



One University Assessment Celebration

April 10, 2026

Academic Affairs

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

One University Assessment Celebration

Welcome

Presentation of Awards

- Champions
- Outstanding Assessment
- Faculty, Staff, and Student Engagement
- Best Use of Results
- Collaborative Inquiry and Action

Poster Presentation Recognition

Closing Remarks





Welcome to the One University Assessment Celebration

Julie Hasenwinkel
Associate Provost for Academic Programs



IE Champion Awards



Assessment Champion for Academic Programs

- Dr. Liu led a five-member task force to transform assessment across the entire MAE department — leading a comprehensive, multi-year effort that rebuilt the ABET assessment framework for both Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering programs from the ground up.
- Dr. Liu brought national best practices from the ABET Symposium to the task force and facilitated structured faculty discussions to put them into action.
- She developed more than ten assessment exemplars covering all eight Student Outcomes — providing faculty with concrete, practical models for selecting tools, justifying methods, and interpreting results.
- Dr. Liu redesigned the department's Continuous Quality Improvement system from scratch, streamlining data entry, automating calculations, and embedding structured improvement planning — then trained both ME and AE program directors to ensure the system's long-term sustainability.
- Her work has produced a durable cultural shift: assessment discussions are now embedded in faculty retreats, curricular planning, and program review as a matter of standard practice — no longer triggered only by accreditation deadlines.



Xiyuan Liu

Associate Teaching
Professor
Dean's Faculty Fellow for
Academic Affairs

Assessment Champion for Co-Curricular Programs

- Assessment drives operational change under Emily Dittman's leadership. She empowers her team to use results to expand community and campus partnerships, increase faculty and student fellowships, improve the Museum's online and in-person accessibility, expand student roles, and increase grant funding all while running a museum with a rich and diverse collection.
- In Fall 2025, she led the museum team through the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Self-Study process for the first time in the museum's history, positioning the museum among fewer than 1,100 nationally accredited institutions and providing a detailed, evidence-based roadmap for continued advancement.
- Emily also prioritizes the Museum's long-term success and engaged the Museum team, advisory board, and other stakeholders in a revised strategic planning process that focuses on Facilities enhancements, Collection Stewardship, Institutional Excellence, Financial Sustainability, and Community Engagement.



Emily Dittman

Director Syracuse University
Art Museum



Magdelín Montenegro

Part-Time Instructor, Spanish
The College of Arts and
Sciences

Course Feedback Champion

- Magdelín sets the tone from day one by including a dedicated course feedback section in her syllabus, signaling to students that their input will be valued and used. She follows through with mid-course check-ins to make targeted adjustments while the course is still in progress.
- When students raise concerns about unclear assignments and heavy workloads, she responds with clearer rubrics, exemplars of strong work, and restructured projects with built-in checkpoints. Feedback in, action out.
- She actively closes the feedback loop by sharing the feedback she receives and explaining what she plans to change, while being transparent when a change is not feasible. This builds the kind of trust that encourages students to engage honestly and consistently.
- Through open class discussions about what is and is not working, she makes feedback a shared, collaborative experience, giving students a visible stake in shaping the course.
- The results speak for themselves: across six semesters and 280 students, she achieved a 93.6% response rate, never dropping below 89%, and in Fall 2024 hit 100% across multiple sections. That consistency reflects a culture where students trust that their feedback matters.

Shared Competencies Assessment Champion

- 'Cuse Works was the first university partner to start tagging any type of experience with the Shared Competencies. Their leadership in adopting this framework early on has provided the university with 6 years on data that shows trends in which competencies are more evident in campus jobs and how circumstance affects what skills students learn in campus jobs. For instance, during covid, the university offered the most on-campus jobs focusing on scientific inquiry and research skills and communication skills through testing labs and research communications.
- Tagging on-campus job postings allows students to see the critical skills they can expect to gain through student employment. This allows students to identify jobs that will help them enhance critical skills they want or need to develop. To date, 3,188 unique jobs have been tagged with the Shared Competencies.



'Cuse Works

Shared Competencies Student Champion



- This new award highlights the contributions and role recognized student organizations play in developing critical skills outside the classroom.
- Fetch Collective Magazine's day-to-day operations intentionally integrates specific experiences for members to develop critical and creative thinking, communication skills, and information literacy and technological agility
- Last year Fetch received Shared Competency supplemental funding from our office to support their Magazine Lab which engaged their newest members in developing magazine production skills through hands-on workshops.
- Members don't just produce content — they reflect on past issues, analyze feedback collectively, and apply lessons learned to future work, embedding a genuine culture of continuous improvement and student-led learning experiences.

