STUDENT AFFAIRS ASSESSMENT LEADERS

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The Landscape Report: The State of the Field of Student Affairs Assessment

Provided by: SAAL Research On & Advancing Knowledge Committee

March 2024

Introduction

The Student Affairs Assessment Leaders (SAAL) Landscape Survey was first administered in 2019 and again in the fall of 2023. The Landscape Survey is administered to SAAL members with the purpose of better understanding the current state of the field of Student Affairs assessment and the needs of people engaged in Student Affairs assessment. The SAAL Research On and Advancing Knowledge Committee revamped the 2023 survey by adding questions specific to the assessment approaches being used at institutions through decision-making, identifying opportunities for improvement, strategic planning initiatives, established learning outcomes by varying levels (i.e., institution, division, department), and assessing impact of student affairs programs, initiatives, and services. Additionally, with the rollout of SAAL's new strategic plan, the SAAL Board is focused on identifying strategic priorities for the immediate years to follow the survey. To inform SAAL's strategic priorities, a new section was added to the 2023 Landscape Survey to focus on SAAL strategic planning to help better understand, from SAAL members' perspectives, where strategic focus should be for the immediate future.

It is important to note that although the 2023 Landscape Survey was revamped from the 2019 version, the Research On and Advancing Knowledge Committee was mindful to not make significant changes to questions within the "Institutional Characteristics" and "Assessment Happening within your Institution" sections to allow for comparisons and trends analysis to meaningfully evaluate how the student affairs assessment field is changing and evolving.

This report provides the SAAL Board with an overview of where our constituents believe the field of student affairs assessment has been and where it may be headed. In addition, themes that emerged from the questions asked about successes and challenges being faced in the field of student affairs assessment will be discussed. Finally, practical recommendations for the SAAL Board will be offered.

2023 Landscape Survey Summary

Institutional Characteristics

A significant majority of respondents indicated that they are currently working in student affairs (most commonly in assessment positions) at 4-year institutions of higher education. Almost two-thirds of respondents are working at large (10,000+) and 19% at small (<10,000) 4-year institutions. The majority of respondents do not work for institutions with special designations, but nearly a quarter of respondents work at a federally designated minority-serving institution. The top four accrediting organizations represented in the responses are the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Middle States Commission on

Higher Education (MSCHE), and WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), aligning with the relative national sizes of these organizations.

Student Affairs Assessment & Respondent Characteristics

Most respondents indicated that their divisions of student affairs have at least three student affairs assessment staff, with almost a third having four or more staff. About one-third of respondents indicated they work full-time in their positions. Additionally, approximately 40% of respondents indicated that they have at least one graduate assistant or student employee working in their student affairs assessment office.

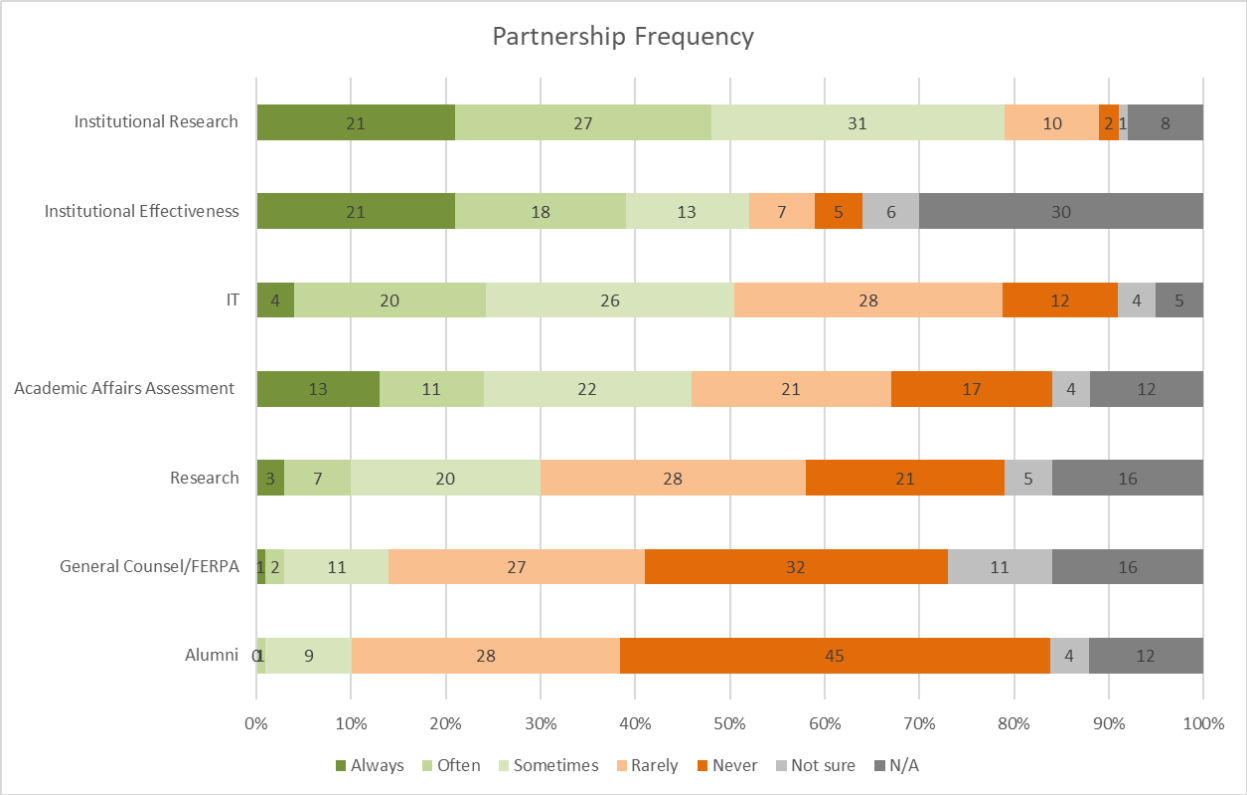
There is a good distribution of years of experience for respondents, with the scale tipping to the majority (70%) having seven or less years of experience. Further, the majority of respondents indicated they have non-assessment experience in student affairs. A much smaller percentage of respondents indicated experience working in academic assessment, institutional research, and assessment outside of higher education. The majority of respondents indicated that they earned advanced degrees.

