TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Office *of the* Provost

Office *of* Planning & Assessment

Degree Program Assessment Report
2020-2021 Evaluation Summary

Introduction of the Program Assessment Rubric

The Program Assessment Rubric (PAR) is designed to measure evidence of student learning in degree programs over time as well as provide qualitative and quantitative feedback to academic departments regarding their assessment documentation. There are five components to the rubric, each reflecting key assessment expectations. The maximum score for each of the five components is a 4.0. The scores for each component are averaged to reflect an overall score for the assessment plan, ranging from "Non-Compliant" to "Highly Developed." An overall average score of 4.0 reflects a "Highly Developed" assessment report. The minimum score a degree program can receive to still be considered as meeting baseline criteria would be a "Developed" score of 3.0. Lower than "Developed" would be either "Emerging" (a score of 2.0) or "Initial" (a score of 1.0). Several programs receiving an "Emerging" score or lower are still compliant, as their deficiencies result from being a new program in the beginning phases on assessment planning. The assessment report components are as follows:

- *Student Learning Outcomes* - All programs are required to have three to five outcomes that specifically measure student learning. Two outcomes are satisfactory, contingent on the quality of the outcomes documented.

- *Assessment Methods* - Each outcome requires multiple methods of assessment that are measurable and related to the outcome.

- *Results* - Not only is it important to document results of the Assessment Methods, but it is important that the results demonstrate critical reflection so they can be used to improve student learning. Documentation of results is encouraged.

- *Actions for Improvement* - Each program is required to document how Results were used (or are planned to be used) to make improvements to student learning within the program. OPA does not require Actions for Improvement for every result; rather, there should be evidence that quality improvements are regularly implemented to improve student learning.

- *Follow-Up Statements* – Follow-Up Statements are required to provide evidence for all Actions for Improvement specified in the previous assessment cycle. Follow-Ups are essential for closing the assessment loop.

2020-2021 Degree Program Review Process

In this review cycle, OPA assessed only the graduate degree programs. Reducing the total number of programs to review allowed for more robust and detailed feedback. A total of 149 academic degree programs were reviewed for the 2020-2021 assessment cycle. Two reviewers evaluated each degree program to ensure rater consistency.

In addition to the OPA review process, College-Level Institutional Effectiveness committees conducted a review of their respective programs. This process allowed faculty peers to offer qualitative feedback from an academic discipline perspective. Reviewers were provided the 4-column assessment reports from OPA's assessment software, Nuventive Improve, and submitted their evaluations based on a simplified rubric in Qualtrics. The participating colleges include Davis College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Arts and Sciences, Human Sciences, Media & Communications, Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering, Rawls College of Business Administration, and University Programs.

Of the 149 graduate degree programs reviewed by OPA, 58 (39%) scored below the minimum threshold of an overall average score of 3.0. This change is a 24% decrease in degree program reports that scored below the minimum threshold compared to the last cycle, wherein graduate programs were reviewed (2018-2019). On the other hand, 64% (91 units) earned a 3.0 or better during the review. This improvement can be attributed to the increased instructions and training regarding best practices in assessment. Specifically, the reporting and analyzing data

were points of extra focus during OPA's trainings. In addition, we also capitalized on 'Exemplary' programs to share their perspectives, lessons learned, and success with other programs on campus.

Of the remaining 91 graduate degree programs scoring above the minimum threshold of 3.0, 18 programs (12%) were identified as 'Exemplary' (scoring $\geq$ 3.75) in 2020-2021. This is a 7% increase since the 2018-2019 assessment cycle. Exemplary degree programs are considered those which demonstrate best practices, such as inclusion of related documentation for Assessment Methods, reflections analysis of Results, actionable plans for improvement, and evidence of follow-through with said action. Figure 1 summarizes overall compliance for the 2020-2021 academic year.
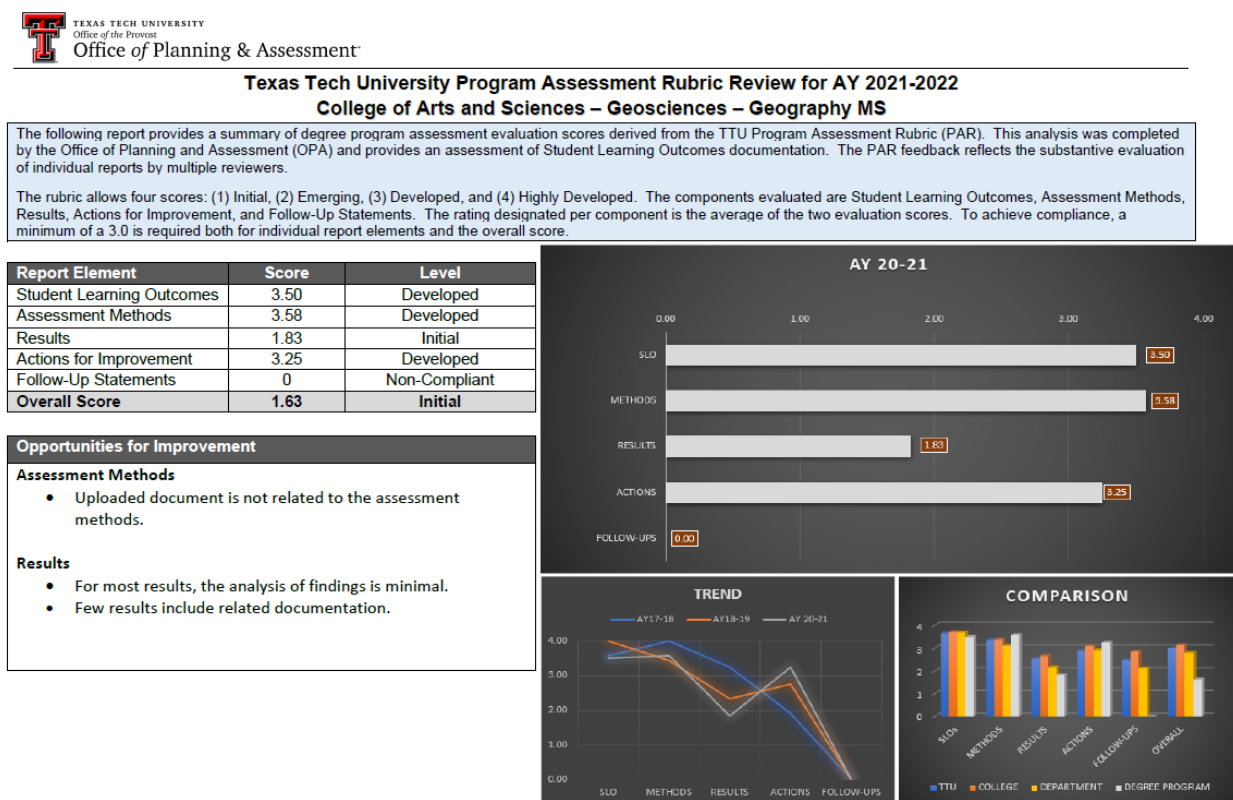
FIGURE 1
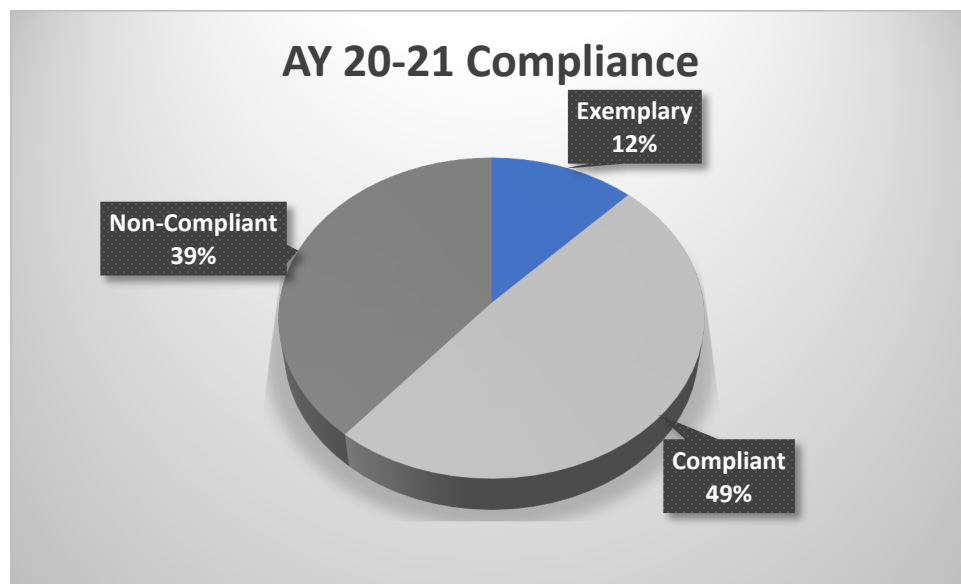
Delivery of PAR Feedback to Departments

