2023 GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

WSU Summary Report

Washington State University

Prepared by the Graduate School   *March 2024*

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WSU graduate programs are expected to engage in an ongoing process of systematic evaluation to assess the quality of graduate student learning and achievement at the degree or program-level. Graduate programs report annually on their assessment activities and use of assessment data to the Graduate School and academic leadership, and the Graduate School provides a systemwide summary for graduate programs, colleges, and the university. As such, graduate program assessment is designed to support graduate students and their learning goals, provide actionable information for program improvement, inform academic and learning support planning, and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the university.

This summary report compiles data from 66 attestation assessment reports that WSU graduate programs submitted to the Graduate School in Fall 2023. The report describes representative assessment activities and uses of assessment data and is not intended to give specific examples or show all assessment undertaken by WSU graduate programs.

WSU Benchmarks and Targets

All WSU graduate programs (100%) are expected to have an assessment plan in place to guide the assessment process and publish student learning outcomes that are specific, well-defined, and measurable. Graduate faculty have primary responsibility for implementing their assessment plan and ensuring that the results are used to improve student learning outcomes and the overall quality and effectiveness of their programs. Substantially all WSU graduate programs (≥ 90%) are expected to conduct regular program assessment activities, use assessment data to make meaningful changes and improvements, and document their results in annual program assessment reports.

Program Assessment Reporting

In Fall 2023, WSU graduate programs were asked to submit an attestation assessment report to the Graduate School documenting their current assessment practice and use of assessment data. All graduate programs (100%) met the report requirement, and Key Areas of Strength, Areas for Attention, and Program Goals are noted below.

Graduate Assessment: Areas of Strength

Note: The Graduate School recognizes that graduate programs may spread their data collection, analysis, and review activities over two or more years as a result of the transition to alternating-year assessment reporting.

1. All WSU graduate programs (66/66) submitted an Attestation Assessment Report to the Graduate School in Fall 2023 that documented ongoing data collection and assessment activities in the graduate program.
2. All graduate programs (100%) currently have a graduate assessment plan in place with student learning outcomes that faculty use to guide the collection and use of assessment data at the degree or program level.
   a. Nine graduate programs (14%) reported that they approved, revised, or made changes to their graduate assessment plan or student learning outcomes in AY 2023.
3. Substantially all graduate programs (97%) publish student learning outcomes for graduate students on their website or in their graduate student handbook where they can be easily accessed by current and prospective students.

4. A majority of graduate programs (85%) reported that faculty conducted at least one program-level assessment activity in AY 2023. Specifically,
    a. 80% of graduate programs collected assessment data including student learning outcomes data, student success measures, or other direct or indirect measures.
    b. 67% of graduate programs conducted program-level assessment activities or assessed one or more graduate student learning outcomes.
    c. 36% of graduate programs made a documentable change or improvement to the graduate program after reviewing assessment data.

Graduate Assessment: Areas for Attention

1. Graduate programs indicated that faculty and staff turnover create challenges for program assessment and continuous quality improvement. To address this issue, programs should establish regular data collection and review schedules, encourage faculty participation in assessment, and ensure that graduate assessment policies, procedures, and timelines are documented and communicated to faculty and staff members.
2. Graduate programs indicated that program assessment does not always provide meaningful or relevant information for program improvement. Graduate programs are encouraged to periodically review their graduate assessment plans and student learning outcomes and make changes to them to ensure that their assessment process provides actionable information for planning and decision-making. Graduate programs are encouraged to reflect on their assessment practice and identify ways to keep their program-level assessment as simple and useful as possible.
3. In previous feedback, graduate programs identified common barriers for assessment including lack of recognition for doing graduate assessment, lack of institutional incentives, difficulty finding time for assessment, and difficulty measuring student learning and achievement in evidence-based ways. The Graduate School is working to address these issues and is available to answer questions and will provide one-on-one support on request.

Graduate Assessment: Program Goals

The Top 5 Program Goals to improve graduate assessment identified by graduate programs in AY 2024 are:

1. Improve data collection and analysis.
2. Share graduate assessment results and improvements with administrators and others.
3. Use graduate assessment to improve student learning outcomes or student success measures.
4. Meet with faculty to discuss assessment results.
5. Use graduate assessment to support program planning and decision-making.

Graduate School Priorities

The Top 3 Graduate School Priorities for graduate assessment in the upcoming 2024-25 academic year are:

1. Improve communication with graduate programs and colleges on timelines, good practice, and expectations for graduate program assessment; provide virtual "office hours" for graduate program assessment starting in Spring 2023.
2. Distribute the 2022-24 report template; collect assessment reports from graduate programs; provide assistance to graduate programs that request help with their assessment or use of assessment data.
3. Compile the 2022-24 report data; document good practice and examples from graduate programs; prepare for the NWCCU Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report in Fall 2024 and the NWCCU Site Visit in Spring 2025.

