

CHANGING THE CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT AT UNC THROUGH PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado

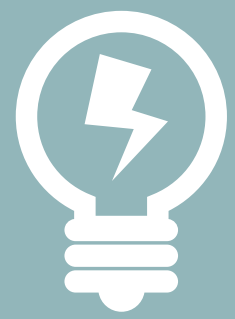
ABOUT UNC



Began as State Normal School in 1889



6 colleges and 200+ degrees



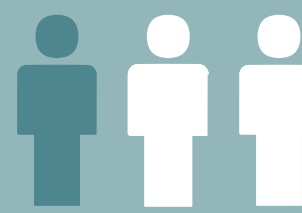
Public doctoral research university

HLC Open Pathway (next review in 2024–25)

FAST FACTS



12,000 Students



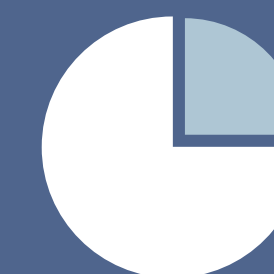
34% First generation



537 Full-time faculty, 240 part-time faculty

80%

Undergraduate



25%

Students of color



Students are from 49 states and 29 countries outside the US

ASSESSMENT AT UNC BEFORE THE ACADEMY

- 2010— Convened University Assessment Council
- 2011— Appointed 6 faculty assessment fellows (FAF)

FAF conducted listening tour to identify faculty needs and challenges:
 - Negative perceptions about value of assessment
 - Fears about how assessment results might be used by administrators
 - Lack of time
 - Insufficient opportunities to talk about student learning with colleagues
 - Uncertainty about how to conduct assessment effectively
 - Lack of consistency in reporting requirements and expectations
- 2011— Applied to HLC Assessment Academy
- 2012— Accepted for 2012 cohort
- 2012— Allocated \$165,000 to support 4-year project (2012–2016)

ACADEMY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Designed and implemented by 6 FAFs and the Assessment Director
- Primary Strategy: Assessment Leadership Institute, 2-year, cohort-based program focused on improving faculty knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- Secondary Strategies: Assessment Mini-Grants, Assessment Fair, University Assessment Council

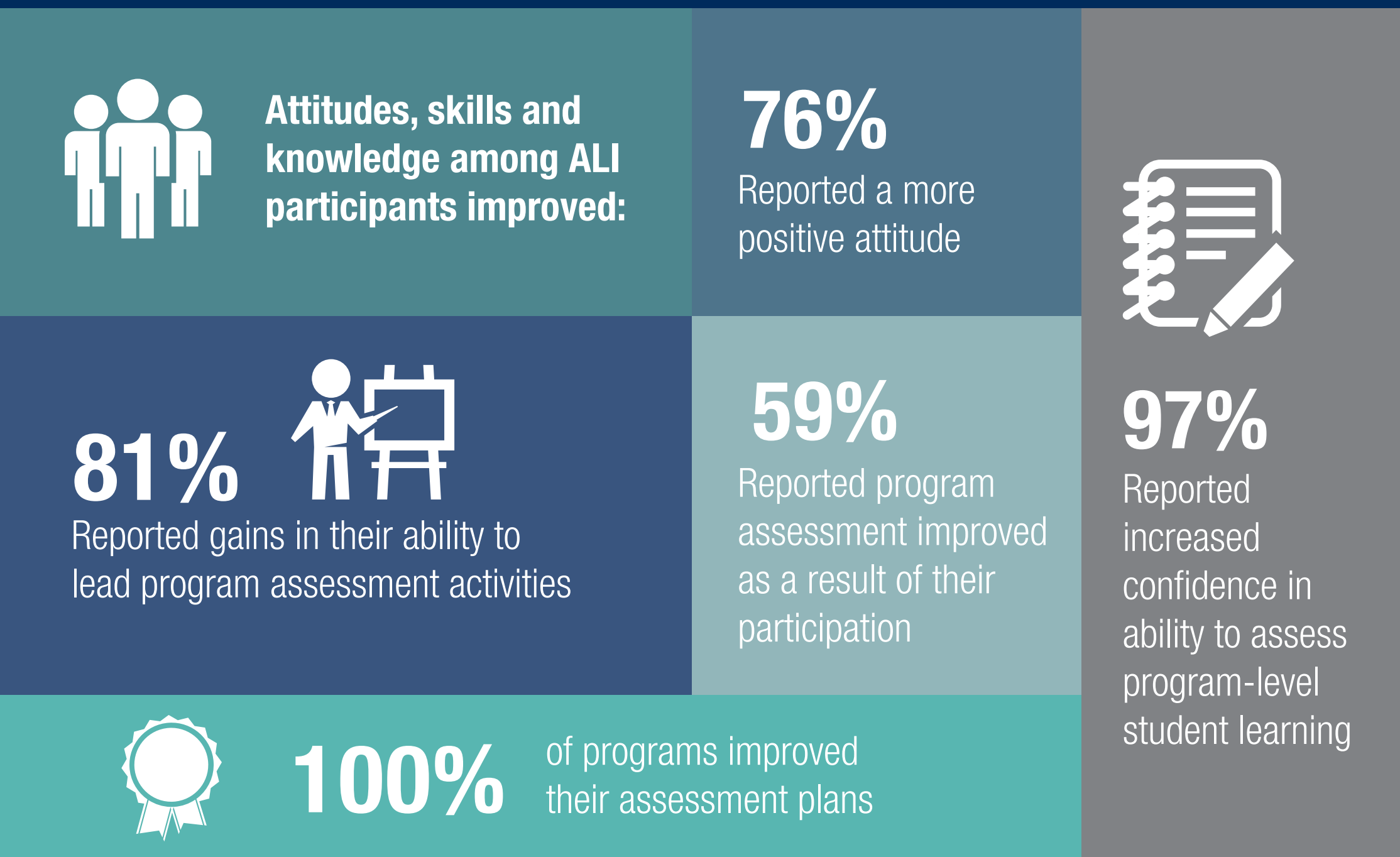
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Kim Black, Director of Assessment and Accreditation
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ACADEMY PROJECT GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

