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Mark J. Braun, EdD, Executive Director

June 24, 2026

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 Members of the General Assembly:

The Iowa Board of Regents submits the attached report in compliance with Iowa Code section 262.9(36). The report highlights how the Regent universities use assessment, course redesign, student feedback, and academic support initiatives to continuously improve teaching, strengthen student learning, and support student success.

The Board remains committed to promoting academic excellence and ensuring that Regent institutions continually evaluate and improve educational outcomes for Iowa students. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mark J. Braun
Executive Director

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Attachments

Enc (3)



Office of Assessment

310 Calvin Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
assessment.uiowa.edu

DATE: May 28, 2026

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

RE: Compliance with Continuous Quality Improvement Legislation

I am attaching the 2025/26 report of the University of Iowa's compliance with Iowa Code Section 262.9(36). Since we first began compiling these annual reports, this documentation has consistently shown continuous quality improvement to be widely integrated throughout existing course structures and established faculty practices.

The first section of this year's report highlights examples of ways that assessment is integrated throughout large-enrollment General Education courses. The following section provides examples of structural changes departments have made in several large-enrollment courses in order to facilitate more formative assessment and feedback to students and help students use that information to improve their learning.

The third section of the report focuses on in a variety of other large enrollment courses that are leveraging technology to provide students with frequent personalized feedback and suggestions for continuing to improve their learning in the course.

The final section highlights projects in which instructors in introductory courses are partnering with undergraduate consultants and learning assistants. In the Students as Partners program, undergraduate consultants provide instructors with student perspectives on plans for class sessions and assignment design. In the Learning Assistants program, students in large lecture courses receive direct support during class time from other students who have previously done well in the course. Learning Assistants work with students during small group activities, clarify lecture materials, and respond to student questions. Outside of class time, Learning Assistants regularly update instructors on common challenges faced by students who are currently enrolled in the course. Both forms of partnership provide instructors with information that helps them support students in their courses more effectively.

Please let me know if you need additional information from me about these documents or other institutional assessment and improvement efforts at the University of Iowa during 2025/26.

UI CQI Strategies 2025/26

Continuous Improvement in University of Iowa Courses	
May 2026	Report Date
2025-26	Report Period
Number of courses with annual enrollment of 100 or more	
531	Total number of courses with annual enrollments of 100 or more
175,762	Total student enrollments in courses with annual enrollments of 100 or more

The following summaries provide examples of UI instructors engaging in forms of continuous quality improvement in order to assess and improve their teaching in large-enrollment courses and to provide students with regular feedback on their progress toward achieving course learning goals.

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN LARGE-ENROLLMENT GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

General Education courses are designed to include early and frequent feedback to students in order to help both faculty members and students monitor student learning and progress in the course. To have a course included in the General Education program, faculty must submit a syllabus, assignments, and sample assessment procedures to the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC), which consists of faculty members and representatives of the Dean's office. To gain approval from GECC, a course must demonstrate that it has clear expectations, early and frequent feedback to students, and assignments that build in complexity over the course of the semester. For more information, see <https://resource.clas.uiowa.edu/course-attributes-and-instructor-expectations>.

GECC recently undertook a comprehensive review of Visual and Performing Arts General Education requirement, which focuses on artistic expression, analyzing the elements of artistic and literary works, and understanding artistic and literary works in their cultural and historical contexts. Large-enrollment courses identified through this review provide examples of ways that faculty assess student learning on an ongoing basis and work to support learning based on the assessment evidence they collect.

ARTH:1050 - From Cave Paintings to Cathedrals (2025/26 enrollment = 132)

ARTH:1060 - From Mona Lisa to Modernism (2025/26 enrollment = 401)

ARTH:1050 and ARTH:1060 are surveys of art history, the former spanning from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages, and the latter from the Renaissance to modern times. The courses introduce students to the close analysis of the elements of art. Students also study how artistic methods and styles have changed over time, how artists respond to their cultural and social context through their artwork, and how artworks reflect certain cultural values.

ARTH:1050 is a large lecture course; ARTH:1060 is offered as an asynchronous online course. Students enrolled in ARTH:1050 are also assigned to smaller discussion sections led by teaching assistants. Students in ARTH:1060 are also assigned to online discussion sections where they respond to discussion prompts and reply to one another's responses. Teaching assistants moderate and participate in these discussions.