The Office of Planning and Assessment meets with academic departments annually to review the results of the PAR analysis, answer questions, and provide programmatic consultation. These meetings are called the Annual Chair Meetings. During this meeting, we discuss their PAR report. This degree program-level report provides a component area score, an overall score, a qualitative feedback section, and three comparative charts. The charts highlight the average scores by report element, a comparison of scores for the current and previous

assessment cycles, and a comparison of each report component by college, department, and all TTU degree programs. During these consultations, OPA provides recommendations for improving future reporting and, when appropriate, directions to ensure compliance. Figure 2 shows a sample feedback report provided to department chairs during these annual meetings.
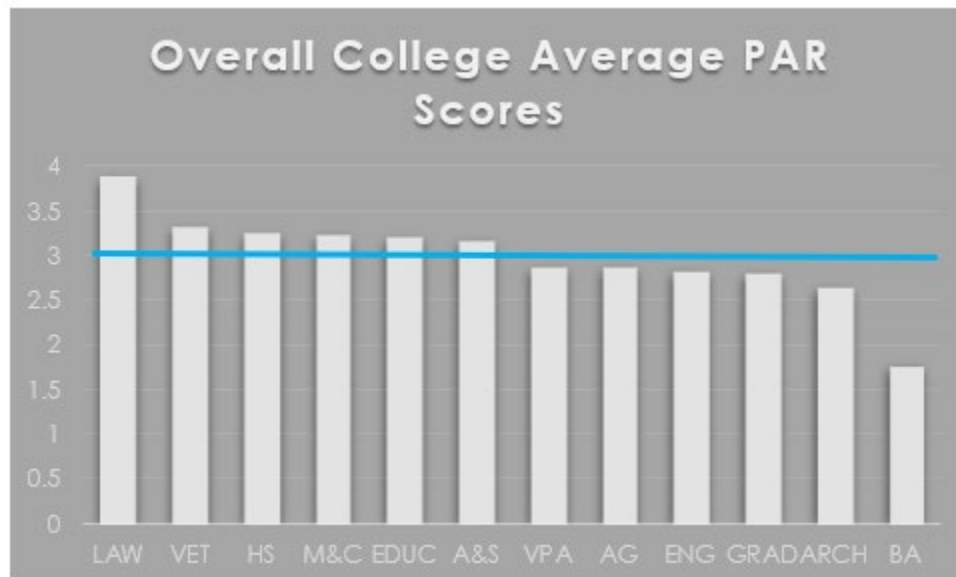
Figure 2

College Comparison

The overall college-level scores from the PAR evaluation resulted in a mean score of 2.64, which equates to an overall 'Emerging' designation for the University, which is problematic. This score is a .15 decrease in scores from the 2018-2019 assessment. When comparing evaluation scores across colleges, it is crucial to bear in mind the significant variability in college size. For example, the largest TTU academic college, Arts & Sciences, houses 34 undergraduate degree programs, while Architecture houses only one. Therefore, the mean score for all degree programs, not considering college designation, is also important. **The**

mean score across the University units is 3.03, considered 'Developed.' Nonetheless, it is important to consider why some colleges have higher assessment scores.

The variance in college-level evaluation scores can likely be attributed to factors such as internal reporting structure, centralized oversight of assessment, and factors related to institutional effectiveness measures.

The **most significant factor** that positively impacted scores is an increased college-level emphasis on program assessment. Figure 3 summarizes overall evaluation scores by college relative to the 3.0 minimum threshold. This chart shows that seven of twelve academic colleges received an average overall score of 3.0 or higher with their graduate degree programs combined. Of note, during the undergraduate program reviews, the College of Visual and Performing Arts and the College of Agriculture, Science, and Natural Resources also fell below the compliance threshold last year.

FIGURE 3

In more detail, Figure 4 provides a breakdown of evaluation scores by individual assessment component for each academic college. This graph demonstrates that most academic colleges continued to score below the 3.0 minimum threshold regarding the Results, Actions for Improvements, and the Follow-Up Statements. In response to these findings, OPA has rethought

how we ask for information in the annual reports. It is our goal to provide space for thorough data analysis, reflection, and most importantly a space where degree programs show how they continuously improve. For example, to improve the results component, program coordinators should include detailed data results as well as a statement providing a qualitative explanation of their data. OPA anticipates that the new focus on Results and Reflection in the next year will help them understand the importance of thorough information in the Results section.

FIGURE 4

Breadown of PAR Scores Across Colleges
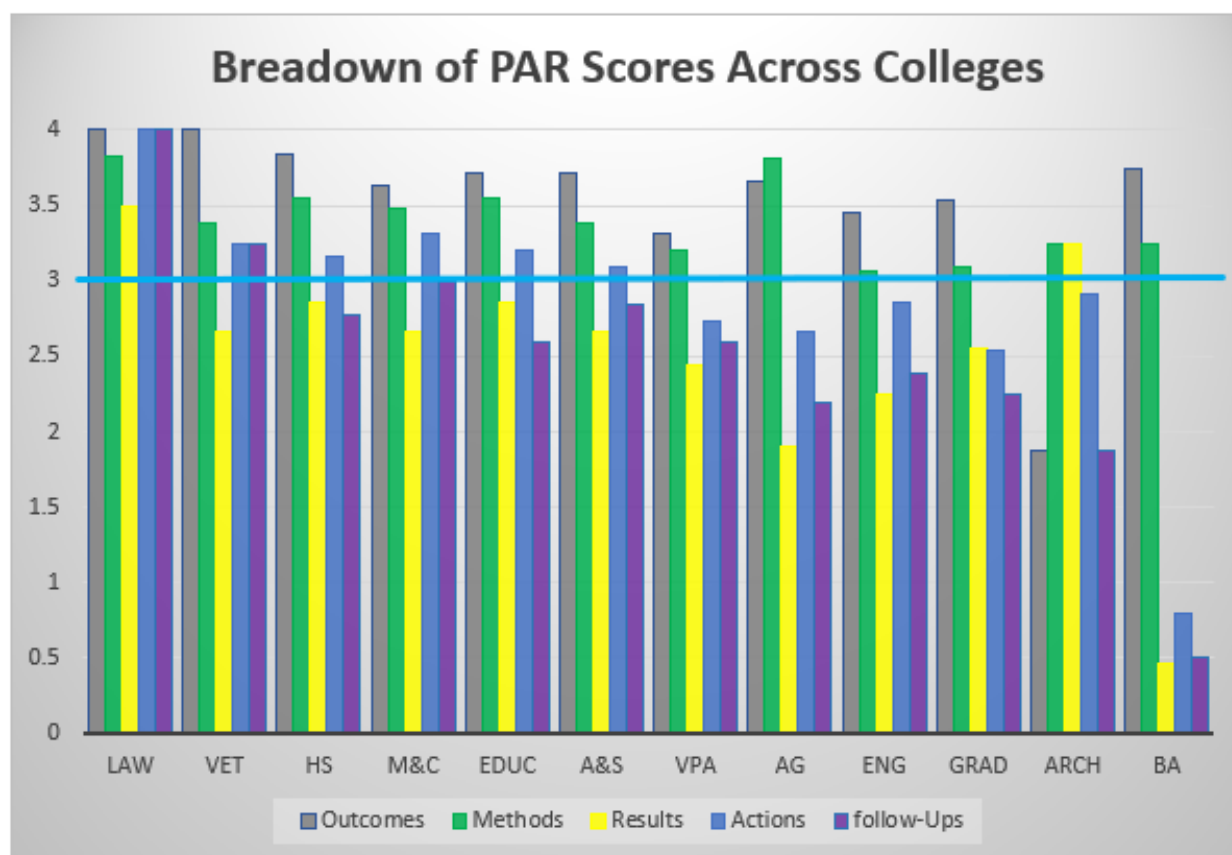
Following our analysis of the PAR data, OPA noticed that some trends, such as not including Follow-Ups, were common within a particular college. In contrast, other trends, such as the need for more detailed Results, were common across the university. Note that although several programs scored low on the 'Follow-Ups,' this finding is rarely discussed in the following section. OPA has observed this trend and addressed the issue by reworking the reflection format. In the future, there will be no 'Follow-Ups' section. Instead, Actions for Improvement and Follow-Ups will both be embedded in the new Annual Reflections section. To

better understand the PAR data, we reflect upon the individual departments within each college in the following sections.