Fetch Collective Magazine

Awards for Outstanding Assessment



Outstanding Assessment in Academic Programs

Library and Information Science MS

- The Library and Information Science MS program demonstrates a strong commitment to student success and continuous improvement — using multiple evidence across five courses to assess three learning outcomes, then using those assessment results not just to assign grades, but to identify specific areas where instructional emphasis or assignment design could be strengthened.
- For example, to better support students' use of primary sources, more emphasis on this practice was embedded into course communications and assignments in IST 632. To help students manage their time, the program incorporated more peer review opportunities in IST 613 — responding directly to patterns identified in the data.
- Perhaps most notably, faculty observations connecting student agency and personal investment to higher quality work — as evidenced in IST 612 where students performing the Booktalks assignment brought their own passions to the work — are now being carried forward into a full course redesign launching Spring 2026. This reflects a program culture where assessment findings are treated as genuine opportunities to grow.

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE MASTER'S DEGREE



Outstanding Assessment in Co-Curricular Programs

Disability Cultural Center

- The disability cultural center has built a replicable model for experiential, equity-centered co-curricular assessment — using two signature unified adaptive sports events, OrangeAbility and the Inclusive Cup, co-hosted with CNY Adaptive Sports, as the primary vehicles for assessing student learning around disability culture.
- Survey data from participants — including Fraternity and Sorority members, and SU's men's and women's hockey and club teams — revealed that the majority deepened their understanding of disability culture, with takeaways ranging from "a newfound respect for how hard sled hockey truly is" to "people of all backgrounds coming together."
- Year-over-year assessment showed measurable growth: the 2025 Inclusive Cup rated better than 2024 across all dimensions — and a new finding emerged: students who played alongside disabled athletes reported they would now seek out and watch adaptive sports, indicating learning that extended well beyond the event itself.
- Evidence shaped action on multiple fronts: such as expanding both events into Disability Pride Month 2026, and strengthening disability identity work through DCC Connect affinity group meetings — where all three outcomes were met, with students expressing their disability identity, recognizing community power, and articulating what belonging looks like in higher education.



Disability Cultural Center



Outstanding Assessment in Functional Units

Office of Pre-College Programs

- The Office of Pre-College Programs has built one of the university's most robust functional unit assessment practices, using five-year longitudinal trend analysis to distinguish genuine growth from temporary fluctuations — tracking applications, enrollments, partner impact, and satisfaction data over time to drive strategic decisions rather than reacting to year-over-year noise.
- The program's five-year growth trajectory speaks for itself: from 1,029 applications in 2021 to 1,907 in 2025 — an 85% increase — achieved through a consistent, evidence-informed approach that continuously turns challenges into opportunities. When a college calendar change forced a shift from a six-week to a four-week program, assessment-guided realignment produced an 11.7% enrollment increase in year one and a 34% increase the following year.
- In 2024, the office introduced an innovative three-dimensional measure to track partner organization impact — number of partners, students served, and funding generated — revealing that 29% of Summer College enrollments (373 of 1,288) are supported through partnerships representing over \$1.18 million in financial access for students who might not otherwise participate.
- Student and parent satisfaction data drive continuous improvements directly: A case in point, Barnes Center and Health Services access became a permanent program feature after student feedback in Summer 2022, In 2024 satisfaction rates were 96% (students) and 97% (parents) — reflecting a program that listens and acts.



Experience pre-college this summer with Summer College!



Summer College - On Campus



Summer College - Online



Summer College - On Location

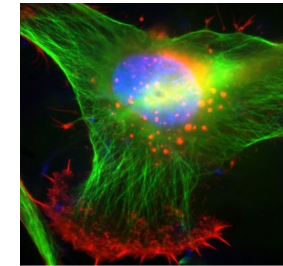
Awards for Best Engagement Strategies



Biology Department

- In the past year, Drs. Ash Heim and Vera McIlvain led a multi-faceted assessment of the undergraduate Biology program bringing together faculty across a 35-member department to strengthen how the program prepares over 125 students for their next steps in the biology field. This has included:
 - Broad faculty participation in curriculum mapping in which program learning outcomes were clarified to make them more measurable. The previously mapped course list was refined to reflect faculty’s recent work in updating the curriculum. Syllabi were reviewed, and relevant assessments added for each course. The level to which the outcomes are addressed are included to show the progression of learning across the curriculum.
 - Faculty-led actions are already in progress. Measuring student learning at different points in the curriculum, results were strong with both first-year students and upper-level students excelling. Yet a multi-pronged improvement plan has been identified, including integrating case-based information literacy modules in upper-level courses, creating student guidelines for evaluating scientific evidence, and expanding graphical reasoning exercises in 200-level labs.
 - Thoughtful engagement in Shared Competencies course tagging ensures Biology students can connect coursework to their broader professional development. Faculty conducted a comprehensive review of regular offerings to review and tag courses with the competencies. Students’ development of these University undergraduate learning goals provide them with transferable skills for job and graduate school searches.