In ARTH:1050, teaching assistants assign students regular homework and in-class assignments related to class material. These assignments provide the instructor and students with early and frequent assessments on student learning in the class. These frequent assignments also provide students with early and frequent feedback about their progress in the class. Students also receive frequent feedback on their contributions in the discussion sections. Students in ARTH:1060 also receive frequent feedback on their contributions in the discussion sections.

CERM:2010 - Ceramics I: Handbuilding (2025/26 enrollment = 165)

In CERM:2010, students with little or no background in ceramics are introduced to the ceramic arts. Throughout the semester, students learn how to make their own clay and glaze, to operate a kiln, and to make different types of ceramic works. The course focuses on learning techniques of artistic production and understanding how the elements of an artwork fit together conceptually. Students receive regular feedback from the instructor as they work on their pieces in class, and class members critique one another's works once they are completed.

Students engage in class discussions of one another's completed pieces and on topics related to contemporary issues in the ceramic arts. Students are also expected to do a research project on a contemporary ceramics artist and present on their research to the class, which then discusses the presentation.

This research also gives greater depth to the course because it provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the historical, cultural, and social context of artists' work. Although the class is primarily focused on technique students are also encouraged to begin thinking about how their work can be an expression of their personal values and concerns.

CW:1800 - Creative Writing Studio Workshop (2025/26 enrollment = 571)

CW:1800 offers undergraduates a creative writing workshop taught by graduate students in the world's premier MFA program in creative writing, the Iowa Writer's Workshop. Students study and learn how to write fiction, poetry, and non-fiction. Students produce creative works and share them with one another and participate in workshops where they receive feedback from their instructor and peers. The students also study creative works by established authors, analyzing elements of the work and learning the craft of writing

Through the workshop process, students receive frequent, ongoing feedback on their work and their progress in the class. Instructors in the class use a rubric (shared in common across different sections of the course) to assess students' participation in the feedback sessions. Students also complete frequent writing assignments based on assigned readings and receive feedback on those assignments as well.

Studying the works of established authors allows students to not only learn about the elements of writing, but also to study and discuss how authors are influenced by and respond to their cultural and social context. Students are invited to reflect on their own context and experiences in their writing and to express their views through their writing while improving their craft.

MODIFYING COURSE STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

BIOL:1411 Foundations of Biology (2025/26 enrollment = 1,302) and **BIOL:1412 Diversity of Form and Function** (2025/26 enrollment = 947)

BIO:1411 and 1412 are introductory courses that are required for the Biology major and a number of other majors in the natural sciences. They are large lecture courses which have recently been significantly restructured in order to provide students with more frequent feedback and assessment of their learning, giving students more opportunities to monitor their own progress, adjust their approaches to studying, and seek help when needed.

In both courses, two high-stakes exams formerly administered outside of class time have been replaced by five shorter exams administered in class. The exams cover the same content, but more frequent lower-stakes exams give students more frequent information about areas where they can improve, and also alleviate student anxiety that is often associated with infrequent high-stakes exams.

In both courses, three full lab report assignments have also been replaced by more frequent smaller-scale assignments, including assignments focusing on different parts of a lab report. This allows for more frequent feedback on student work, while students still learn how to write full lab reports in more advanced courses.

CHEM:1110 - Principles of Chemistry I Labs (2025/26 enrollment = 2,088)

CHEM:1120 - Principles of Chemistry II Labs (2025/26 enrollment = 1,473)

CHEM:2410 - Organic Chemistry Laboratory (2025/26 enrollment = 461)

Chemistry labs help reinforce student learning of course material through conducting hands-on experiments, and they also teach students important laboratory skills that they will use in further studies and in chemistry-related careers. These laboratory skills are similar across multiple courses, and yet the labs are taught by several different instructors, who were previously each expected to develop their own course standards and assessment methods.

To support student learning within and across laboratory experiences, the Chemistry department developed a common rubric for lab courses. This shared rubric is beneficial to students because it provides a clear articulation of what is expected of them in lab courses and provides common standards across multiple courses, facilitating student ability to build on their learning from one course to the next. It's also beneficial to instructors, who can now use these common standards when setting learning expectations in their courses.