Davis College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resoucrces

The overall Davis College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (DCASNR) PAR score was 2.89, considered 'Emerging.' Across all CASNR departments, the Student Learning Outcomes scores were 'Developed,' whereas most departments scored less than a 3.0, or 'Emerging,' in the Results and Actions for Improvement. The lack of evidence in the Results element is of concern within this College. Specific improvements that could be made include data documentation and analysis of findings. The new Annual Program Reflections template will address the College's concerns directly about how best to explain its annual improvement process.
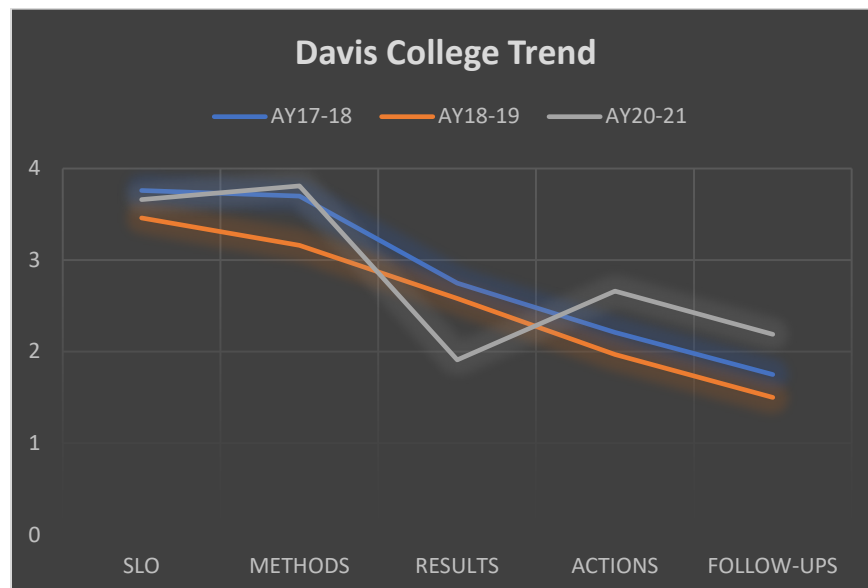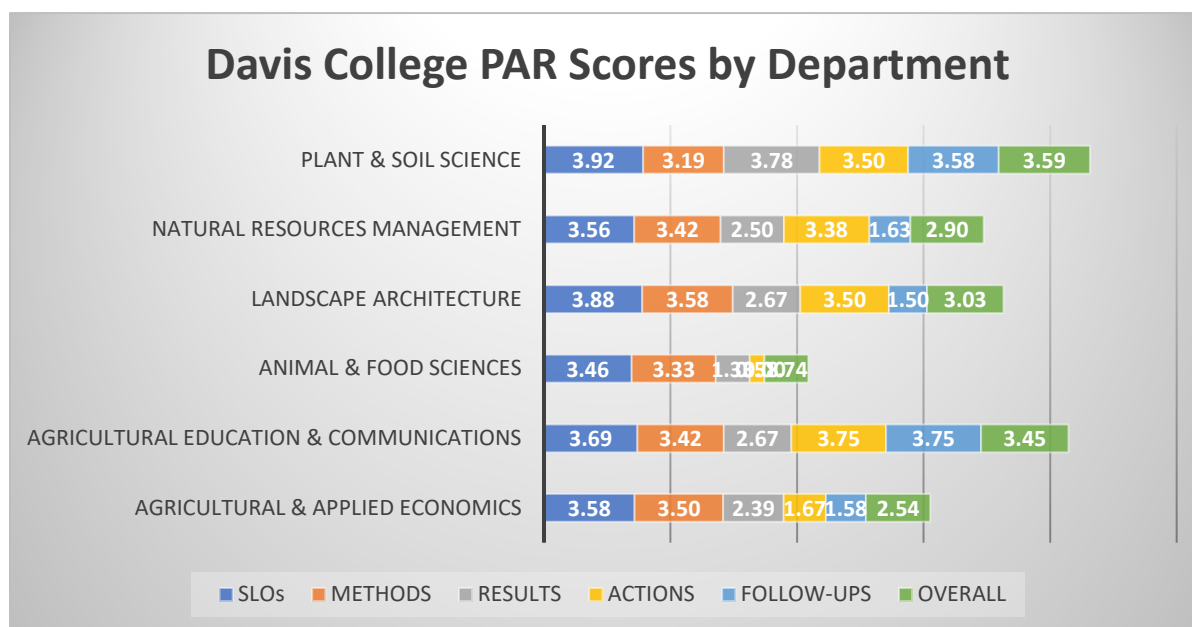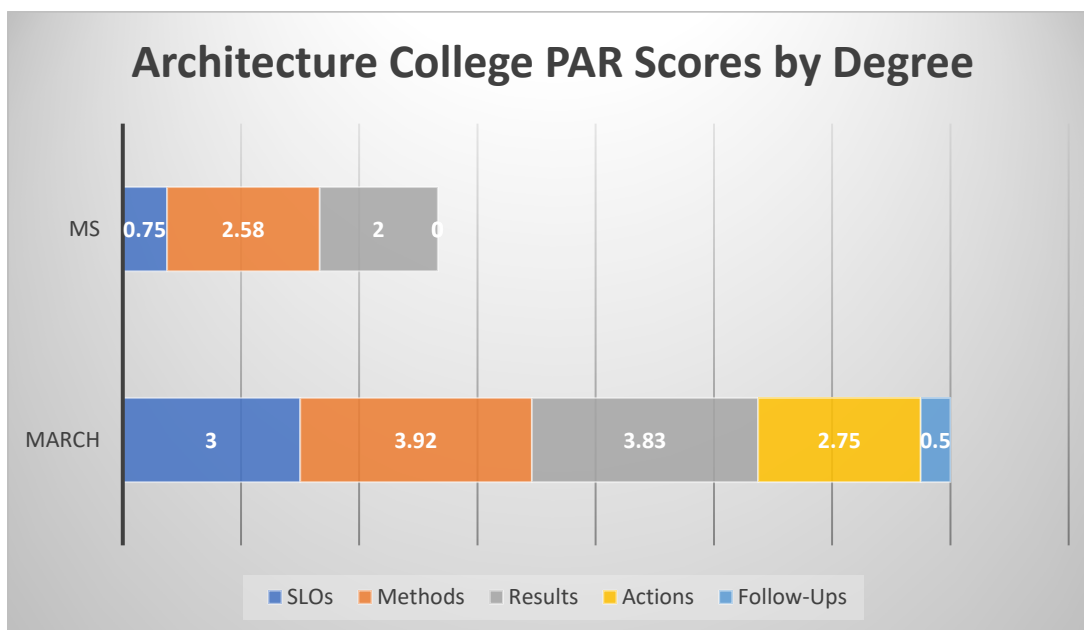
FIGURE 5

FIGURE 6

Davis College PAR Scores by Department

Department	SLOs	METHODS	RESULTS	ACTIONS	FOLLOW-UPS	OVERALL
PLANT & SOIL SCIENCE	3.92	3.19	3.78	3.50	3.58	3.59
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	3.56	3.42	2.50	3.38	1.63	2.90
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	3.88	3.58	2.67	3.50	1.50	3.03
ANIMAL & FOOD SCIENCES	3.46	3.33	1.38	1.50	1.07	2.74
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION & COMMUNICATIONS	3.69	3.42	2.67	3.75	3.75	3.45
AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS	3.58	3.50	2.39	1.67	1.58	2.54

College of Architecture

The overall College of Architecture (ARCH) PAR score was 2.64 , which is considered 'Emerging.' This program has improved its assessment processes over the years. The low score is a result of this College having two graduate departments, one that excells and one that is beginning. OPA is working with the MS program to ensure adequate assessment planning for 2022-2023.