2. INTRODUCTION

Washington State University is a public land-grant research university and is classified as an R1 Doctoral University: Very High Research Activity in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. WSU operates as a statewide system and is comprised of six campuses, eleven academic colleges, extension offices in all 39 Washington counties, and one tribal extension office. WSU graduate programs and graduate education are essential components to the research, teaching, and service missions of the university, providing important opportunities for graduate students to learn, grow, and thrive at the highest levels.

In Fall 2022, 2,770 graduate students were enrolled in 119 graduate degree programs, including 206 thesis and non-thesis degree options and areas of specialization, and more than 20 graduate certificate and non-degree plans. Graduate degree programs and plans are administered via 66 graduate programs that include 9 online graduate programs, 32 multi-campus graduate programs, 5 interdisciplinary graduate programs, and 11 professionally accredited graduate programs.

Graduate Program Assessment

WSU graduate programs are expected to engage in a process of program-level assessment and continuous quality improvement to evaluate student learning outcomes in the graduate program and meet the evolving needs of graduate students and disciplines. In an effective assessment system, graduate faculty determine the student learning outcomes and assessment methods for the program, collect and review assessment data on a regular basis, and use the results to update graduate curricula, improve teaching methods, enhance student support services, and allocate resources to improve the quality and effectiveness of the graduate program. The Graduate School supports the development and refinement of effective assessment systems in graduate degrees and programs, and graduate faculty are encouraged to adapt their learning outcomes and assessment activities to meet the specific context, needs, and goals of the program.

Program Assessment Reporting

In Summer 2020, the Graduate School conducted a needs assessment to collect input from graduate programs and identify opportunities to improve the collection, use, and reporting of graduate assessment data at the program-level. As a result, the Graduate School streamlined the reporting process and changed the annual assessment reports to an alternating cycle with biennial comprehensive assessment reports, completed every two years, and attestation assessment reports completed in the interim year. The changes minimize the reporting burden for graduate programs while maintaining effective assessment systems and practices.

The changes were well-received by faculty and staff, and all WSU graduate programs (100%) submitted an attestation assessment report to the Graduate School in Fall 2023. The majority of graduate programs continued to collect assessment data and conducted assessment activities during the interim year, and programs are well-positioned to provide narrative examples in the next biennial comprehensive assessment report due in May 2024. The Graduate School's program assessment report schedule for AY 2024-27 is below.

Assessment Report	Format	Due Date
2022-24 Biennial Comprehensive Assessment Report	Narrative w/ assessment examples	May 2024
2025 Attestation Assessment Report	Short form	May 2025
2024-26 Biennial Comprehensive Assessment Report	Narrative w/ assessment examples	May 2026
2027 Attestation Assessment Report	Short form	May 2027

Graduate Assessment and Accreditation

WSU is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and has been continuously accredited by institutional accreditation agencies since 1916. WSU academic programs are expected to contribute to an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment to evaluate program performance, promote continuous improvement, and meet NWCCU standards for student learning and achievement. NWCCU Standard One describes the expectations for evaluating student success, program assessment, mission fulfillment, and closure of achievement gaps in degrees, certificates, and other programs.

> **NWCCU Standard One – Student Success, and Institutional Mission and Effectiveness**[1]
> *"The institution articulates its commitment to student success, primarily measured through student learning and achievement, for all students, with a focus on equity and closure of achievement gaps, and establishes a mission statement, acceptable thresholds, and benchmarks for effectiveness with meaningful indicators. The institution's programs are consistent with its mission and culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, credentials, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs. Programs are systematically assessed using meaningful indicators to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes for all students, including underrepresented students and first-generation college students."*

In addition, WSU graduate programs may additionally be professionally accredited, approved, or recognized by their respective agencies or state boards. Learning outcomes and program-level assessment are critical components for professional accreditation, and graduate assessment should complement the procedures and practices that graduate programs are asked to follow for professional accreditation. The Graduate School recognizes the time and effort that faculty contribute to professional accreditation, the standards of practice involved, and the value of professional accreditation for ensuring continuous quality improvement and public accountability in these degree programs.

See **Appendix A**. for a list of professionally accredited graduate programs at WSU and their respective accrediting agencies.

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[1] NWCCU 2020 Accreditation Standards, https://nwccu.org/standards/.

3. KEY ELEMENTS OF PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

The key elements of graduate program assessment are intended to provide a useful and manageable framework that faculty can use to guide the collection and use of assessment data to improve student learning outcomes and other aspects of the graduate program. Graduate programs are expected to describe how assessment data are collected, analyzed, and used in a graduate assessment plan that is implemented by program faculty. Student learning outcomes should be well-defined, measurable, student-centered, and appropriate for the discipline and degree level. In addition, the assessment plan should include all graduate students and locations where the program is delivered, including all WSU campuses, research and extension centers, and other locations as applicable.