PSY:1001 - Elementary Psychology (2025/26 enrollment = 1,570)

PSY:2301 - Introduction to Clinical Psychology (2025/26 enrollment = 629)

PSY:2401 - Introduction to Developmental Science (2025/26 enrollment = 554)

PSY:2501 - Introduction to Social Psychology (2025/26 enrollment = 595)

PSY:2601 - Introduction to Cognitive Psychology (2025/26 enrollment = 515)

PSY:2701 - Introduction to Behavioral Neuroscience (2025/26 enrollment = 522)

PSY:2811 - Research Methods & Data Analysis I (2025/26 enrollment = 554)

PSY:2812 - Research Methods & Data Analysis II (2025/26 enrollment = 414)

These courses provide Psychology and Brain Sciences majors with an introduction to the discipline, surveys of the various branches of psychology, and an introduction to research methods in the field. All these introductory courses are taught through large lectures combined with smaller discussion sections.

The Psychology and Brain Sciences department undertook a comprehensive review of the discussion sections in these courses to assess teaching methods and student learning. This assessment process resulted in two changes that have improved the student learning experience in all these courses. The first was to provide more uniform guidance and support for the teaching assistants (in partnership between with the Center for Teaching) on best practices for facilitating student learning in discussion sections.

The second was to hold discussions among the different instructors teaching each course to share best practices in terms of teaching methods and assignments that best support student learning. These discussions allow instructors to benefit from one another's observations and develop more effective strategies in their own courses.

USING LEARNING ANALYTICS TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING IN LARGE COURSES

Course Activity Insights (CAI) is a suite of learning analytics dashboards for faculty that has been designed to facilitate data-informed teaching and ultimately support student success at the University of Iowa. Large-enrollment courses using CAI are listed in Table 1. In surveys, interviews, and consultations with CAI team members, instructors reported that CAI augments their teaching by enhancing their capability to anticipate and identify students' needs.

Instructors used CAI to support students more effectively by leveraging real-time insights into student engagement with course materials. This enabled them to make adjustments in teaching and communication strategies. For instance, some instructors aligned their lectures with students' majors and concurrent course enrollments, and others shared insights about the relationship between student engagement with course materials early in the semester and their subsequent performance on assignments and tests later in the semester. This approach allowed instructors to provide feedback to students on more effective ways to engage with course materials and to

adapt their own communication with students in response to students' academic backgrounds and levels of course engagement.

CAI also became a proactive tool for instructors to identify and support students at different levels of engagement. For example, they provided targeted guidance to underperforming students based on whether the students were highly active or not very active in engaging with online course materials. Additionally, CAI facilitated the instructors' end-of-semester reflections on course design, helping them plan adjustments for future semesters based on engagement data and performance correlations. This process included checking the alignment between formative and summative assessments to ensure the course design effectively supported desired learning.

More information about instructor uses of CAI is reported at <https://oneit.uiowa.edu/unlocking-insights-instructors> and <https://teach.its.uiowa.edu/research-and-analytics/course-activity-insights>.

Table 1. Large Enrollment Undergraduate Courses Using CAI in 2025/26.

Course Number	Course Title	Annual Enrollment
ACCT:2200	Managerial Accounting Analytics & Data Visualization	1340
BIOL:1412	Diversity of Form and Function	947
BIOL:3244	Animal Behavior	102
BIOS:4120	Introduction to Biostatistics	304
CHEM:1080	General Chemistry II	557
CHEM:1110	Principles of Chemistry I	2088
CHEM:1120	Principles of Chemistry II	1473
CHEM:2210	Organic Chemistry I	1105
ECON:1100	Principles of Microeconomics	1973
ECON:1200	Principles of Macroeconomics	1650
ENGR:1100	Introduction to Engineering Problem Solving	499
ENTR:3100	Entrepreneurial Finance	342
FIN3200	Investment Management	674
MGMT:2000	Introduction to Law	1499
MGMT:2100	Introduction to Management	1615
MKTG:3000	Introduction to Marketing Strategy	1741
PSY:2501	Introduction to Social Psychology	595
PSY:2812	Research Methods & Data Analysis in Psych II	414

PARTNERING WITH STUDENTS

Instructors in large-enrollment gateway courses are often engaged in a variety of efforts to assess and improve student learning and advance the use of evidence-based teaching in their courses. Some instructors in these courses are partnering directly with students in a variety of ways to help them assess and improve their teaching and provide direct support to help students assess and improve their learning.

Learning Assistants

The Learning Assistant (LA) Program provides direct support to students in large enrollment courses through the integration of LAs into classrooms. LAs are undergraduate students who, with training and support, help facilitate activities during class sessions to increase active collaboration to improve student learning.