FIGURE 7

Architecture College PAR Scores by Degree

MS: SLOs 0.75, Methods 2.58, Results 2, Actions 0

MARCH: SLOs 3, Methods 3.92, Results 3.83, Actions 2.75, Follow-Ups 0.5

Legend: ■ SLOs ■ Methods ■ Results ■ Actions ■ Follow-Ups

College of Arts and Sciences

The overall College of Arts and Sciences (A&S) PAR score was 3.14, which is considered 'Developed.' Seeing the overall trend of A&S helps OPA know how best to guide the department program coordinators during the next assessment cycle. Specifically, this college has scored lower in the Results and the Follow-Up Statements in the past two years. This year, OPA will provide department-level training regarding adequate 'Result Analysis' to almost every department. Specific guidance will be provided regarding evidence in the Annual Reflection section as well.
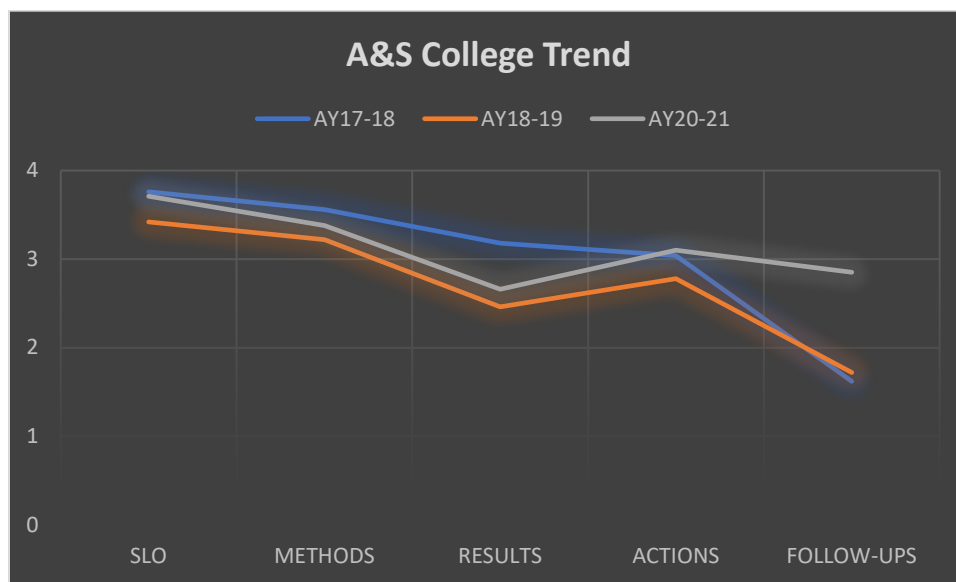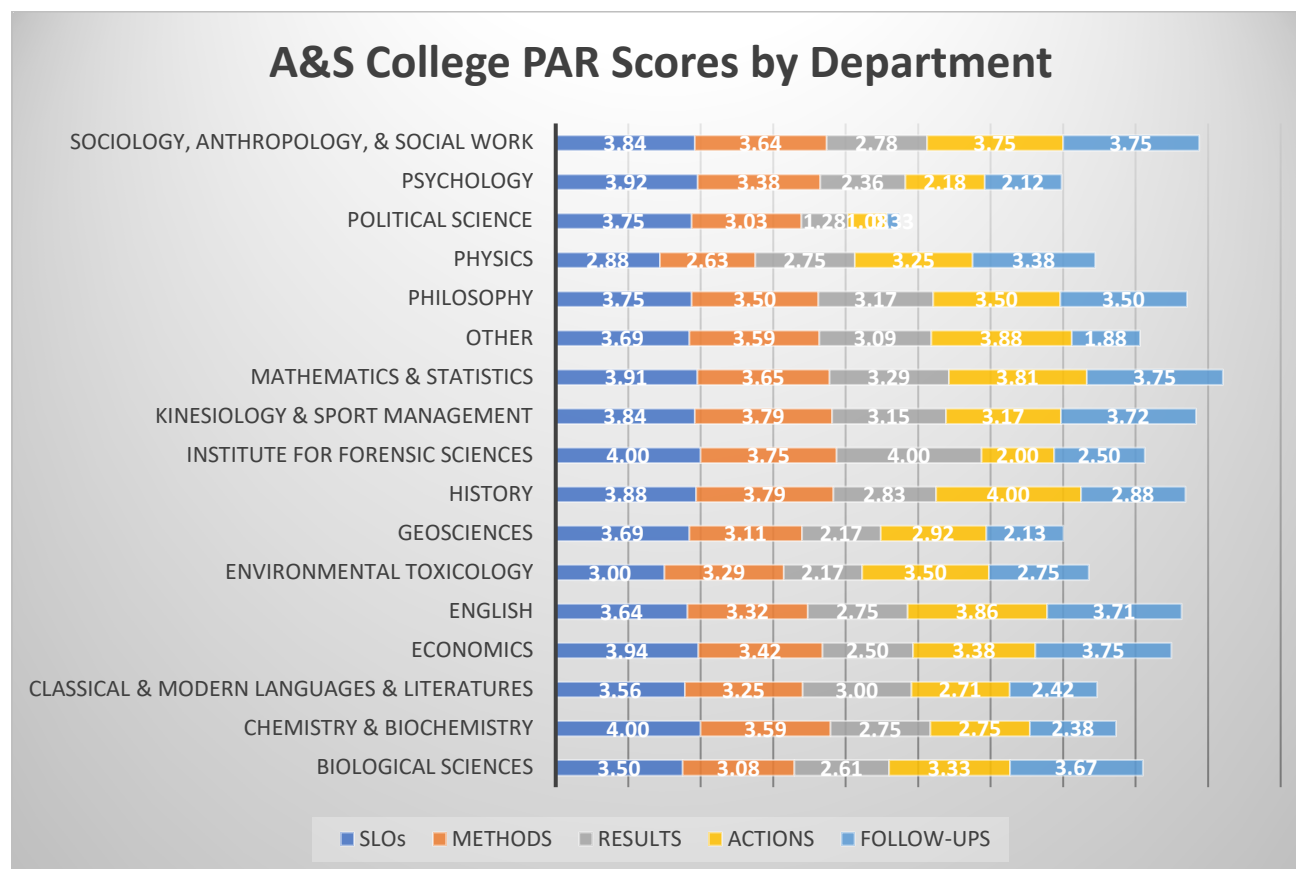
FIGURE 8

A&S College Trend

FIGURE 9

A&S College PAR Scores by Department

Department	SLOs	METHODS	RESULTS	ACTIONS	FOLLOW-UPS
SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, & SOCIAL WORK	3.84	3.64	2.78	3.75	3.75
PSYCHOLOGY	3.92	3.38	2.36	2.18	2.12
POLITICAL SCIENCE	3.75	3.03	1.28	1.08	1.33
PHYSICS	2.88	2.63	2.75	3.25	3.38
PHILOSOPHY	3.75	3.50	3.17	3.50	3.50
OTHER	3.69	3.59	3.09	3.88	1.88
MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS	3.91	3.65	3.29	3.81	3.75
KINESIOLOGY & SPORT MANAGEMENT	3.84	3.79	3.15	3.17	3.72
INSTITUTE FOR FORENSIC SCIENCES	4.00	3.75	4.00	2.00	2.50
HISTORY	3.88	3.79	2.83	4.00	2.88
GEOSCIENCES	3.69	3.11	2.17	2.92	2.13
ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY	3.00	3.29	2.17	3.50	2.75
ENGLISH	3.64	3.32	2.75	3.86	3.71
ECONOMICS	3.94	3.42	2.50	3.38	3.75
CLASSICAL & MODERN LANGUAGES & LITERATURES	3.56	3.25	3.00	2.71	2.42
CHEMISTRY & BIOCHEMISTRY	4.00	3.59	2.75	2.75	2.38
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	3.50	3.08	2.61	3.33	3.67

■ SLOs ■ METHODS ■ RESULTS ■ ACTIONS ■ FOLLOW-UPS

College of Business Administration

      The College of Business Administration average overall PAR score was 2.28, which is considered 'Emerging.' The Business Administration College has a phenomenal undergraduate assessment system in place, but the graduate programs need more guidance. Of the six graduate programs, all have 'Developed' or better Assessment Plans. The Results, Actions, and Follow-Up statements were under-developed. OPA needs to work with the graduate programs ahead of the deadline to ensure that Result Data is communicated appropriately. It is likely that the new format for Annual Reflections will work better for this College as well.