Key Assessment Elements Graduate Program Assessment Reports, 2018-2023						
Key Elements in Place	**2018 Annual Program Assessment Report (60 Program Reports)**		**2020-22 Biennial Comprehensive Assessment Report[2] (61 Program Reports)**		**2023 Attestation Assessment Report[3] (66 Program Reports)**	
1. Assessment Plan	60	100%	61	100%	66	100%
2. Student Learning Outcomes	60	100%	61	100%	66	100%
SLOs Published on Program Website or in Student Handbook	58	97%	51	84%	64	97%
3. Collected Data	56	95%	56	92%	53	80%
4. Conducted Assessment Activities	57	96%	56	92%	44	67%
5. Used Assessment Data	54	90%	46	75%	24	36%
6. Reported Results	60/71	85%	61/72	85%	66/66	100%

The graduate program director or chair leads the assessment process by engaging with faculty members, students, and other stakeholders; ensures that assessment data are collected and used; and reports annually on key assessment activities and program improvements. Assessment duties may be delegated to the graduate coordinator, an assessment coordinator (if one is available), or a standing committee depending on the individual characteristics and needs of the graduate program.

Graduate faculty play a central role in program assessment as instructors, mentors, and administrators. They are responsible for defining student learning outcomes, analyzing and interpreting assessment data, using assessment results to make changes, and evaluating the results of those changes on graduate student learning and achievement in the program. All graduate faculty who have teaching responsibility or are involved in the training or mentoring of graduate students should be included in the assessment process.

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[2] In 2020, the Graduate School implemented an alternating-year cycle to regularly collect and review graduate program assessment data. The cycle alternates between a comprehensive assessment report, completed every two years, and a shorter attestation assessment report completed in the interim year. The first Biennial Comprehensive Assessment Report with assessment examples was collected from graduate programs in Fall 2022.

[3] The first Attestation Assessment Report was collected in Fall 2023.

To be effective, graduate program assessment should provide actionable insights that can be used to guide program improvements, inform internal decision-making, and support institutional goals. Graduate programs are expected to report annually on their program-level assessment and use of assessment data.

Area for Attention: Faculty and staff turnover create challenges for program assessment and continuous quality improvement. To address this issue, graduate programs should establish regular data collection and review schedules, encourage faculty participation in assessment, and ensure that graduate assessment policies, procedures, and timelines are documented and communicated to faculty and staff members.

4. GRADUATE ASSESSMENT PLANS

All WSU graduate programs (100%) currently have a **graduate assessment plan** in place that they use to guide their assessment of student learning and achievement at the degree or program level. The assessment plans frequently include a mission statement, program description, program objectives, student learning outcomes, methods of direct and indirect assessment, a timeframe to collect and analyze data, and procedures to ensure the timely review and use of assessment data by faculty in the program. Graduate faculty are encouraged to periodically evaluate their assessment practice and make changes to their assessment plans, student learning outcomes, and assessment instruments as they gain experience collecting and using program-level assessment data.

Only nine graduate programs (14%) reported that they approved, revised, or made changes to their assessment plan in AY 2023.

	Yes	No	Not sure/don't know
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate assessment plan in the last academic year?	9 14%	54 82%	3 5%

Area for Attention: Graduate programs determine the kinds of assessment data, student success measures, and assessment procedures that they use to evaluate student learning and success in the program. Graduate faculty should periodically review and make changes to their graduate assessment plan as they gain experience collecting and using assessment data for program improvement. The Graduate School is available to answer questions and consult with graduate programs if they need help updating their assessment plans or they would like feedback on how to improve their use of assessment data.

5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND STUDENT SUCCESS MEASURES

Substantially all WSU graduate programs (97%) reported that they publish degree or program-level **student learning outcomes** for graduate students on their program website, in their student handbook, or in other materials. Only two graduate programs (3%) said they do not publish their student learning outcomes or provide them in writing.

		n	% Total Programs
Are program-level graduate student learning outcomes published or provided in writing to students in your program?	Yes, on program website	47	71%
	Yes, in student handbook	45	68%
	Yes, other	6	9%
	No	2	3%
Total		66	100%

Other/write-in: Course syllabi, learning outcomes are being distributed to students this fall, CALIPSO, written per individual student, the program is currently in moratorium and being revised, so the SLOs are not public facing at this time but are available upon request, not sure.

	Yes	No	Not sure/don't know
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	6 9%	59 89%	1 2%

Six graduate programs (9%) reported that they approved, revised, or made changes to their graduate student learning outcomes in 2023. Graduate faculty are responsible for evaluating and updating student learning outcomes to ensure that they are aligned with the curriculum and program goals and they are relevant, useful, and used to make informed decisions about the graduate program.

