. I have also added items that are completed online at the student's leisure (within a time frame) that help to enforce understanding of the material while boosting grades. Finally, to assist critical thinking in a class so large, I use a discussion board and instituted a "discussion reflection" over literature sources which required each student to participate in discussion with me and their classmates over the material. Feedback from students at the end of last semester suggested a growth in the number of students who felt engaged in the class and confident with what they learned.”

**Level 2 Field Experience: Teacher as a Change Agent (TEACHING:3128)** “Through watching students work in the classroom as early field experience students I have gained an understanding of what students go through as they move from a teacher candidate to teacher. As their confidence grows in the classroom the apprehensions they have about teaching disappear and the more risks they are willing to take as they assume a role as a teacher. This growth is the outcome of the Tasks we ask students to complete during the experience. Teacher candidates look at their mentor teacher's classroom from a 30,000-foot view then balcony view and then a close-up view as they experience teaching in the classroom. The evaluation of teacher candidates through this process provides me as well as the student a picture of the student's strengths and weaknesses as they move through the teacher education process. The experience teacher candidates gain through taking TEACHING 3128 allows them to have a blueprint for future areas of focus in teaching that can't be taught in the typical university classroom.”

**Physical Geography (GEOG:1210)** “I use a number of approaches to assessment, most of them with the purpose of learning how interested the students remain in the course material. It is not so important to me to determine how much of the specific material students retain, but how well they understand how the different course materials relate in a systematic way. It is difficult to 'test' this in a course this large as the tests and quizzes are all online. To overcome this, I allow the students to earn back 1/2-point on the questions they mark wrong by identifying WHY they gave the 'incorrect' answer and WHY the correct answer was more appropriate. I then use these explanations to find areas of the course where I should spend either more or less time.”