LAs enroll in a course to provide training for their roles: LS:1014 - *Learning Assistants Training - Pedagogy: Creating Collaborative Learning Environments*. In the course, LAs receive training in facilitation, pedagogy, and course content through which they are able to apply in the courses they support. In addition to providing students with direct support and feedback on their learning during class sessions, LAs meet with instructors for weekly planning sessions, at which they are able to provide instructors with feedback based on their in-class observations and interactions with students who are taking the course.

Four large-enrollment courses (combined annual enrollment of 4489 students) incorporated LAs during 2025/26. For more information, visit <https://learning.uiowa.edu/learning-assistant-program>

Students as Partners

This year the university expanded the Students as Partners program, originally piloted in 2023 to support instructors in large-enrollment lecture-based courses. Undergraduates in this program are each assigned to work with an instructor to enhance teaching and learning experiences in the instructor's course. Student consultants receive training and support from the Center for Teaching, observe class sessions, and meet with the instructor to discuss teaching methods and possible course enhancements. Through these meetings, instructors receive feedback from a student perspective which helps them improve assignments and class activities and also provides insight on challenges students are facing in their courses.

Eight large enrollment courses (combined annual enrollment of 4982 students) incorporated Students as Partners during 2025/26. To learn more, see teaching.center.uiowa.edu/programs-and-initiatives/students-partners

STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING EXCELLENCE

Promoting excellence in teaching and learning is a central priority of the University's 2022-27 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan has sparked a number of initiatives related to assessing and supporting student learning both within and outside of their courses: <https://strategicplan.uiowa.edu/excellence-teaching-and-learning-progress>

In addition, during this time, faculty have continued to prioritize student learning as they adapt their teaching strategies in response to increasing enrollments: <https://now.uiowa.edu/news/2025/10/more-students-more-solutions-faculty-rise-meet-growing-enrollment>

During this time, the university has seen record-high student retention and graduation rates at a time of steadily increasing undergraduate enrollment: <https://now.uiowa.edu/news/2026/02/ui-sets-new-records-student-retention-graduation>

To: Rachel Boon, Chief Academic Officer, Iowa Board of Regents
From: Megan Vogt-Kostner, Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning
Re: Report on 2025-2026 Compliance with Continuous Quality Improvement Legislation
Date: June 1st, 2026

The attached report presents information on course level assessments conducted at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) in accordance with Iowa Code Section 262.9 (36). Faculty who taught courses with enrollments of 100 or more students during Summer 2025, Fall 2025, and Spring 2026 were invited to complete a survey, either individually or collaboratively with colleagues teaching the same course, to share how they assess, intervene, and enhance student learning and outcomes within their courses.

The survey collected detailed information about the types of assessments used at the course level and the instructional changes made in response to assessment findings. It also explored how faculty communicated course learning outcomes to students. According to this year's responses, 99% of faculty reported including learning outcomes in their course syllabi. Beyond the syllabus, faculty shared a variety of strategies to communicate these outcomes, such as: presenting the learning outcomes verbally in class (74%), posting them on the course eLearning site (68%), including them with specific assignments for the course (48%), sharing them through class PowerPoint presentations (47%), and discussing them in conversations with students after class or during office hours (46%).

The report further details a range of modifications faculty made to better support student learning and engagement. The most frequently reported changes were all focused on enhancing the overall student experience. These included adding, removing or revising current assignments to better align with student learning outcomes (77%), reviewing and updating course activities (74%), modifying the time devoted to course activities to enhance student learning (67%), providing more guided, hands-on practice opportunities in the classroom (41%), and modifying course textbooks or other learning materials to better support student learning (38%).

Through open-ended questions in the 2025–2026 Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) survey, faculty shared specific changes they made to their courses based on assessment results throughout the semester. 77% of respondents offered detailed reflections on their teaching practices. Faculty reported revising and refining assignments, activities, and lecture materials in areas where students experienced significant difficulty. Faculty reported using frequent assessments throughout the semester to monitor student learning and make real-time adjustments based on performance outcome data and student feedback. Faculty also incorporated opportunities for student reflection through discussion boards, journaling, and in-class activities to strengthen engagement and content comprehension. To support learning styles and increase student participation, instructors reinforced learning through supplemental classroom materials and methods. In response to concerns surrounding AI, faculty redesigned assignments to ensure student learning, often incorporating more in-class activities to more accurately assess student understanding.

Overall, the survey findings reflect a sustained commitment among UNI faculty to using assessment data to enhance teaching practices and support student success. Through thoughtful reflection and targeted instructional changes, faculty are continually working to improve the quality of education offered in high-enrollment courses across the university.