Figure 0
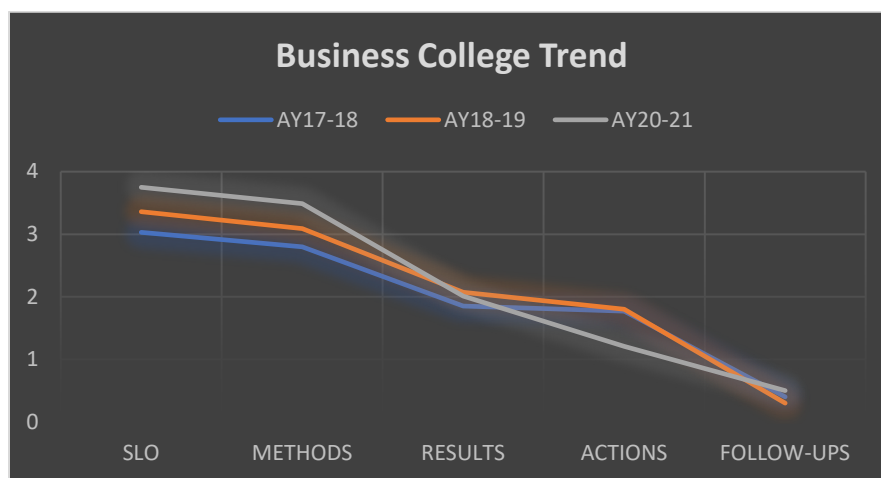
FIGURE 11
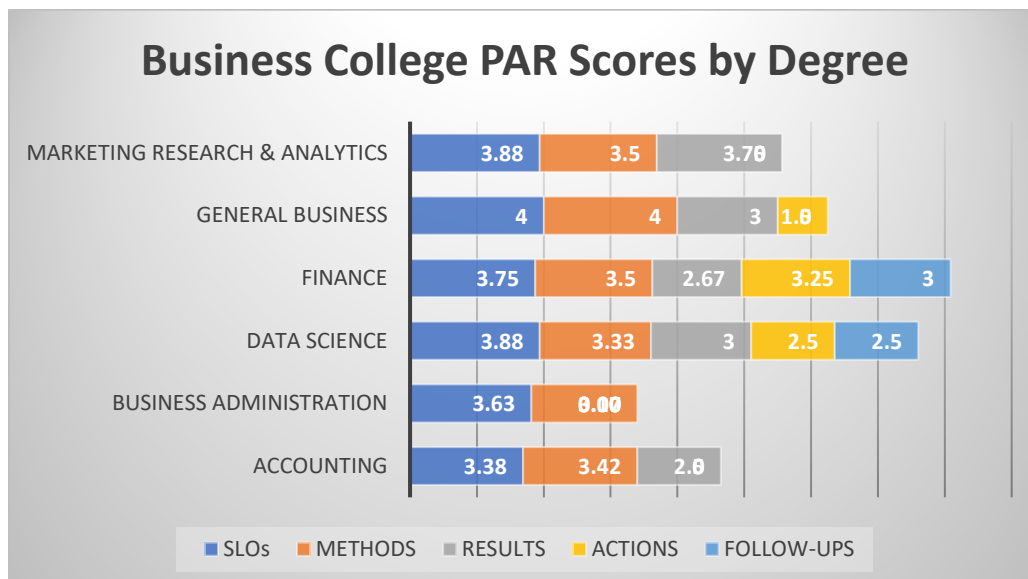
College of Education

The College of Education (EDUC) has an overall score of 3.20, which is considered 'Developed.' On the whole, the College has demonstrated strong and consistent assessment processes through the years. Several degree programs in the Educational Psychology Department have earned 'Highly Developed' scores and should be used as examplars for other degree programs.
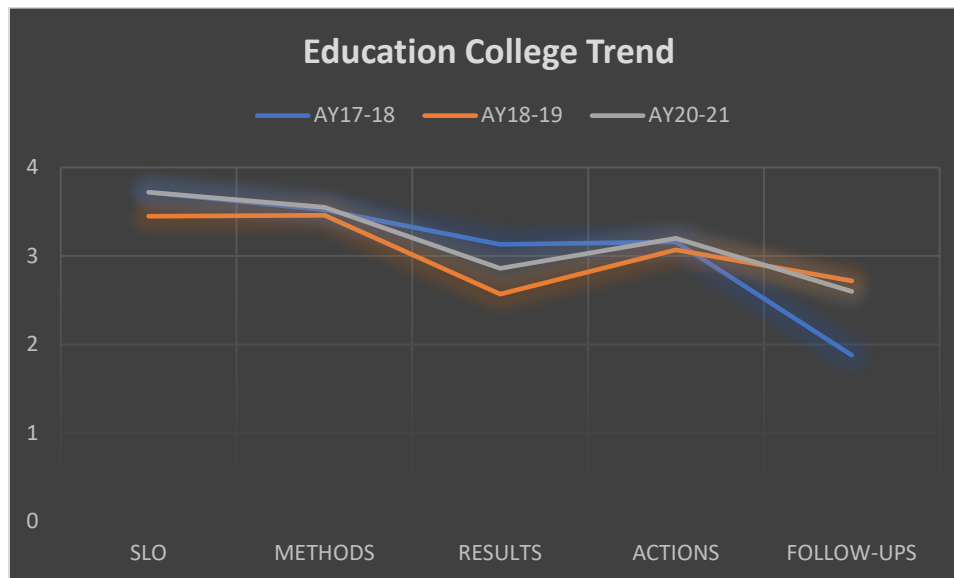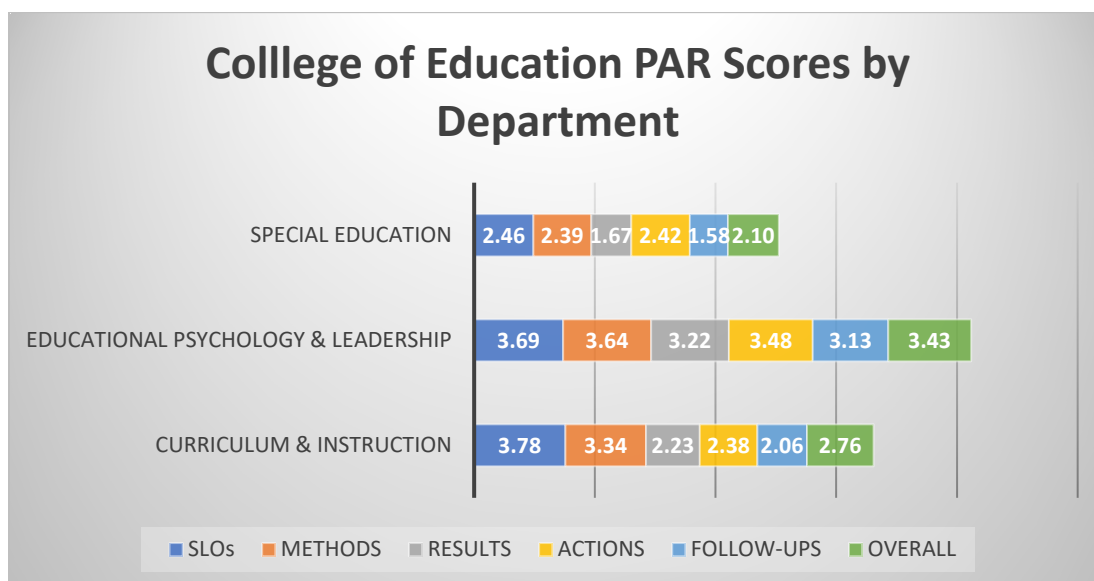
Figure 12