Best Faculty Engagement Strategies



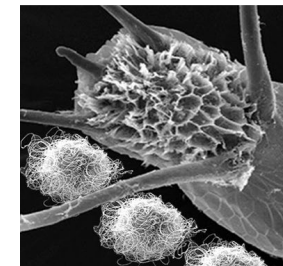
Cell biology



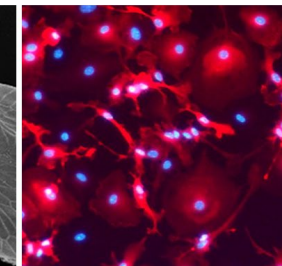
Developmental biology



Evolution & behavior



Genetics & genomics



Neuroscience



Ecology & plants



- In 2024-25, Arts at SU began developing a coalition-wide strategic plan through facilitated sessions involving staff from all 12 arts units. The group established 5 shared priorities and ensured assessment incorporates diverse organizational contexts while building genuine staff buy-in.
- In the following year, Arts at SU documented 310 exhibitions and performances, 110,000 attendees, 708 student research projects, and \$1.33 million in external funding — giving staff a shared, quantitative picture of their collective impact that no single unit could see alone.
- Assessment approaches have spread organically across the coalition and enhance coordination and collaborative efforts such as event planning, shared templates, pre- and post-surveys, and strategies to support experiential learning.
- Arts at SU has built a cross-campus engagement model grounded in reflective practice. Together, staff developed clear success outcomes aligned to mission, established strong measures for tracking participation and reach, and set benchmarks to guide continuous improvement. Staff’s meaningful engagement with assessment findings is a distinguishing strength of their work.

Best Student Engagement Strategies

M.A. in Linguistic Studies

- Dr. Amanda Brown put students in charge of assessing their own program. Three Linguistic Studies master's students became peer researchers in a project designed to build assessment skills, develop a sense of agency in curricular development, and surface insights that faculty-led processes alone could not capture.
- Using surveys and focus groups, the researchers engaged 14 current students and 6 alumni in answering 3 questions: Do students know the program's learning outcomes? How do they feel about the master's focus areas? Should a psycholinguistics focus area be added?
- The peer model was essential to data quality. Participants felt more comfortable sharing their perspectives with their peers, and generated insights around which important faculty discussions and program innovations will follow. Alumni engagement exceeded expectations, showing alums to be actively invested in the program even though they had completed it.
- The work reached well beyond the program: the team presented at a disciplinary conference and the 2025 One University Assessment Celebration. One of the peer researchers, Johnson Akano, represented at the Middle States Commission on Higher Education annual conference, where he presented the project poster to higher education professionals from across the country. As Akano reflected, "It was a rare opportunity to share with educators in higher education how active student involvement in curriculum development is transforming the learning experience of students."



Awards for Best Use of Results



Best Use of Results in Academic Programs

Biomedical Engineering BS

- The Biomedical Engineering BS program excels in what most programs/units struggle with – closing the assessment loop to measure the impact of curricular changes.
- Capstone assessment data revealed that 81% of students met the engineering design outcome, but struggled to balance competing design constraints and over-relied on computational modeling without justifying key assumptions.
- Rather than noting the gap and moving on, the full Biomedical Engineering faculty discussed the findings at the August 2025 retreat and implemented a focused design constraints and trade-offs workshop using real case studies showing how design decisions must balance public health, safety, and scalability.
- Subsequent capstone data showed 87.5% of teams met or exceeded the learning outcome. Faculty noticed the interdisciplinary teams achieving the outcome at a higher rate – a finding faculty are now using to inform how team composition and mentorship are approached going forward.



LGBTQ+ Resource Center

Best Use of Results in Co-Curricular Programs



- The LGBTQ+ Resource Center used assessment data to fundamentally rethink what its programming should look like — discovering that students weren't seeking events that spotlighted their identities, but rather low-risk, community-centered spaces where they could connect safely under a challenging national climate.
- Acting on that finding, the Center shifted event language and format: renaming "Queer Prom" to "Second Chance Prom," designing activity-first events like "Gaymer Night" and "Fidgets for Finals."
- These changes drove increased attendance, stronger student satisfaction scores on event evaluations, and an increase in students attending multiple events. By Fall 2025, the Center nearly matched its prior-year attendance total in a single semester alone and exceeded the prior-year evaluation engagement - students saw how their feedback actually informed program changes.
- Assessment of student staff wellness through pre-post surveys and structured semester tracking led to sustained improvements in staff morale, sense of belonging, and academic focus — with student staff themselves requesting the process continue as a permanent component of their leadership experience.
- Using assessment results helps the Center meet their goals of reaching more students and building deeper connections.