University of Northern Iowa CQI Report for 2025-2026

This page offers a summary of the assessment strategies used during the 2025–2026 academic year. The following pages share the types of course enhancements made by faculty, along with examples of assessments and related activities from selected courses.

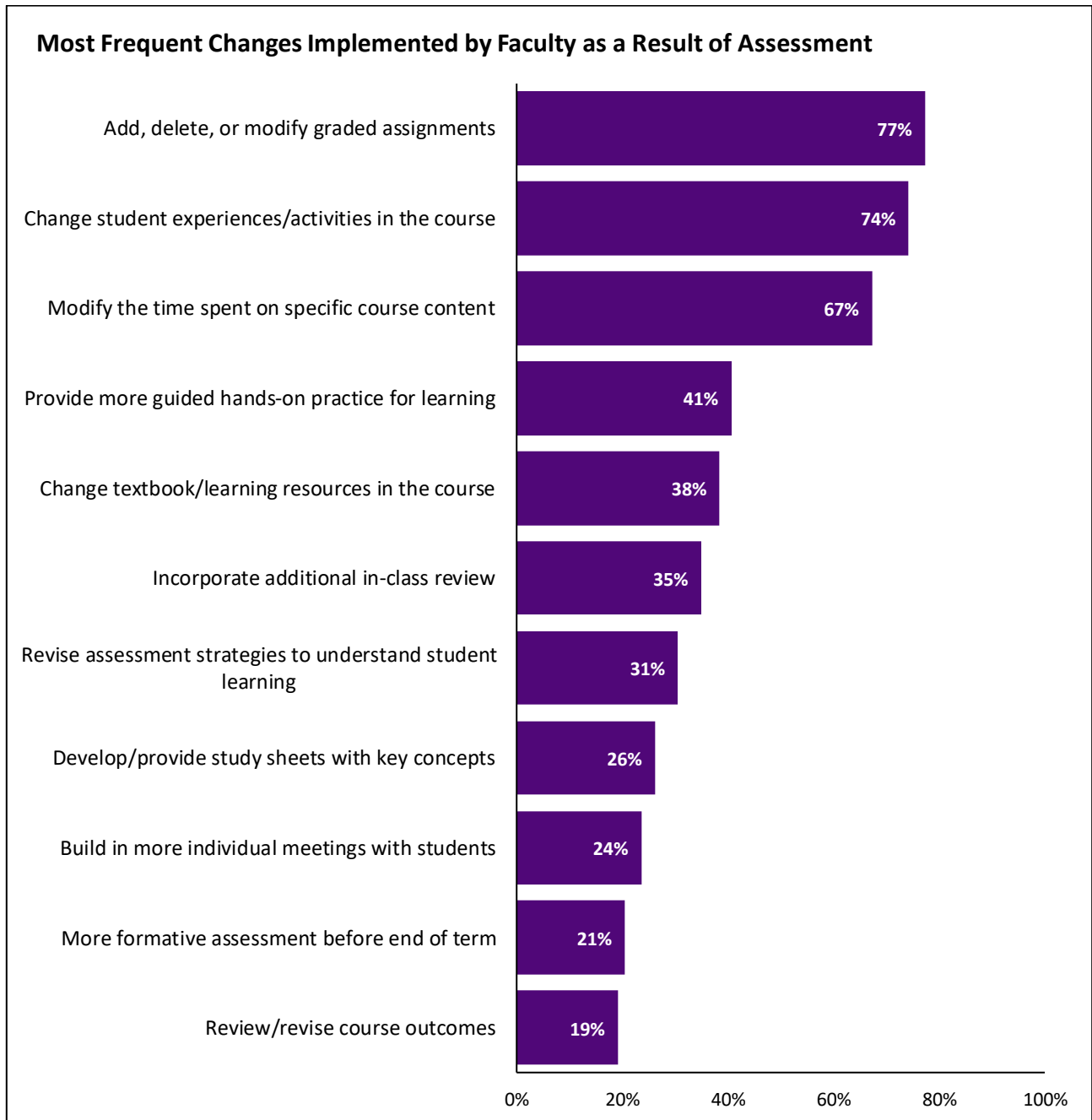
Continuous Improvement in University of Northern Iowa Courses	
<i>May 2026</i>	Report Date
<i>Summer 2025 – Spring 2026</i>	Report Period
Number of Courses, Students Enrolled	
<i>92 courses</i> <i>449 sections</i>	Total Number of Courses Offered (enrollment > or = 100 students) Total Number of Sections Offered in 2025-2026 (enrollment > or = 100 students)
<i>84,588</i>	Total Student Enrollment in Courses
Number of Courses ¹ Utilizing Continuous Improvement Strategies and Percent of Respondents Reporting	
173	Graded homework assignments (76%)
164	Locally developed tests or quizzes (72%)
134	Observation of students doing in-class activities (59%)
126	Student understanding of content and concepts as revealed in class discussions (55%)
107	Written or oral student reflections on their experiences and/or learning (47%)
105	Rubrics or evaluation forms for individual project(s) (46%)
84	Specific questions on tests or quizzes (37%)
74	Discussion in individual meetings with students (32%)
57	Formative (non-graded) assessments over the term (25%)
52	Rubrics or evaluation forms for culminating project(s) (23%)
50	Faculty assessment of presentations or projects (22%)
50	Journaling, discussion boards, blog (22%)
49	Review of midterm and final grade distributions (21%)
44	Comparison of course syllabi and/or assignments across sections (19%)
41	Surveys of student perceptions of learning (18%)
38	Evaluation of student performance in simulations activities (17%)
38	Faculty discussion of student performance across sections of course (17%)
36	Peer assessment of presentations or projects (16%)
24	Clicker questions or polling activities (11%)
23	Evaluation of student performance in subsequent courses (10%)
21	Field experience evaluation forms (9%)
18	Department/program monitoring of DFW rates (8%)
18	Conduct pre- & post-tests (8%)

