Fall 2025
Assessment News Brief

Fall Forward with Assessment

An Innovative Approach to General Education

By Dr. Rachel Ndonye, Department of Chemistry

In spring 2024 semester, students who are nonscience majors participated in an activity on e-cigarette use in the United States among young adults. The activity—a cross-disciplinary learning practice that connects course topics to real world application—helped students develop and practice their data analysis and communication skills. It was implemented in a general education chemistry course.

To achieve expected learning outcomes, students were required to understand the course topic, evaluate and analyze provided statistical data, draw informed conclusions, and propose reasonable recommendations to solve a community issue. Student work was assessed based on subject knowledge, data interpretation, analysis and conclusion, connections made between concepts, understanding the potential health risks of e-cigarette use, and proposing reasonable strategies to address the issue. The original assignment was tweaked in latter semesters based on student assessment results. It has since been implemented in other chemistry program courses.

Assessment results show that the project effectively helped students learn to interpret and analyze data, use data to make persuasive arguments about community issues, make informed personal decisions, and write clearly about numerical information.

This interdisciplinary approach illustrates how diverse teaching strategies can foster self-awareness, encourage learning connections across disciplines, and apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problems. It also emphasizes the value of data-driven decision-making in fields such as research and public policy.

The activity fostered development of problem-solving and quantitative reasoning skills, and demonstrated how to apply course topics in real-world context. The activity's goals were to help students learn application of a course topic in real-world scenarios, how to interpret and analyze statistical data and make a convincing case about a community issue while emphasizing the importance of data in decision-making.

Office of Assessment Moves to OIRE

As of July 1, 2024, the Office of Assessment is now part of the Analytics and Insights Division. This move centralizes assessment functions across the College and better situates assessment personnel to coordinate with college areas that engaged in assessment activities.

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📅 Upcoming 2026 Activities

As 2026 approaches, the following disciplines and programs should be working on their CAR Reports and Year-3 Integrated Assessment Reports (**due next fall by October 1, 2026)**. Please don't forget that these reports involve data collection and scoring activities for general education competencies and/or program outcomes. If you have not yet organized data collection activities, please reach out to the Office of Assessment so we can assist you in setting up activities to collect the necessary data you will need to complete the reports.

Disciplines scheduled to submit their College Area Review (CAR) Reports for 2025-2026:

Anthropology   *Music*
Criminal Justice   *Philosophy*
Education   *Psychology*
General Education   *Sociology*
General Studies   *Women's/Gender Stu.*

Disciplines scheduled to submit their Year-3 Integrated Assessment Reports for 2025-2026:

Accounting   *History*
Business Admin.   *Hospitality*
Computer Apps.   *International Studies*
Comp. Gaming/Sim.   *Management*
Computer Science   *Network/Wireless Tech.*
Cybersecurity   *Nutrition*
Economics   *Paralegal Studies*
Engineering Science   *Political Science*
Ethnic Social Studies

All other disciplines/programs should provide their Annual Update Reports for assessment activities by October 1, 2026.

College Area Review (CAR) Dashboard

Check out the new Power BI dashboard that now provides disciplines and programs with quick access to data needed to complete the CAR report (a quick shout out to Scott Poese in OIRE for creating this). The link can be found on the OIRE Dashboards site, as well as in the Assessment Repository in Blackboard titled "***CAR Data Dashboard***" on the left main menu. It can also be accessed here: CAR Data Dashboard

⚠️ Reminders for Assessment Reporting

A few quick reminders on important changes that have been instituted over the last two assessment cycles:

All assessment reports have a due date of **October 1 at the end of each assessment cycle year** (including the Annual Update Report which was previously due on August 1).

Both the CAR and Year-3 Assessment Reports are **now uploaded as Word documents or PDFs** through the Assessment Reporting site. The link can be accessed through the Assessment Repository in Blackboard.

Assessment Workshops for Fall 2025

Topic	Dates/Times	Registration Link
Overview of the Year-3 Integrated Report Presented by Debbie Grubb ***Year 3 workshops are aimed at anyone working on their Year-3 Reflection Reports and CAR Reports that are due October 1, 2026, but are open to all disciplines, programs, or areas in any year of the cycle.***	Friday, October 24 2-3 p.m.	[Friday, October 24 Workshop - Register](#)
	Tuesday, November 18 Noon-1 p.m.	[Tuesday, Nov 18 Workshop - Register](#)
New Chairs Presented by Cassandra Jones ***This workshop is designed to provide information to new academic chairs about the assessment process.***	Friday, November 14 11 a.m.-Noon	[Friday, Nov 14 Workshop](#)

Assessment News

Dr. Cassandra Jones and Debbie Grubb attended the Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) annual conference in Alexandria, Virginia, in May 2025. Debbie collaborated with Dr. Carlee Ranalli, dean of planning and institutional effectiveness at Hagerstown Community College and Dr. Laura Renninger, director of learning assessment at Frederick Community College to co-present at the conference.

The title of the presentation was *Assessment Affinity Groups: Fostering Innovation and Collaboration Across Institutions and Assessment Practitioners.* The presentation focused on the ability of affinity groups to foster collaboration, innovation, and shared learning across educational institutions in higher education. The presentation was based on the Maryland Community College Learning Assessment Group (MCCLAG), made up of 16 community colleges in the state of Maryland.

This cross-institutional collaboration provided the opportunity for members to connect with practitioners, scholars, and decision-makers in assessment from other colleges in Maryland, across the United States, and in Europe and Australia.

Assessment Questions?
Please contact Dr. Cassandra Jones or Debbie Grubb at outcomes@montgomerycollege.edu