Best Use of Results in Functional Units

- Syracuse University Libraries has built one of the university's most comprehensive and multi-dimensional assessment practices — spanning research services, student wellness, information literacy instruction, experiential learning, digital infrastructure, and scholarly publishing — and in every area, data gathered in one cycle directly shapes decisions in the next. I'll share just a few highlights.
- The Read and Publish program grew from 12 to 15 publisher agreements, producing a 48% increase in open-access articles and over \$640,000 in Author Publishing Charge savings. Disaggregated results by school/college and discipline revealed participation gaps and that evidence is now actively driving FY26 outreach to close those gaps.
- MindSpa massage chair room reservations grew 78% after a second room was added based on prior-year demand data. Survey feedback from users revealed 100% of respondents reported lower stress levels after use.
- The Student Library Advisory Board (SLAB), formalized in Spring 2025 with eight members representing five schools and colleges, provided structured, semester-long feedback that directly produced visible improvements during the semester itself — including updated printer location information on the website, additional power outlets, and revised elevator signage. Students noted, "We weren't simply commenting on library services but genuinely contributing to their transformation."

Syracuse University Libraries



Collaborative Inquiry & Action



First Year Seminar

- First Year Seminar (FYS 101) is the only all-university course required of every undergraduate student at Syracuse University, reaching more than 4,000 students each year — centering on students' transition to college, enhancing their sense of belonging, and their ability to engage across differences with empathy and inclusion.
- In March 2025, Shannon Schantz led an 11-week cross-campus working group — including faculty, staff, administrators, and a 14-member student group representing 8 schools and colleges — to redesign FYS 101 from the ground up for Fall 2025. The redesign was anchored entirely in evidence: nearly 6,000 student responses at 70%+ response rates identified four persistent problems — class length, passive delivery, students wanting practical transition support, and an inauthentic Personal Engagement Plan — each driving a direct curriculum change.
- Students participated as genuine design partners, not validators — their firsthand accounts confirmed quantitative findings and directly shaped how identity-related activities were designed, which resulted in adding hidden curriculum content for first-generation students. Fall 2025 showed gains across multiple measures, with stronger outcomes for first-generation, non-domestic, non-White, and female-identifying students — and the collaboration is continuing into 2026 with new advisory groups already shaping the next iteration.



Assessment Leadership Institute

The posters around the room feature assessment work from faculty, staff, and students. I invite you to grab some refreshments and learn more about their projects after the ceremony. But let me tell you a little bit about these initiatives.

The assessment leadership institute engages faculty from across campus in a 2 ½ day curriculum to develop a sense of agency to inform program-level decision-making, enhance facilitation skills to guide assessment efforts, and increase their overall knowledge and skills to study student learning.

We have 7 faculty members to recognize this year.

Assessment Leadership Institute Faculty



Ben Akih Kumgeh
Mechanical & Aerospace
Engineering| ECS



Vera McIlvain
Biology | A&S



Alex Méndez Giner
Film & Media Arts | VPA



Ash Heim
Biology| A&S



Nancy Rindfuss
Nutrition & Food Studies | Falk



Xiyuan Liu
Mechanical & Aerospace
Engineering| ECS

Student Engagement in Assessment

The student engagement in assessment min—grant supports faculty and staff in including students in the assessment process. Bringing students into program/unit assessment efforts validates their lived experiences as learners and provides faculty/staff with insights to enhance the overall student learning experience.

We have 8 teams to recognize this year.

Student Engagement Grant Recipients

**Civil and Environmental
Engineering**
Yilei Shi | ECS

Nutrition Science MA
Claire Cooney & Nikki Beckwith |
Falk

**Civil and Environmental
Engineering**
Svetoslava Todorova | ECS

Setnor School of Music
Klark Johnson | VPA

**Communication Sciences and
Disorders**
Charles Nudelman | A&S

School of Social Work
Nadaya Brantley | SOE

**Environment, Sustainability
and Policy BA/BS**
Jane Read | Maxwell

The Writing Center
Collie Fulford | A&S



Closing Remarks

Laura Harrington

Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness





Thank You!

We would like to extend our thanks to the School of Education for their invaluable assistance in setting up the venue, and to the Syracuse Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement (SOURCE) for generously providing us with boards and easels for our posters.

Our thanks, as well, to nominators for highlighting excellent work in assessment. The narratives they provided were used in the award descriptions.