¹ 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 for assessing student learning included: supplementary written assignments, presentations, review of lesson plans, feedback on presentations and projects, participation in in-person community of practice events, observation of student teaching, and self-guided lab activities.

Overview of CQI Activities at UNI

In the Qualtrics survey distributed in April and May 2026 to faculty teaching courses with 100 or more students per year, one question focused on the types of changes faculty were implementing as they collected assessment data and pursued continuous improvement. The table below provides a summary of faculty responses.



Selected Examples of Assessments

The Qualtrics survey responses for the 2025-2026 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.

Criminal Justice Systems (CRIM 2022): I use discussions, applied assignments, experiential learning, and written assessments to evaluate student understanding of the criminal justice system. Through early assessments, I found that while students could describe components such as law enforcement, courts, and corrections, they often struggled to apply concepts and relied on personal opinions rather than evidence-based reasoning. In response, I incorporated more structured, scenario-based activities and case analyses that require students to apply concepts such as discretion, due process, and systemic inequality to real-world situations. I also revised assignment expectations to more explicitly require the use of course terminology and supporting evidence. Additionally, I integrated experiential learning through a jail tour, followed by a structured reflection assignment that requires students to connect their observations to course concepts related to corrections and institutional practices. I also increased the use of low-stakes, in-class activities to allow students to practice applying concepts before completing higher-stakes work, which helps identify gaps in understanding early. As a result of these changes, students demonstrate stronger engagement and an improved ability to connect theory to practice in both discussions and written work.

Development and Learning in Sociocultural Contexts (EDPSYCH: 2068): The assessment tools used in this course have evolved over multiple semesters. In earlier offerings, a combination of short quizzes/tests and large group projects was implemented; however, these formats did not consistently foster meaningful student interaction. To promote peer teaching and exposure to diverse perspectives, the course now incorporates multiple in-class group activities throughout the semester. Students work collaboratively to discuss and respond to guided questions that address topics such as the influence of early developmental contexts on later outcomes, reflections on personal metacognitive knowledge and strategy use, and theory-based approaches for supporting multilingual learners. These revisions provide students with continual opportunities to recall and apply previously learned concepts while integrating new material, thereby supporting the development of a strong and coherent foundational understanding over the course of the semester.

Family Relationships FAM SERV:1020: I utilize a variety of instructional methods and assessment techniques. Students get hands on learning and application of theory through interviews with friends and family. They are assessed through weekly quizzes on textbook materials. This gives me frequent feedback and allows for quicker intervention and support of it is found students struggle with particular content areas. The final presentation/paper has been modified to allow students to either submit in a paper format or a presentation to best allow for them to demonstrate their learning in a method that they resonate with and works for them.