Over half of respondents work at the division-level or higher, and hold titles with director (executive to assistant). Half of respondents report to vice presidents/chancellors and/or executive or senior directors/directors. Respondents indicated that most of their time is spent relationship-building and in collaboration with stakeholders, followed by consultation, knowledge sharing and dissemination; developing a culture of evidence; working with technology; strategic planning; professional development; and accreditation.

Student Affairs Assessment (SAA) Happening Within Your Institution: Collaboration/Partnerships

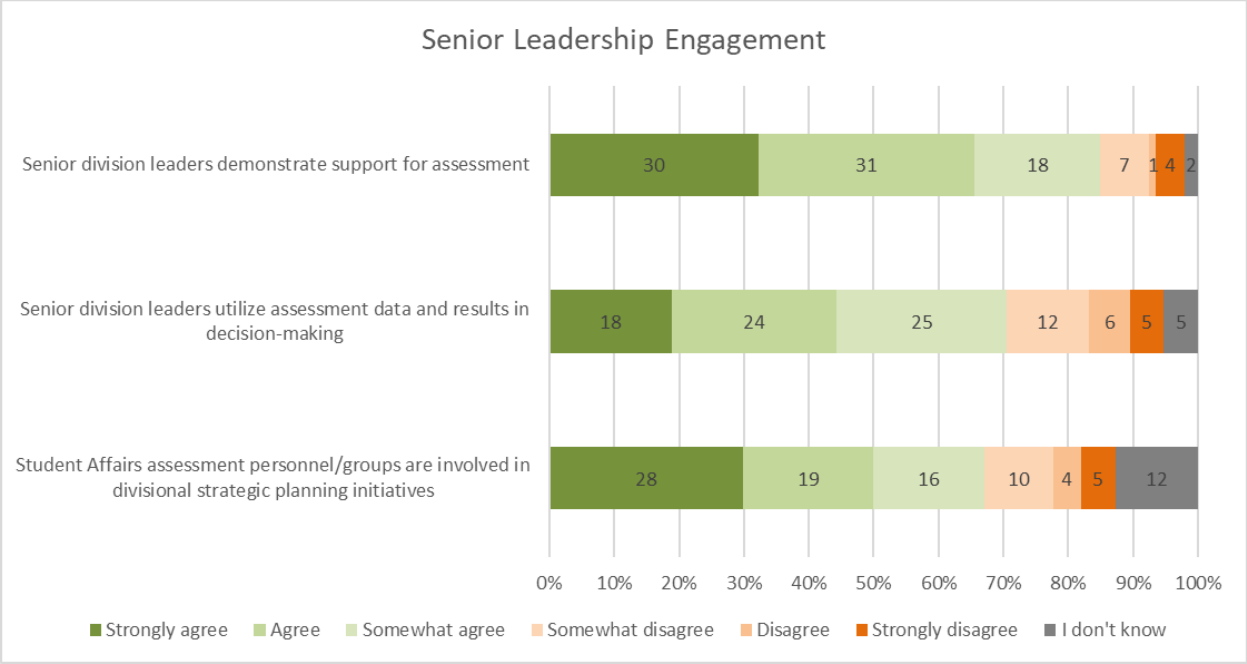
One of the key characteristics of student affairs assessment work, based on the responses to this survey and the experiences of the researchers, is relationships - important both in frequency and quality. We explored relationships through the lens of collaboration and partnerships through a series of items designed to gather information from respondents about the engagement of student affairs assessment with other institutional practices and stakeholders. Respondents confirmed that in the majority of institutions, **student affairs participates meaningfully in accreditation efforts**. Engagement of SAA staff in **conversations about the assessment of student learning** is only slightly less widespread; however, student engagement in assessment processes and practices beyond providing data is substantially less widespread.