Figure 13

College of Engineering

The College of Engineering (ENG) overall score was a 2.71, which is considered 'Emerging.' As indicated in the trend chart, the lower scores in Assessment Methods, Results, Actions for Improvemeent, and Follow-Up Statements have been consistently low through the years and are in fact improving. The College had major administrative turn-over during the final semester of this assessment cycle. It is completely expected that with the new and consistent leadership, the trend to more 'Developed' reports is likely to continue. The department-level review indicates that additional support should be given to the following departments: Electrical & Computer, Industrial, and mechanical. Continued training in the new assessment format is advisable for this College.
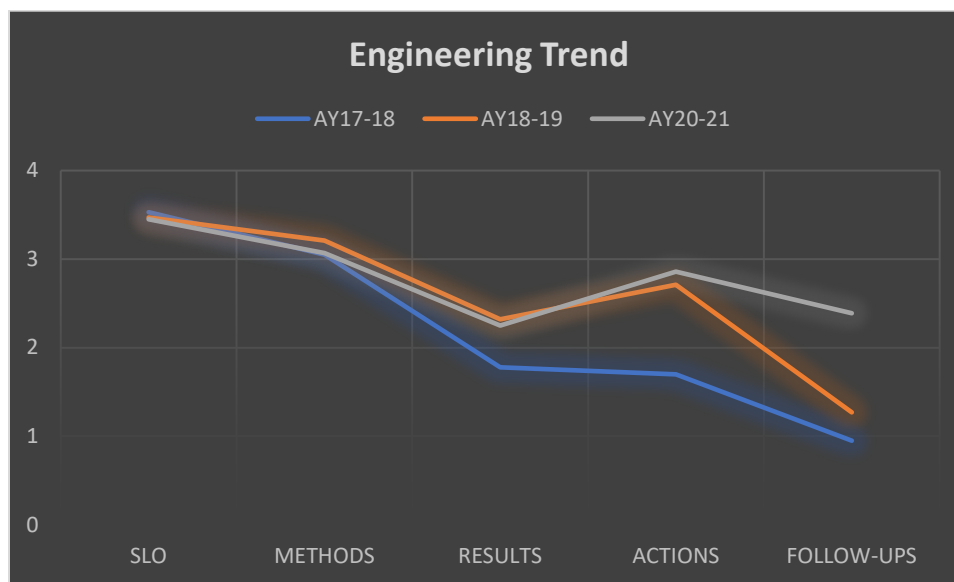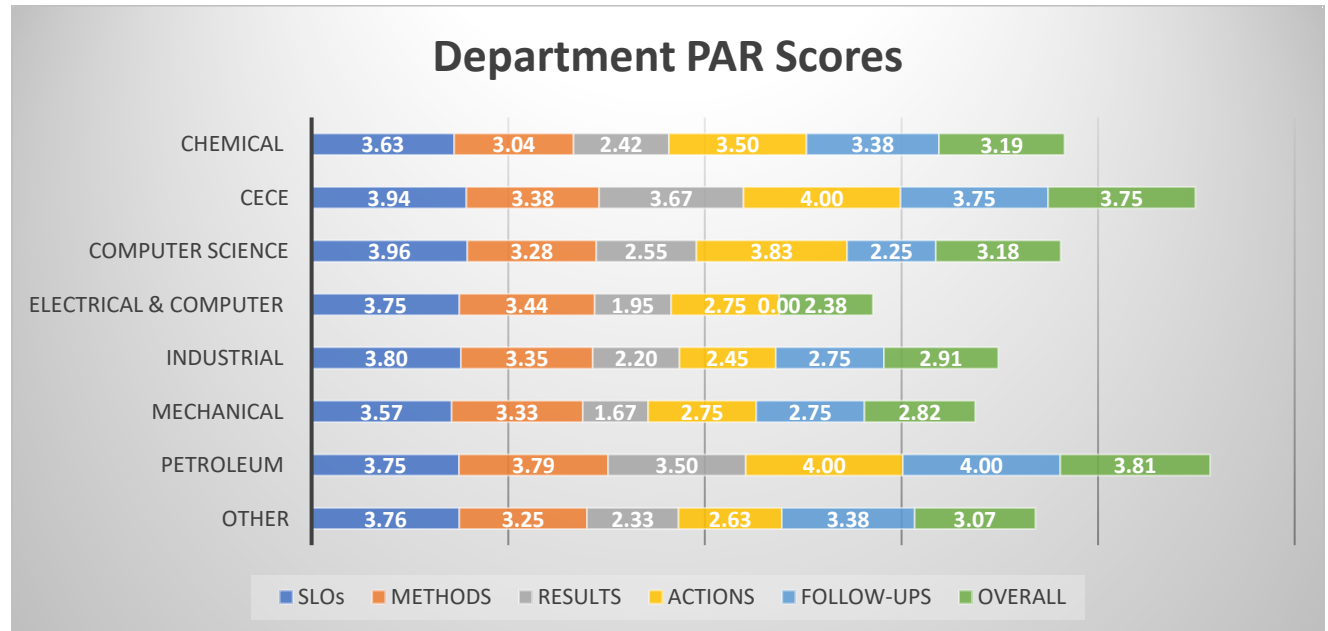
FIGURE 14

FIGURE 15

Department PAR Scores

Department	SLOs	METHODS	RESULTS	ACTIONS	FOLLOW-UPS	OVERALL
CHEMICAL	3.63	3.04	2.42	3.50	3.38	3.19
CECE	3.94	3.38	3.67	4.00	3.75	3.75
COMPUTER SCIENCE	3.96	3.28	2.55	3.83	2.25	3.18
ELECTRICAL & COMPUTER	3.75	3.44	1.95	2.75	0.00	2.38
INDUSTRIAL	3.80	3.35	2.20	2.45	2.75	2.91
MECHANICAL	3.57	3.33	1.67	2.75	2.75	2.82
PETROLEUM	3.75	3.79	3.50	4.00	4.00	3.81
OTHER	3.76	3.25	2.33	2.63	3.38	3.07

Graduate School

  The Graduate School has an overall score of 2.79, which is consdered 'Emerging.' Each degree program within this College is simulataneously in the Graduate School as well as within another respective College. Also, enrollment in the programs eb and flow through the years. Therefore, some programs may not have enough students in an assessment cycle, leaving their scores low. Other programs have regular attendance and robust assessment measures**. In fact, the Interdisciplinary Studies MS and the Biotechnology MS degree programs have 'Highly Developed' scores and should be used as examplary for other degree programs, especially those non-traditional degree programs.**

College of Human Sciences

The College of Human Sciences (COHS) overall score was a 3.23, which is considered 'Developed.' Human Sciences has consistently received 'Developed' and 'Highly Developed' scores throughout the past few years. Four programs scored 'Highly Developed' and should be used as exemplars for the rest of the College. The lowest scoring Element was the 'Follow-Up' statements, which like with other colleges should be remidied in the upcoming assessment cycle and the new Annual Reflection format.

FIGURE 16
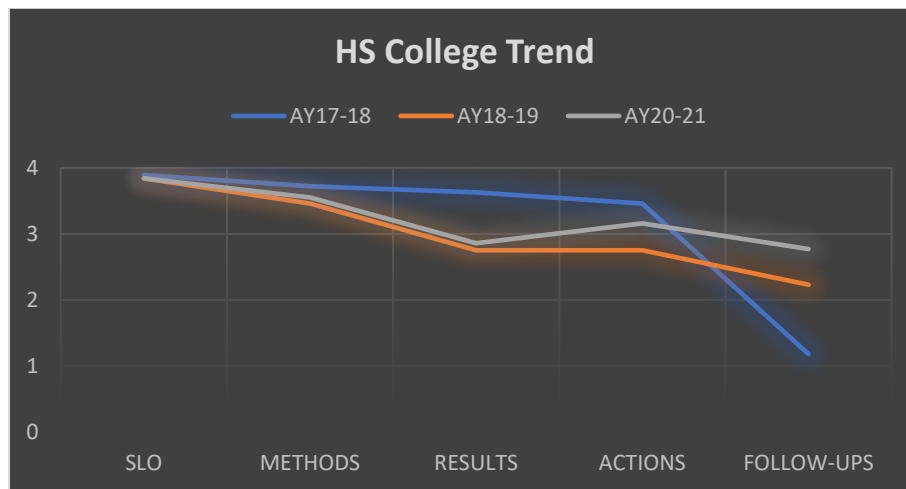
FIGURE 17
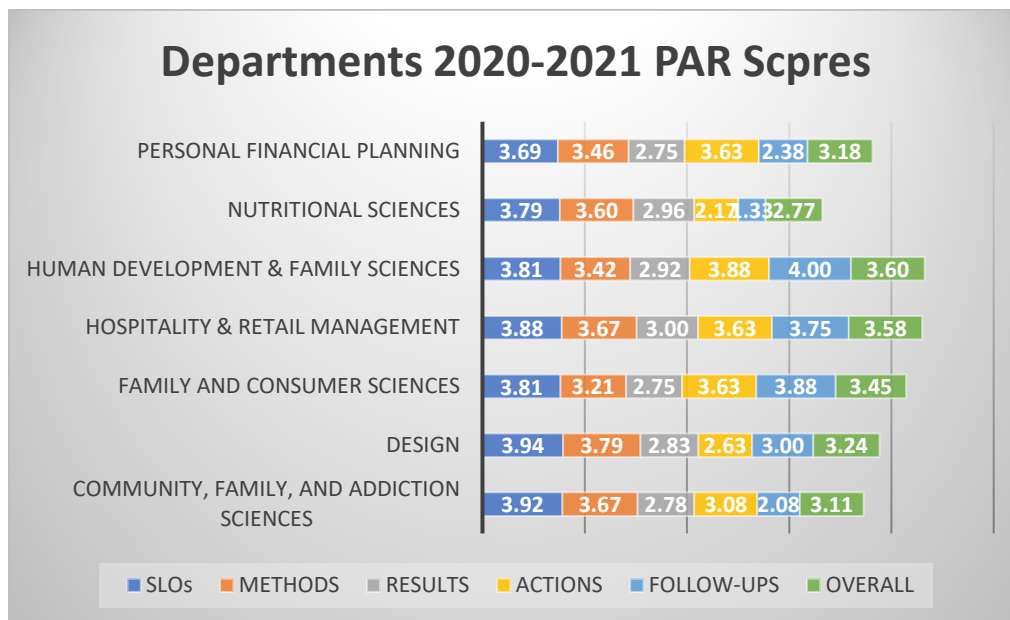
School of Law

The School of Law (LAW) has an overall score of 3.87, which is considered 'Highly Developed.' Through the Years, this School has earned high scores with their thorough and rigorous assessment processes. The School was also been awarded the Assessment in Innovation Grant in AY 2020-2021.