General Physics I (PHYSICS:1511): I employ a variety of active learning strategies to foster conceptual understanding. In my General Physics courses, I use Mastering Physics assignments and analyze student performance data to identify areas of difficulty. I employ clicker-based think-pair-share questions to diagnose misconceptions in real time and adjust instruction accordingly. After implementing this method, the percentage of students correctly answering conceptual exam questions increased significantly. In group settings, students collaboratively solve problems on whiteboards or engage in workbook-based activities that require teamwork and verbal reasoning. I regularly incorporate in-class demonstrations, slow-motion video analysis, and PhET simulations to illustrate core physical principles. These approaches are particularly effective in large, mixed-major courses where student backgrounds vary widely.

Strategies for Academic Success (UNIV:1055): For this course, one key insight from our assessment was the value of structured peer support. We found the bi-weekly coaching sessions with peer coaches to be highly beneficial. During these sessions, students were more willing to open up and confide in their peers, and the peer coaches were able to provide helpful resources and guidance in a way that felt approachable and supportive. At the same time, we recognized a gap in our own connection with students. From an instructor perspective, there was a noticeable disconnect early in the semester, and we did not begin to build strong rapport with students until around mid-semester. Based on this realization, we made a change to the course in the following term. In the fall, we introduced intentional 1:1 meetings with students, meeting with each student twice a semester. These meetings were designed to get to know students more holistically, understand their experiences, and identify any potential barriers impacting their success. This proactive approach allowed us to provide more personalized support and foster stronger relationships earlier in the course, ultimately enhancing student engagement and learning.

Strategic Management (MGMT:4175): I use a combination of chalkboard work and skeleton notes, so students actively engage with the material during class rather than passively copying finished solutions. I have developed in-class worksheets with practice problems that give students hands-on experience applying concepts in real time, and I collect these for completion to identify areas where students are struggling so I can adjust instruction accordingly. I have also revised major assignments to improve student awareness of the strengths and limitations of AI by incorporating activities where students evaluate AI-generated responses for accuracy and bias, and I require a brief reflection on any AI tools used so students develop the habit of thinking critically about these tools rather than relying on them uncritically. Additionally, I provide structured study guides organized around learning objectives and practice problems to help students prepare more effectively for assessments.

Teaching Methods I: Elementary Curriculum (EDUC:2302): I use multiple forms of assessment to evaluate student's progress toward learning outcomes and to inform instructional adjustments. Students analyze lesson plans for key components and make targeted adaptations, then apply this learning by collaboratively designing and teaching a group lesson that incorporates effective lesson planning practices. These lessons are framed through the lens of diverse learners, encouraging students to consider how factors such as culture, language, and individual needs shape instruction. In addition, students complete eight low-stakes, UDL-inspired reflections in varied formats based on course texts. These reflections provide insight into the theoretical understandings students are developing throughout the course. Through these assessments, I have learned that while students can identify elements of effective lesson planning, they benefit from more explicit support in applying these components in practice. In response, I have refined assignment scaffolds and provided clearer connections between analysis and application tasks. I also plan to implement an end-of-semester student survey to gather more targeted feedback and continue improving the course to better support student learning.

Elementary Teaching (EDUC:4134): In 2025, a team of COE faculty and administrators conducted a peer review of comparable teacher education programs to determine best practices in supervising and evaluating student teachers. One of the outcomes was to create common weekly seminars for student teachers that support them through their experience. Through this work, the Student Teaching Coordinator team aligned student learning outcomes to the student teaching seminars, key assessments and assignments, and field experiences. This work is underway and expected to be implemented in the fall of 2026.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

2024-25 Iowa Board of Regents Continuous Improvement Report Iowa State University

During the 2024-2025 academic year, Iowa State University continued a number of student success initiatives with a focus on continuous improvement and supporting student learning. This report will highlight both sustaining and developing initiatives for continuous improvement in the classroom.

Summary of Continuous Improvement in Iowa State University Courses	
Report Date	March 2026
Report Period	AY 2024-2025
Number of Courses and Enrollment	
Total Number of Courses	637
Number of Course Sections by Term	Fall 2024: 2050 Winter Session 2024-2025: 44 Spring 2025: 1921 Summer 2025: 217
Number of Courses by Level	Undergraduate: 569 Graduate: 11 Professional: 57
Total Student Enrollment (duplicated enrollment)	222,626

DFW Rates

Successfully completing a course helps a student progress efficiently towards graduation. Efficiency includes both graduating in a timely manner (at a pace appropriate for individual student ability) and financial efficiency (only paying to take courses a single time). One measure of the progress towards graduation is analyzing DFW rates, or the number/percentage of students who earn a D or F grade or withdraw from a course. Iowa State University monitors this data when evaluating the success of a previous academic year. DFW rates are impacted by the experience a student has in the classroom and are an important metric in assessing quality and improvement in the classroom.