		Yes, collected data	Yes, collected data and assessed results	No, did not collect	Skipped item
Did your graduate program collect data to assess any of the following student success measures in the last academic year?	Degree completion rates	39 59%	10 15%	9 14%	8 12%
	Career outcomes/placement data	25 38%	6 9%	11 17%	24 36%
	Certification exam pass rates	12 18%	6 9%	7 11%	41 62%
Total		42 64%	14 21%	15 23%	49 74%

In addition, many graduate programs track degree completion rates, career outcomes, placement data, and certification exam pass rates (if applicable). **Student success measures** like these are important metrics for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the graduate program and can provide valuable regarding the knowledge, skills, and student readiness for placement in academic and non-academic career tracks after graduation. The majority of graduate programs (80%) reported that they collected data on at least one student

success measure in 2023. Nearly a quarter of the graduate programs (21%) said they used the data and assessed results.

Area for Attention: All WSU graduate programs are expected to publish their student learning outcomes online or in the student handbook, so they are accessible to current and prospective graduate students. The Graduate School will follow-up with graduate programs to ensure that they publish their student learning outcomes and they are available to graduate students per NWCCU accreditation standards. (NWCCU 1.C.1-3) In addition, the Graduate School will consult with graduate programs if they need help updating their learning outcomes or they would like feedback on how to better incorporate their learning outcomes into their assessment or administrative practices.

Degree completion rates, career outcomes, placement data, and certification exam pass rates are important metrics for graduate programs, graduate students, and external entities. Graduate programs are encouraged to develop procedures for collecting, evaluating, and using student success measures and other relevant data to supplement their learning outcomes assessment and enhance outcomes for graduate students.

6. GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT IN 2023

All WSU graduate programs submitted a program assessment report in 2023, and the majority of graduate programs (85%) indicated that they conducted at least one **program assessment activity** in the last academic year. A similar percentage of graduate programs (80%) reported that they collected data to assess student learning outcomes, program goals, or other aspects of the graduate program. The overall level of activity is less than the WSU annual target of 90%, which likely reflects the transition to biennial assessment schedules and more balanced workloads.

All Graduate Programs (n=66, AY 2023)

	Yes
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate assessment plan or graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	12 18%
Did your graduate program collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	53 80%
Did faculty in your graduate program conduct any program-level assessment activities or assess graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	44 67%
Did faculty make any documentable changes or improvements to the graduate program after reviewing assessment data in the last academic year?	24 36%
Total	56 85%

Area for Attention: Although assessment activities efforts are below the annual target, the majority of WSU graduate programs (85%) have stayed engaged in program assessment activities during the last academic year. The Graduate School will work with graduate programs to ensure that their assessment activities stay on track, and programs are able to document how they are collecting and using assessment data in the next biennial comprehensive assessment report. The Graduate School will share best practices and offer support to graduate programs if they need help meeting these requirements.

Online Graduate Programs (n=9, AY 2023)

9 graduate programs are offered fully online through WSU Global Campus or other distance education.

Online graduate programs reported lower faculty engagement with program-level assessment activities (67%) and lower data collection rates (56%) compared to other graduate programs.

	Yes
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate assessment plan or graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	
Did your graduate program collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	5 56%
Did faculty in your graduate program conduct any program-level assessment activities or assess graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	5 56%
Did faculty make any documentable changes or improvements to the graduate program after reviewing assessment data in the last academic year?	4 44%
Total	6 67%

Area for Attention: Although assessment activities and data collection rates are lower, the majority of online graduate programs (67%) have stayed engaged in various program assessment activities during the last academic year. The Graduate School will work with online graduate programs to ensure that their assessment activities stay on track, and programs are able to document how they are collecting and using assessment data in the next biennial comprehensive assessment report. The Graduate School will share best practices and offer support to online graduate programs if they need help meeting these requirements.

Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (n=5, AY 2023)

5 graduate programs are interdisciplinary by design or combine disciplines from two or more colleges.

Interdisciplinary graduate programs reported lower faculty engagement with program-level assessment activities (60%) and lower data collection rates (60%); however, the number of interdisciplinary graduate programs (5) is very low.

	Yes
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate assessment plan or graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	
Did your graduate program collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	3 60%
Did faculty in your graduate program conduct any program-level assessment activities or assess graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	3 60%
Did faculty make any documentable changes or improvements to the graduate program after reviewing assessment data in the last academic year?	2 40%
Total	3 60%

Area for Attention: Although assessment activities and data collection rates are low, the majority of interdisciplinary graduate programs (60%) have stayed engaged in various program assessment activities during the last academic year. The Graduate School will work with interdisciplinary graduate programs to ensure that their assessment activities stay on track, and programs are able to document how they are collecting and using assessment data in the next biennial comprehensive assessment report. The Graduate School will share best practices and offer support to interdisciplinary graduate programs if they need help meeting these requirements.

Multi-campus Graduate Programs (n=31, AY 2023)

32 graduate programs are offered on two or more campuses including WSU Pullman, WSU Spokane, WSU Tri-Cities, WSU Vancouver, WSU Global Campus (online), and WSU Extension/Research and Extension Centers.