Figure 18
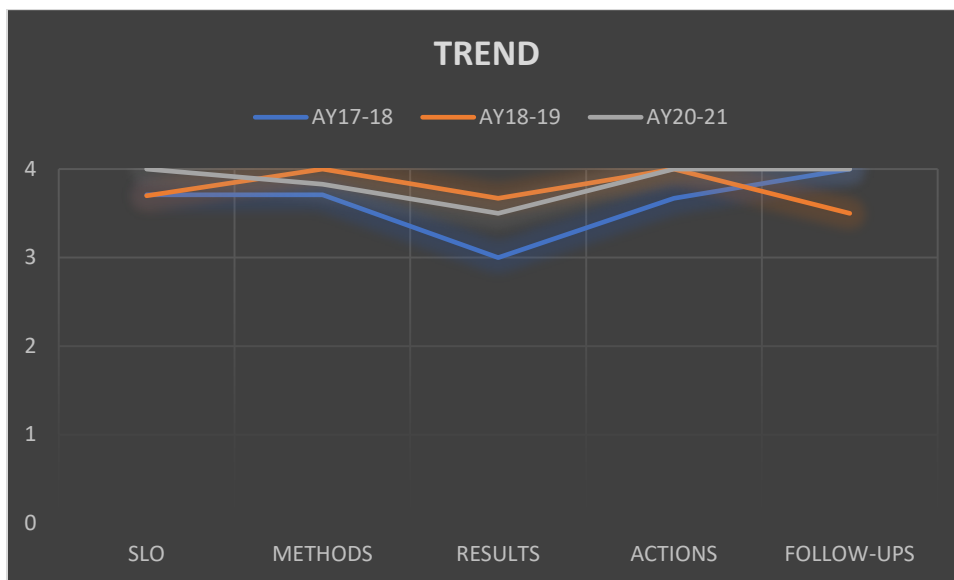
College of Media and Communications

The College of Media and Communications (COMC) overall score was 3.22, which is considered 'Developed.' The College's assessment has has remained stable over the past few years. It is recommended that OPA continue its focused guidance regarding Results and Result Analysis. The Degree Program in the department of Communication Studies reflects a particparly exemplary assessment and could be dissemnated to other departments as an example.
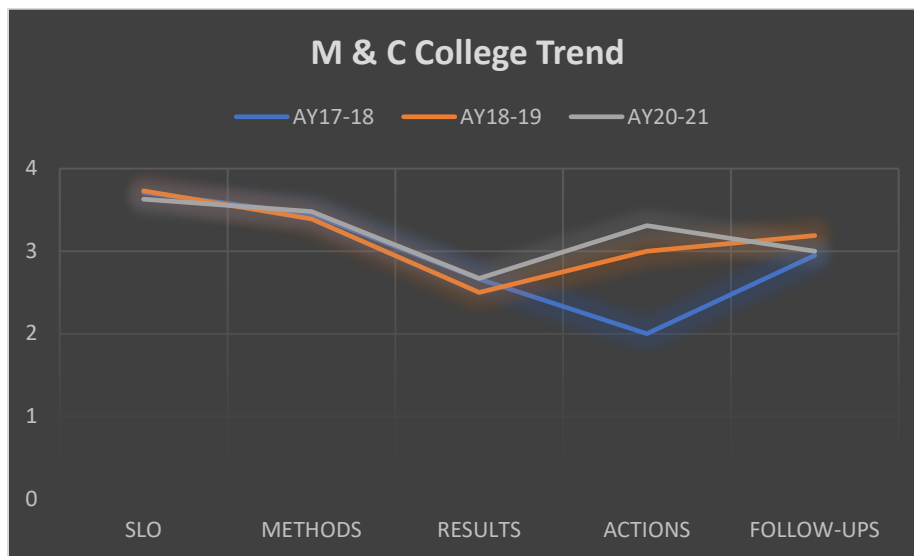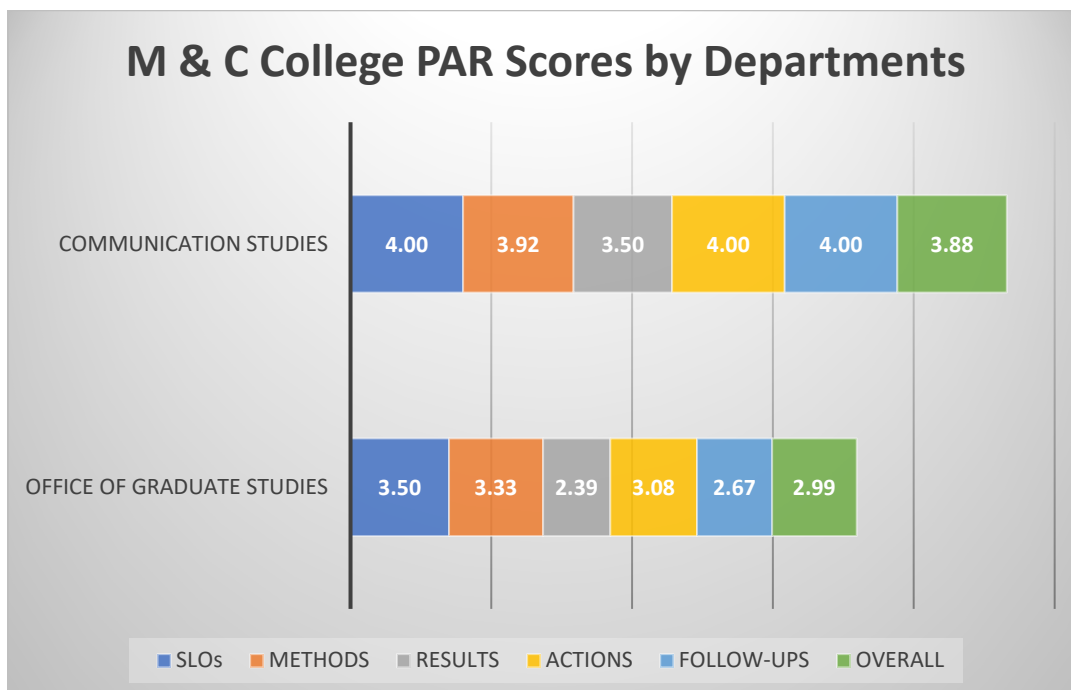
FIGURE 19