College-wide DFW Rates

Despite the disruption in the pattern of student achievement during the years immediately after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, college-wide DFW rate data shows all six undergraduate colleges to be at or below Fall 2020 DFW rates. All six undergraduate academic colleges have seen consistent drops in UG DFW rates when comparing Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023, and Fall 2024. Notable declines are found in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (F21: 15.3%; F24: 12.5%) and the Ivy College of Business (F21: 10.1%; F24: 6.4%) This demonstrates that overall, more students are successfully completing their courses and progressing toward their degree completion.

DFW Rates in Individual Courses

Iowa State continues to focus on DFW rates on campus through tracking the changes and patterns in those rates across individual courses. Iowa State University continues to provide high-quality opportunities for faculty to develop their teaching and classroom skills through offerings from CELT, the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. All departments participate in the CELT-led Student-Centered Learning Workshop. This workshop “reflects Iowa State’s land-grant mission by supporting a shared commitment to teaching that helps all students learn deeply and apply their knowledge beyond the classroom.” The Student-Centered Learning Workshop gives time for faculty to discuss and reflect on their teaching experiences and learn about evidence-based instructional practices.

DFW Rates in Individual High Enrollment Courses

DFW rates at Iowa State have declined overall since AY 21-22. This illustrates diligent work the faculty have done within their courses to continue improving the quality of the classroom experience. The improvement in the quality of the classroom experience is also illustrated by the observation that only three courses have consistently remained in the list of the 20 courses with the highest DFW rates over the last four academic years, and each of those have seen steady declines in their DFW rates in that time. Additionally, these courses enroll less than 55 students. Of courses with the highest DFW rates from Fall 2024, only six of them have enrollment of over 100, which represents less than 1% of the total number of courses with over 100 enrollments. Departments and colleges are paying attention to student achievement and adjusting the quality of their offerings.

Good progress has been made in courses with the highest enrollments as well. There are 14 courses that appear consistently in the top 20 of total enrollment over the past four years. Of these 14 courses, 9 have DFW rates that are equal to or lower than those in Fall 2021, showing year over year improvement. Notable decreases were seen in high enrollment courses in English/communications, science, and mathematics, demonstrating the focus that faculty are giving to courses with direct impacts on skills needed in today’s workforce. These numbers will continue to be monitored and evaluated into future semesters, and faculty will continue to evaluate and assess their courses, course structure, and teaching methodology.

An example of how the DFW rate data is used in continuous improvement can be seen in the successful course redesign efforts for the PHYS 2310 & 2320 (Classical Physics I & II) course sequence, mentioned in last year’s report. In a cross-campus partnership, the Office of the Senior Vice President & Provost, the College of Engineering, the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, and the Department of Physics and Astronomy began work in the summer of 2023 to collaboratively redesign, assess, and iterate on these two important foundational courses for Iowa State engineering students. AY 2023-2024 final grades in both Physics courses saw DFW rates drop by over 20% compared to AY 2022-2023. DFW rates for AY 2024-2025 are holding steady at approximately the same overall rates as AY 2023-2024. Not only did the number of students receiving a D, F, or W decrease, but the percentages of A’s awarded in the courses remains above AY 2022-2023 rates. The redesign included reviews and adjustments to content, learning outcomes, assessments, and increased academic support opportunities (tutoring and coaching).

General Student Academic Success Efforts

In AY 24-25, a variety of outreach efforts were conducted through the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost to give students early referral to academic support. Outreach and communication included:

- The Cyclone Check-In survey: a brief survey with the opportunity for students to note their concerns and receive information and a personalized follow-up
 - As a result of survey responses, over 1500 unique students received an individualized message connecting them with academic resources through the Academic Success Center on campus.
- Interim Grade Connections: over 10,000 distinct students received outreach and support activated by a C- or lower interim grade in a course. Outreach connected students with their instructor, academic advisor, financial aid, and the Academic Success Center.
- Cyclone Support Specialist: the staff member hired in this role was able to increase the number of students receiving electronic connections to campus resources (280% increase from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024), and there was a subsequent increase in the number of students who actually acted to utilize the resource (appointment conversions increased 183% from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024).