Multi-campus graduate programs reported slightly higher faculty engagement with program-level assessment activities (88%) and higher data collection rates (84%) compared to other graduate programs. The higher rates are likely due to increased coordination for graduate programs that are centrally administered from one campus but are delivered to students at multiple campuses or locations.

	Yes
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate assessment plan or graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	4 13%
Did your graduate program collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	27 84%
Did faculty in your graduate program conduct any program-level assessment activities or assess graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	23 72%
Did faculty make any documentable changes or improvements to the graduate program after reviewing assessment data in the last academic year?	12 38%
Total	28 88%

Area for Attention: The majority of multi-campus graduate programs (88%) have continued to collect data and remained engaged in program assessment during the last academic year. The Graduate School will work with multi-campus graduate programs to ensure that their assessment activities stay on track, and programs are able to document how they are collecting and using assessment data in the next biennial comprehensive assessment report. The Graduate School will share best practices and offer support to multi-campus graduate programs if they need help meeting these requirements.

Professionally Accredited Graduate Programs (n=11, AY 2023)

11 graduate programs are professionally accredited including 7 graduate programs that are accredited by professional organizations and 4 programs in education and nursing that are reviewed by the State of Washington.

Professionally accredited graduate programs reported greater faculty involvement with program-level assessment activities (100%) and higher data collection rates (100%) compared to other graduate programs. The higher rates may be due to long-standing learning outcomes assessment and data collection practices required for professional accreditation.

	Yes
Did faculty in your program approve, revise, or make changes to your graduate assessment plan or graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	2 18%
Did your graduate program collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	11 100%
Did faculty in your graduate program conduct any program-level assessment activities or assess graduate student learning outcomes in the last academic year?	11 100%
Did faculty make any documentable changes or improvements to the graduate program after reviewing assessment data in the last academic year?	5 45%
Total	11 100%

Area for Attention: The Graduate School will continue to support professionally accredited graduate programs in their assessment efforts and will share best practices and offer support to professionally accredited graduate programs if they need help meeting these requirements.

7. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Approximately 67% of WSU graduate programs reported that they conducted at least one **specific program-level assessment activity** in 2023. The most frequently reported program assessment activities were collected assessment data (77%), followed by analyzing or reviewing assessment data (59%), and held at least one graduate faculty meeting with scheduled time devoted to graduate assessment (59%).

	n	% Programs That Conducted Any Activities (n=44)	% Total Programs (N=66)
Collected assessment data	34	77%	52%
Analyzed or reviewed assessment data	26	59%	39%
Held at least one graduate faculty meeting with scheduled time devoted to graduate assessment	26	59%	39%
Shared graduate assessment results with department or school leadership	20	45%	30%
Integrated graduate assessment discussion into a regular committee meeting of the department or school	19	43%	29%
Discussed program-level graduate assessment results as part of an annual faculty retreat or workshop	18	41%	27%
Shared graduate assessment results with advisory board or accrediting body	5	11%	8%
Other/write-in	3	7%	5%
Provided or supported assessment training for graduate faculty or staff	1	2%	2%
Total	44	100%	67%

Other/write-in: Graduate student annual reviews, start deeper review into entire program (to be completed in FY 24), data analysis was completed and results will be shared with the faculty including the advisory board.

Area for Attention: Although a majority of WSU graduate programs (67%) said they engaged in program-level assessment activities in 2023, only half of all graduate programs (52%) said they collected assessment data and less than a third (30%) said they shared assessment results with their department or school leadership. The Graduate School will continue to support graduate programs in their ongoing assessment of graduate student learning outcomes and program goals. Program assessment activities are expected to increase when graduate programs submit their 2022-24 biennial comprehensive assessment reports later this year. In addition, the Graduate School will meet with the Associate Deans for graduate education from each college so they can help support graduate program assessment and the use of assessment data at the program and college-level.

8. USING GRADUATE ASSESSMENT FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Using program assessment and program-level assessment results to inform internal decision-making, planning, or to make changes to the graduate program is a critical component in the assessment process. Approximately one-third of graduate programs (36%) reported that they used assessment data to make at least one program change or improvement in 2023. Graduate programs frequently reported using assessment data to make changes involved the graduate student handbook (58%), graduate courses (54%), and professional development opportunities for graduate students (54%).

	n	% Programs That Made Any Changes (n=24)	% Total Programs (N=66)
Policy, procedural, or informational change in graduate student handbook	14	58%	21%
Course content revision	13	54%	20%
Provided professional development opportunities for graduate students	13	54%	20%
Addressed student climate issues	11	46%	17%
Changes in mentoring or advising of graduate students	10	42%	15%
Supported departmental decision-making	10	42%	15%
Continued current effective curriculum	8	33%	12%
Revised faculty teaching strategies or methodologies	8	33%	12%
Changes to resource allocations	6	25%	9%
Other/write-in	6	25%	9%
Improved collection, review, or use of assessment data	5	21%	8%
Course changes through Faculty Senate process	2	8%	3%
Curricular changes through Faculty Senate process	2	8%	3%
Supported college-level decision-making	2	8%	3%
Total	24	100%	36%

Other/write-in: Aligned program goals with newly required state standards, changes to recruitment-admissions procedures, changes to program requirements, changes to graduate program leadership, several changes in progress, and updated clinic handbook.