Goals	Activities
Refine and implement consistent standards for program-level assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Developed Guiding Principles for the Assessment of Student LearningCreated assessment plan and annual report templatesAdopted web-based assessment data management system (LiveText)
Build a professional development portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivered Assessment Leadership Institute to 70 faculty from 25 departments (about half of all departments)Created virtual assessment toolbox
Support engagement in assessment as a scholarly activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Awarded \$60,000 in assessment mini-grants to 44 recipientsSponsored four Assessment FairsPublished names of faculty engaged in assessment scholarship

ACADEMY PROJECT DIRECT OUTCOMES



FACULTY ENGAGEMENT IN ASSESSMENT-RELATED SCHOLARSHIP



ACADEMY PROJECT INDIRECT OUTCOMES

- Conversation about assessment has changed:
 - Project participants taking on leadership roles and serving on governance committees
- General education reform:
 - New chair, vice chair, and several members of faculty council from ALI programs
- External engagement:
 - Leadership in state-wide revision of general education learning outcomes
 - Participation in WICHE-led Multi-state Passport Mapping Project
 - Consultation to North Texas Community College Consortium on adopting ALI model

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Faculty involvement and ownership in every aspect of project
- Financial investment in assessment
 - Faculty reported that financial investment showed UNC believes assessment is valued and important
- Interdisciplinary approach that respected disciplinary traditions and provided flexibility
- Consistent message and focus on assessment for improvement of student learning
- Effective ALI curriculum and requirement that programs involve multiple faculty in workshop attendance, homework, and projects
- Consistent leadership from Assessment Director and faculty assessment fellows

CHALLENGES

- Initial scope of project too broad.**
Dropped one project goal on revising promotion and tenure policies.
- Incorporating mixed methods longitudinal research methods research into the project.**
Time consuming, but contributed to FAF motivation to stick with the project.
- Ongoing challenges with involving all faculty.**
Focused on reaching critical mass rather than trying to reach everyone.
- Uncertainty about lasting impact and ability to maintain momentum**
Insufficient time has passed to evaluate lasting impact; early signs are positive.

ASSESSMENT AFTER THE ACADEMY

- General Education Reform**
 - Sent 7-member team to AACU General Education Assessment Institute June 2016
 - Adopted LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes as general education framework
 - Defined learning outcomes for each of 8 general education categories
 - Established sub-committee on general education assessment
 - Developed policy and process for ongoing review of general education courses
 - Assigned FAF to design and conduct pilot assessment of new general education SLOs
- Institutional Learning Outcomes**
 - University Assessment Council charged with leading revision (last revised in late 1990's) and developing systematic assessment process
 - Conducted surveys and focus groups with faculty, staff, students, and alumni
 - Frequently asked questions from faculty: "Is this learning outcome assessable?" "How will we know if students are learning this?"
 - New ILOs to be finalized by end of spring 2017 with assessment to begin next year
- Faculty Development and Support**
 - Appointed senior FAF to lead faculty development activities
 - Initiated monthly workshop series on course-level assessment
 - Creating program-level assessment handbook based on ALI curriculum
 - Continuing assessment mini-grants and Assessment Fair
 - Implementing brownbag series for program assessment coordinators



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