The goal of this newsletter is to promote better awareness and understanding of assessment, and to keep Concord faculty, staff, and students informed on important and relevant information related to assessment and accountability.

What's Happening in Assessment

Annual Program Assessment Reports are due November 1. To assist you in creating a strong and thorough report, we've outlined key tips and best practices below.

1. *Follow the Template Structure:* Ensure that your report follows the provided template structure.
2. *Provide Context and Highlights:* In the introduction section, provide background information about your program to help reviewers understand the context of your assessment efforts. Highlight any significant achievements or improvements.
3. *Address Changes Since Last Review:* Clearly outline any changes made to the curriculum or assessment plan since the last review, and explain the reasons behind these changes. This demonstrates responsiveness to assessment data.
4. *Forecast Future Developments:* Share a preliminary forecast for anticipated improvements or changes in the program for the upcoming academic year based on assessment data. This shows a commitment to continuous improvement.
5. *Align with University Learning Goals:* Clearly state the program's learning goals and indicate how they align with the University's Learning Goals. This demonstrates alignment with the institution's mission.
6. *Document Program Outcomes:* List the specific outcomes of your program in terms of student learning and link them to the University Learning Goals. Provide evidence of how these outcomes are assessed.
7. *Describe Data Collection Methods:* Detail the methods used to collect data on student learning outcomes, both direct and indirect. Use a chart or table to present this information clearly.
8. *Analyze Data and Share Findings:* Explain how your program analyzed the assessment data, present the findings, and compare them to previous years. Address any improvements or areas of concern.
9. *Address Reviewer Recommendations:* If applicable, explain how you have addressed recommendations from previous assessment reports. This demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to feedback.
10. *Detail Follow-Up Actions:* Describe any changes made to the curriculum, activities, services, goals, or student learning outcomes based on the analysis of assessment data. Explain how these changes have affected the data collection and review process.
11. *Include Viability Assessment:* If the program's retention rate or enrollment falls below certain benchmarks, provide a detailed program improvement plan. Ensure this plan is regularly updated and reviewed by the Provost.

How AI Can Enhance Program Assessment at Concord University

Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to strengthen how we approach program assessment at Concord University. By leveraging AI, we can automate and streamline data collection and analysis, making it easier for faculty and staff to interpret student learning outcomes, identify gaps in program effectiveness, and make evidence-based improvements. Here are a few specific ways AI can be integrated into our assessment efforts:

- Incorporate automated data analysis. AI can quickly analyze vast amounts of data from assessments, surveys, and program evaluations. By detecting patterns and trends, AI can identify areas where programs are excelling or underperforming, providing actionable insights to faculty and administrators in real time.
- Use predictive analytics. AI can be used to forecast student success by analyzing historical data on student performance and engagement. This can help Concord predict which students may need additional support and resources, allowing us to proactively address potential challenges before they affect academic outcomes.
- Identify natural language processing for qualitative data. AI-driven tools can analyze qualitative feedback from surveys and focus groups, identifying key themes and sentiments. This can be particularly helpful in understanding student and faculty perspectives on program effectiveness, course content, and teaching methodologies.
- Incorporate personalized feedback with AI. AI can deliver personalized feedback to students and faculty based on assessment results, ensuring that improvements and strategies are tailored to individual needs. This could enhance both teaching and learning experiences by providing timely and relevant feedback.

By incorporating AI into program assessment, Concord University can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its evaluation processes, ultimately leading to better program design, student outcomes, and institutional success.

Looking Ahead: The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) – Spring 2025

In Spring 2025, Concord University will participate in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This national initiative provides valuable insights into the quality of our students' academic experience. By examining areas such as student involvement in co-curricular activities, engagement with faculty, and time spent on academic work, we can better understand the strengths and areas of growth in our student body.

NSSE results will be pivotal in shaping future initiatives. Data-driven insights will allow us to refine our educational practices, strengthen student support services, and further enhance student success. The feedback gathered will directly inform the strategies and initiatives implemented across academic departments, and as we focus on improving engagement, we will continue to adapt and evolve our approach to education to meet the needs of all students.