Area for Attention: The Graduate School will continue to assist graduate programs in their use of assessment data and assessment results to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in their degree programs.

9. PROGRAM GOALS FOR GRADUATE ASSESSMENT

Virtually all graduate programs (97%) identified at least one **goal or opportunity** to improve their program assessment, indicating whether the goals are planned but not started, started, making progress (but progress is slow), making good progress, or almost finished. More than half of the graduate programs (58%) said they are making good progress on at least one goal; however, more than two-thirds of the programs (70%) said they are making progress, but progress is slow, and a majority of graduate programs (83%) said they want to implement new assessment activities but haven't started yet.

What are your **main goals** for graduate assessment next year?

	Planned but haven't started	Started	Making progress, but progress is slow	Making good progress	Almost finished	Grand Total
Collect and analyze assessment data	21	17	8	14		60
Use graduate assessment to support program planning and decision-making	17	17	6	20		60
Use graduate assessment to improve student learning outcomes or student success measures	25	13	6	14		58
Meet with faculty to discuss assessment results	36	6	1	12	1	56
Share our graduate assessment results and improvements with administrators and others	30	16		5	3	54
Use graduate assessment to improve other aspects of the graduate program (reputation, rankings, etc.)	26	9	4	11		50
Revise assessment rubrics, forms, measures, or data collection instruments	18	16	6	3	1	44
Update our graduate student learning outcomes or graduate assessment plan	22	11	2	8		43
Learn more about graduate assessment/increase the capacity of faculty and staff to do assessment	21	6	7	4	1	39
Restart our graduate assessment	17	9	5	4	1	36
Assess multi-campus programs as one program	6	6		8	2	22
Assess online graduate courses	2	4	1	3	1	11
Other/write-in	2	5	1	2	1	11
Assess online graduate program as a distinct program	3	1	3	1	1	9
Prepare for professional accreditation or state review		3		3	3	9
Assess multi-campus programs individually	3	2		1		6
Assess online graduate program as complement to in-person program or instruction	3	1		1		5
Total (Main Goals)	252	142	50	114	15	573
Total (Distinct Programs)	53	45	23	37	10	64

Other/write-in: Offer remote learning with Pullman to add course options, increase enrollment, change in course requirements, evaluate success of new prelim procedures and professional activities, update mandatory coursework, address student concerns about the comprehensive exam, revised and updated graduate program faculty, curricular changes through faculty senate, informational changes documented in program handbook, developed an exit questionnaire for students that decide not to continue with the program, revise student handbook.

Program Goals: The Top 5 Program Goals identified as 'Planned but haven't started', 'Started', or 'Making progress, but progress is slow' for the upcoming 2024-25 academic year (n=60) are:

1. Collect and analyze assessment data (46)
2. Share graduate assessment results and improvements with administrators and others (46)
3. Use graduate assessment to improve student learning outcomes or student success measures (44)
4. Meet with faculty to discuss assessment results (43)
5. Use graduate assessment to support program planning and decision-making (40)

Graduate School Priorities: The Top 3 Graduate School Priorities for the upcoming 2024-25 academic year are:

1. Improve communication with graduate programs and colleges on timelines, good practice, and expectations for program assessment.
2. Distribute the 2022-24 assessment report template and collect assessment reports from graduate programs.
3. Compile the 2022-24 report data; document good practice and examples from graduate programs; prepare for the NWCCU Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report due in Fall 2024 and the NWCCU Site Visit due in Spring 2025.

In addition, the Graduate School will work with graduate programs that request assistance preparing their 2022-24 assessment report, updating their graduate assessment plan or student learning outcomes, or improving their data collection, use of assessment data, or assessment practice.

Appendices

APPENDIX A. WSU GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORTS BY GROUP

All Graduate Programs

A total of 66 graduate programs, including 119 doctoral and master's degrees and 209 graduate plans (thesis and non-thesis degrees and areas of specialization) submitted an attestation assessment report to the Graduate School in 2023. (100% response rate)

1. Agriculture
2. American Studies and Culture
3. Animal Sciences
4. Anthropology
5. Apparel, Merchandising, and Textiles
6. Architecture
7. Art
8. Athletic Training
9. Biological and Agricultural Engineering
10. Biological Sciences
11. Biomedical Sciences (IID)
12. Business Administration, Ph.D.
13. Chemical Engineering
14. Chemistry
15. Civil and Environmental Engineering
16. Clinical and Translational Medicine
17. Clinical Psychology
18. Communication, Ph.D.
19. Computer Science – Vancouver, M.S.
20. Criminal Justice and Criminology
21. Crop and Soil Sciences
22. Cultural Studies and Social Thought in Education
23. Curriculum and Instruction
24. Dietetics, Nutrition, and Exercise Physiology
25. Economic Sciences
26. Educational Leadership
27. Educational Psychology
28. Electrical Engineering – Vancouver, M.S.
29. Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
30. Electrical Power Engineering, P.S.M.
31. Engineering and Technology Management
32. Engineering Science
33. English
34. Entomology
35. Experimental Psychology
36. Food Science
37. History
38. Horticulture
39. Individual Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program
40. Interior Design