M & C College Trend

Figure 20

M & C College PAR Scores by Departments

Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts

The Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts (TCOVPA) overall score was a 2.86, which is considered 'Emerging.' Overall, the College has improved in their assessment process. The Theatre Department is in need of revamping their assessment plan so that they can get applicable and current results each year. OPA will assist in this realignment process.
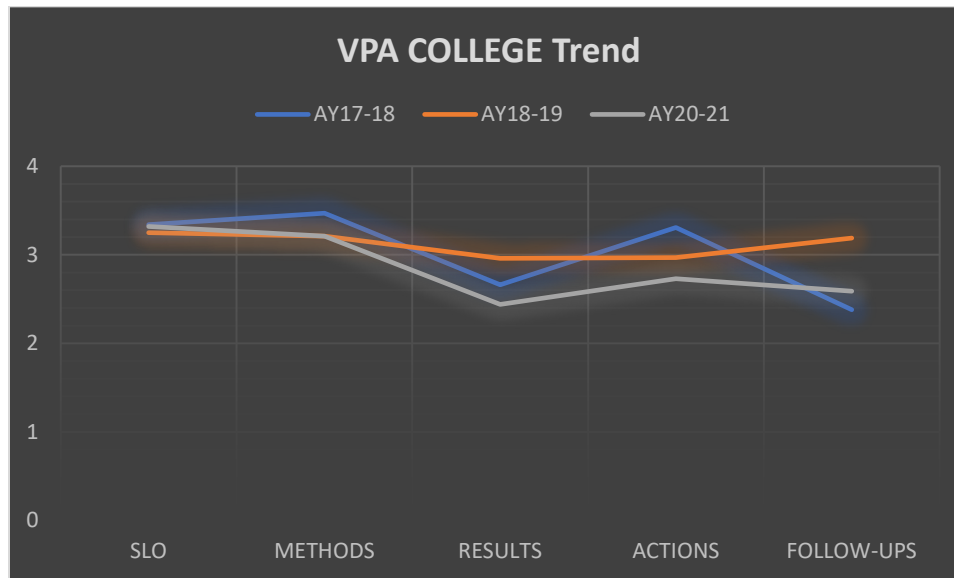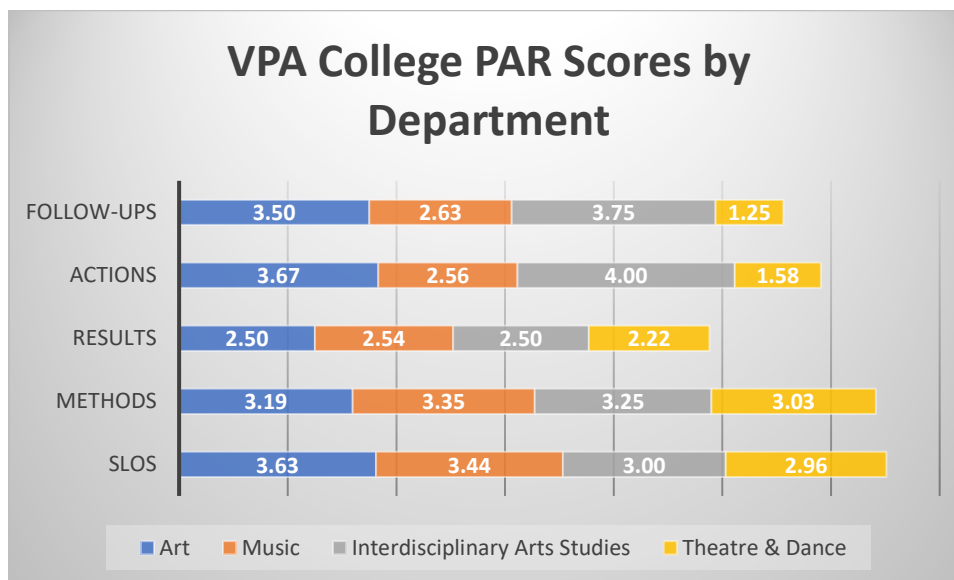
FIGURE 21

FIGURE 22

Veterinary School

This school admitted its first cohort of students in AY 2020-2021. Thus, this is their first year of assessment reporting. Their score was an overall 3.31, which is considered 'Developed.' The program has rigor and information assessment methods in place. Not all assessment methods had results because everyone in the program is in their first year. It is anticipated that the scores will improve overall as the program progresses.

Figure 23
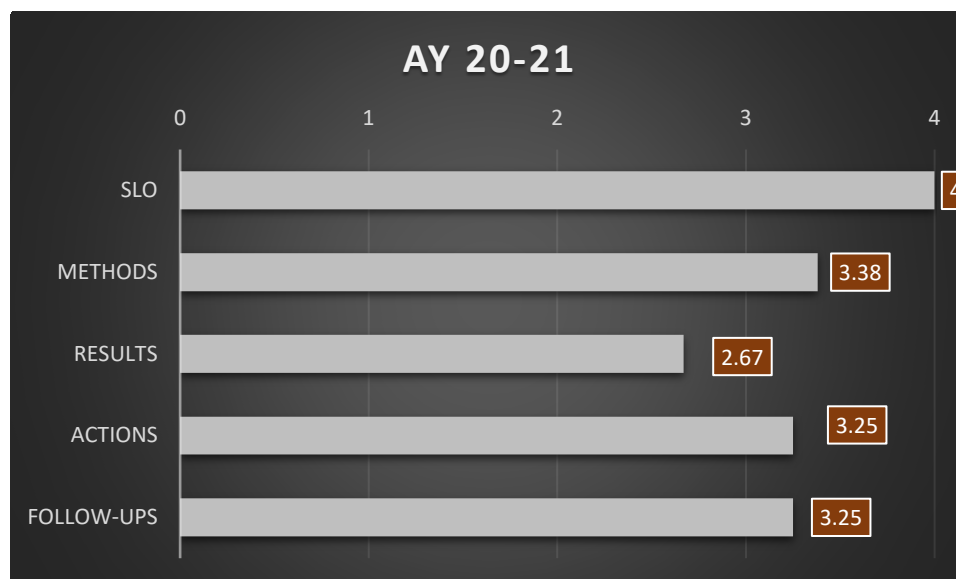
College-Level Peer Reviews

The Program Assessment Rubric (PAR) is the primary method of evaluation degree program assessment. However, the review process is supplemented by a College-Level Peer Review process that was established by the University-Level Institutional Effectiveness Committee (ULIEC). The ULIEC consists of representatives from each of the 13 academic colleges who are charged to oversee a College-Level Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The College-Level IE Committees annually conduct a peer review of a sampling of degree program reports based on a simplified rubric. The Simplified Peer Review Rubric asks faculty to provide quantitative feedback on a 6-point scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) on the following questions:

1. The Student Learning Outcomes identified by this program are applicable and appropriate for the program.
2. The Assessment Methods used by this program for measuring student learning are applicable and appropriate to meet the disciplinary needs of the program.
3. The Results that the program entered are useful for understanding the extent to which students learned the intended outcomes.
4. The Actions for Improvement that the program entered will help that program better assess student learning or improve student learning in general.

Lastly, and most importantly, faculty are asked to provide detailed qualitative commentary regarding their rankings for each program assessment.

The overarching purpose of the College Level Peer Review process is to evaluate the appropriateness of assessment plans from a disciplinary perspective. While the PAR is more extensive, it is designed to evaluate completeness of reporting and general assessment practices that is intended to assist programs in developing more meaningful assessment. The College-Level Peer Review is conducted by disciplinary peers that can provide feedback on the types of learning expected and the methods selected. Combined, these review processes provide a holistic review of assessment practices at the degree program-level.

Strategies for Improvement

The documentation of student learning assessment and demonstration of a commitment to continuous improvement is critical to a successful response to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Standard 8.2.a, which states, "the institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results for student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs."
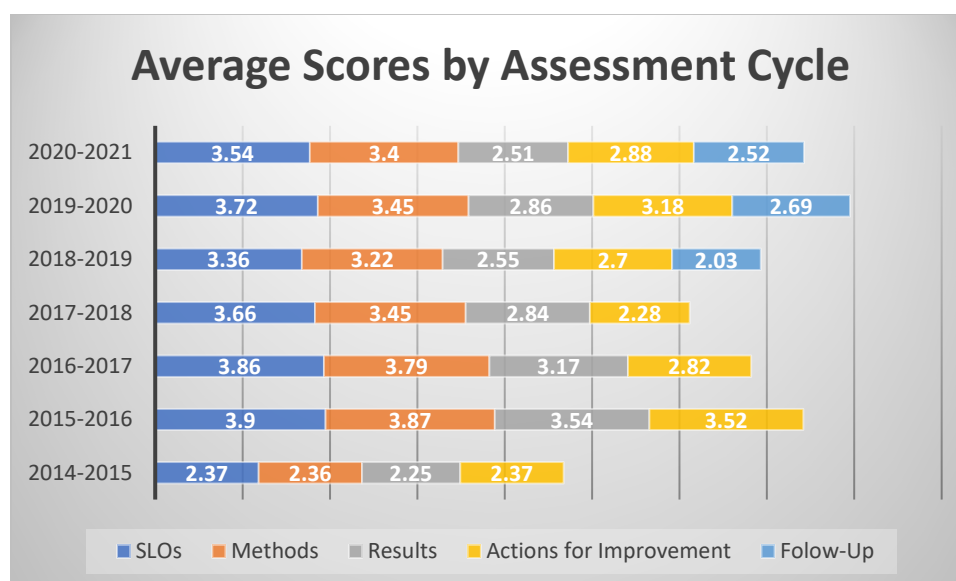
FIGURE 24

Figure 24 summarizes the overall average score by component area for the past several assessment cycles. This graph demonstrates that while OPA sees variability in the overall scores from year to year, the foundation of the Assessment Plans, its outcomes and assessment methods, have remained solid. The changes made to the upcoming cycles within the Results and the Reflections directly address the areas that show consistently poor scores.

Based on these results, OPA will continue to offer educational outreach opportunities to engage faculty members in meaningful assessment and will build partnerships with new, college-level leadership across the campus. Specifically, Department Chair visits will include emphasis on thorough results accompanied with an analysis and documentation. OPA will also provide workshops and trainings to prepare faculty and program directors for the changes being made in the 21-22 reporting cycle.