41. Kinesiology
42. Language, Literacy, and Technology
43. Master in Teaching
44. Master of Nursing
45. Mathematics
46. Mathematics and Science Education
47. Mechanical and Materials Engineering
48. Mechanical Engineering – Vancouver, M.S.
49. Molecular Biosciences
50. Molecular Plant Sciences
51. Music
52. Neuroscience
53. Nursing, Ph.D.
54. Nutrition and Exercise Physiology
55. Pharmaceutical Sciences and Molecular Medicine
56. Physics
57. Plant Pathology
58. Political Science
59. Prevention Science
60. School of the Environment
61. Sociology
62. Special Education
63. Speech and Hearing Sciences
64. Sport Management
65. Statistical Science
66. Strategic Communication

Online Graduate Programs

9 master's programs are offered fully online through WSU Global Campus or other distance education. (100% response rate)

1. Agriculture
2. Civil and Environmental Engineering, Master of Engineering with Specialization in Environmental Engineering
3. Electrical Power Engineering, P.S.M.
4. Engineering and Technology Management
5. Master of Nursing
6. Molecular Biosciences, P.S.M.
7. Music
8. Software Engineering
9. Strategic Communication

Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs

5 graduate programs are interdisciplinary by design and require study from two or more disciplines or colleges. (100% response rate)

1. Individual Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program
2. Mechanical and Materials Engineering
3. Molecular Plant Sciences
4. Prevention Science
5. School of the Environment

Multi-campus Graduate Programs

32 graduate programs are offered on two or more campuses or locations including WSU Pullman, WSU Spokane, WSU Tri-Cities, WSU Vancouver, WSU Global Campus (online), and WSU Extension/Research and Extension Centers. (100% response rate)

1. Agriculture
2. Anthropology
3. Biological and Agricultural Engineering
4. Biological Sciences
5. Business Administration, Ph.D.
6. Chemical Engineering
7. Civil and Environmental Engineering
8. Crop and Soil Sciences
9. Curriculum and Instruction
10. Educational Leadership
11. Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
12. Electrical Power Engineering, P.S.M.
13. Engineering and Technology Management
14. Engineering Science
15. Entomology
16. Experimental Psychology
17. Horticulture
18. Language, Literacy, and Technology
19. Master in Teaching
20. Master of Nursing
21. Mathematics
22. Mathematics and Science Education
23. Mechanical and Materials Engineering
24. Molecular Biosciences
25. Music
26. Neuroscience
27. Plant Pathology
28. Prevention Science
29. School of the Environment
30. Sociology
31. Special Education
32. Statistical Science

	WSU Pullman	WSU Spokane	WSU Tri-Cities	WSU Vancouver	WSU Global Campus	Extension/ Research and Extension	Total
Single Campus Graduate Programs	25 38%	5 8%		3 5%	1 2%		34 52%
Multi-campus Graduate Programs	26 39%	11 17%	16 24%	17 26%	8 12%	6 9%	32 48%
Total	51 77%	16 24%	16 24%	20 30%	9 14%	6 9%	66 100%

Professionally Accredited Graduate Programs

11 graduate programs are professionally accredited including 7 programs that are accredited by professional organizations and 4 programs in education and nursing that are reviewed by the State of Washington. (100% response rate)

1. Architecture — National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB)
2. Athletic Training — Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE)
3. Business Administration, Ph.D. — Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
4. Clinical Psychology — American Psychological Association (APA) Commission on Accreditation (CoA)
5. Dietetics, Nutrition, and Exercise Physiology — Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)
6. Educational Leadership — Washington Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB)
7. Master in Teaching — Washington Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB)
8. Master of Nursing — Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
9. Music — National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)
10. Special Education — Washington Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB)
11. Speech and Hearing Sciences — Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the Washington State Board of Education (SBE)

APPENDIX B. UNIVERSITY-WIDE METRICS AND TARGETS FOR PROGRAM-LEVEL GRADUATE ASSESSMENT

All Graduate Programs

	2020-22	2023
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have a graduate assessment plan in place each year.	100% (61/61)	100% (66/66)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have program-level student learning outcomes in place each year.	100% (61/61)	100% (66/66)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs publish student learning outcomes on their website, in their student handbook, or via other materials.	84% (51/61)	97% (64/66)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes each year.	92% (56/61)	80% (53/66)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs conduct any assessment-related activities or assess student learning outcomes each year.	92% (56/61)	67% (44/66)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs use assessment data for program improvement each year.	75% (46/61)	36% (24/66)

Online Graduate Programs

	2020-22	2023
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have a graduate assessment plan in place each year.	100% (6/6)	100% (9/9)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have program-level student learning outcomes in place each year.	100% (6/6)	100% (9/9)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs publish student learning outcomes on their website, in their student handbook, or via other materials.	100% (6/6)	89% (8/9)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes each year.	83% (5/6)	56% (5/9)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs conduct any assessment-related activities or assess student learning outcomes each year.	83% (5/6)	56% (5/9)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs use assessment data for program improvement each year.	83% (5/6)	44% (4/9)

Key: Goal Met: ≥ 90%; Goal Nearly Met: 80%-89%; Goal Substantially Unmet: <80%

Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs

	2020-22	2023
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have a graduate assessment plan in place each year.	100% (3/3)	100% (5/5)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have program-level student learning outcomes in place each year.	100% (3/3)	100% (5/5)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs publish student learning outcomes on their website, in their student handbook, or via other materials.	100% (3/3)	100% (5/5)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes each year.	67% (2/3)	60% (3/5)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs conduct any assessment-related activities or assess student learning outcomes each year.	100% (3/3)	60% (3/5)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs use assessment data for program improvement each year.	100% (3/3)	40% (2/5)

Multi-campus Graduate Programs

	2020-22	2023
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have a graduate assessment plan in place each year.	100% (26/26)	100% (32/32)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have program-level student learning outcomes in place each year.	100% (26/26)	100% (32/32)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs publish student learning outcomes on their website, in their student handbook, or via other materials.	100% (26/26)	97% (31/32)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes each year.	100% (26/26)	84% (27/32)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs conduct any assessment-related activities or assess student learning outcomes each year.	92% (24/26)	72% (23/32)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs use assessment data for program improvement each year.	92% (24/26)	38% (12/32)

Professionally Accredited Graduate Programs

	2020-22	2023
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have a graduate assessment plan in place each year.	100% (12/12)	100% (11/11)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs have program-level student learning outcomes in place each year.	100% (12/12)	100% (11/11)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs publish student learning outcomes on their website, in their student handbook, or via other materials.	100% (12/12)	100% (11/11)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs collect data to assess program-level student learning outcomes each year.	100% (12/12)	100% (11/11)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs conduct any assessment-related activities or assess student learning outcomes each year.	92% (11/12)	100% (11/11)
Substantially all (>= 90%) graduate programs use assessment data for program improvement each year.	83% (10/12)	45% (5/11)

Key: Goal Met: ≥ 90%; Goal Nearly Met: 80%-89%; Goal Substantially Unmet: <80%

APPENDIX C. NWCCU STANDARDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (SELECTED)

NWCCU 2020 Standards Regarding Program-level Assessment/Graduate Assessment

The NWCCU 2020 revised standards for WSU's continuing accreditation through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) took effect on January 1, 2020, and include the following:

- **Learning Outcomes**. The institution identifies and publishes expected program and degree learning outcomes for all degrees, certificates, and credentials. Information on expected student learning outcomes for all courses is provided to enrolled students. **(1.C.3)**
- **Academic Rigor**. The institution offers programs with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission, culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes that lead to collegiate-level degrees, certificates, or credentials and include designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study. The institution awards credit, degrees, certificates, or credentials for programs that are based upon student learning and learning outcomes that offer an appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing, and synthesis of learning. **(1.C.1 and 1.C.2)**
- **Effective and Systematic Assessment is in Place**.
  - The institution engages in an effective system of assessment to evaluate the quality of learning in its programs. **(1.C.5)**
  - The institution demonstrates a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness, including student learning and achievement and support services. The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement. **(1.B.1)**
- **Assessment Results Support Student Learning and Student Achievement**.
  - The institution uses the results of its assessment efforts to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices to continuously improve student learning outcomes. **(1.C.7)**
  - The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing indicators of student achievement are transparent and are used to inform and implement strategies and allocate resources to mitigate perceived gaps in achievement and equity. **(1.D.4)**
  - The institution uses an ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning process to inform and refine its effectiveness, assign resources, and improve student learning and achievement. **(1.B.1)**
- **Faculty Roles**. The institution recognizes the central role of faculty to establish curricula, assess student learning, and improve instructional programs. **(1.C.5)**

Selected NWCCU Commendations and Recommendations: Spring 2018 Year Seven Evaluation

In 2018, the NWCCU commended WSU for its assessment practices. New recommendations based on the NWCCU 2010 standards that impact graduate program assessment planning and priorities include the need to:

- Incorporate student learning outcomes assessment findings into the evaluation of university mission fulfillment (including summary information about student learning outcomes for degree programs),
- Include student learning outcomes data (rather than the process of assessing student learning outcomes) in strategic planning metrics,
- Collect appropriately defined data, which can be disaggregated to identify differences among campuses and learning modalities.