Regarding partnerships with specific offices, overwhelmingly respondents partnered more frequently with **institutional research**. About half of the respondents indicated that they partner at least sometimes with institutional effectiveness, IT, and academic affairs assessment. A much smaller percentage of respondents indicated that they frequently partner with research, general counsel, and alumni.

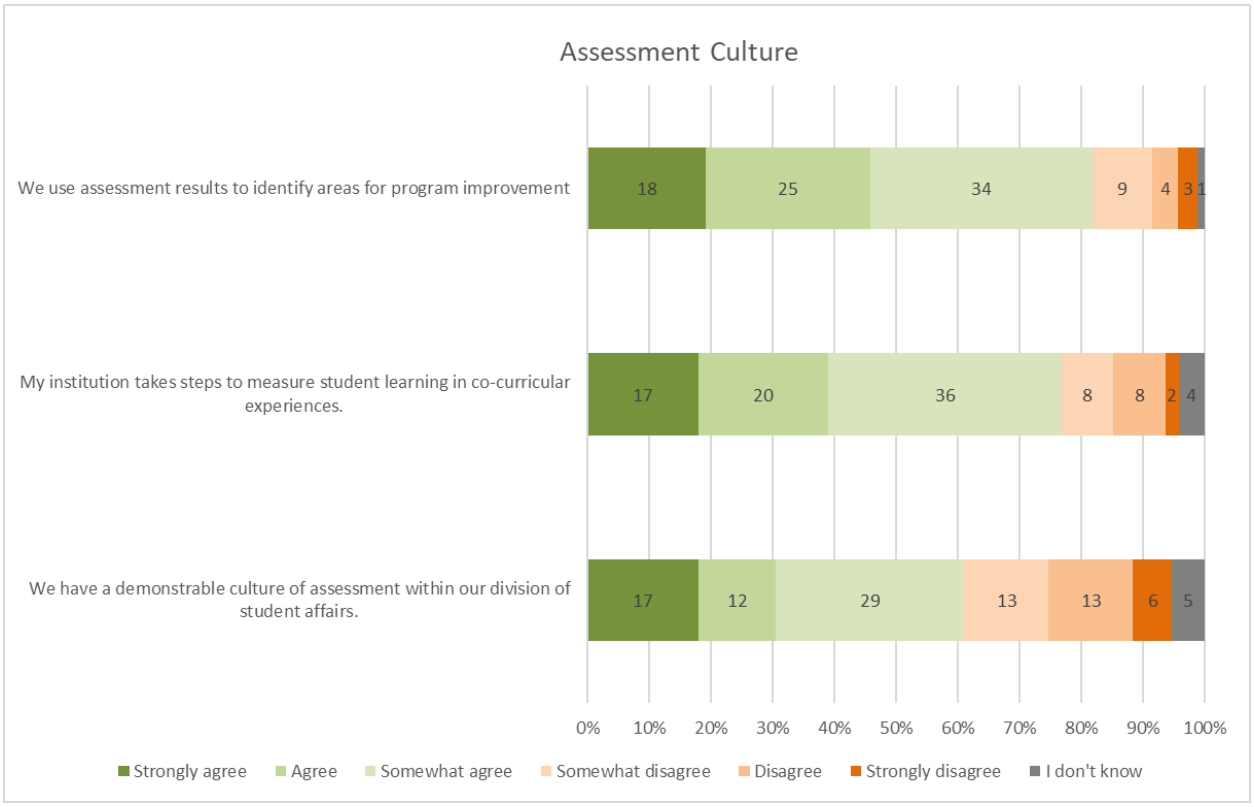


Student Affairs Assessment Happening Within Your Institution: Use/Impact

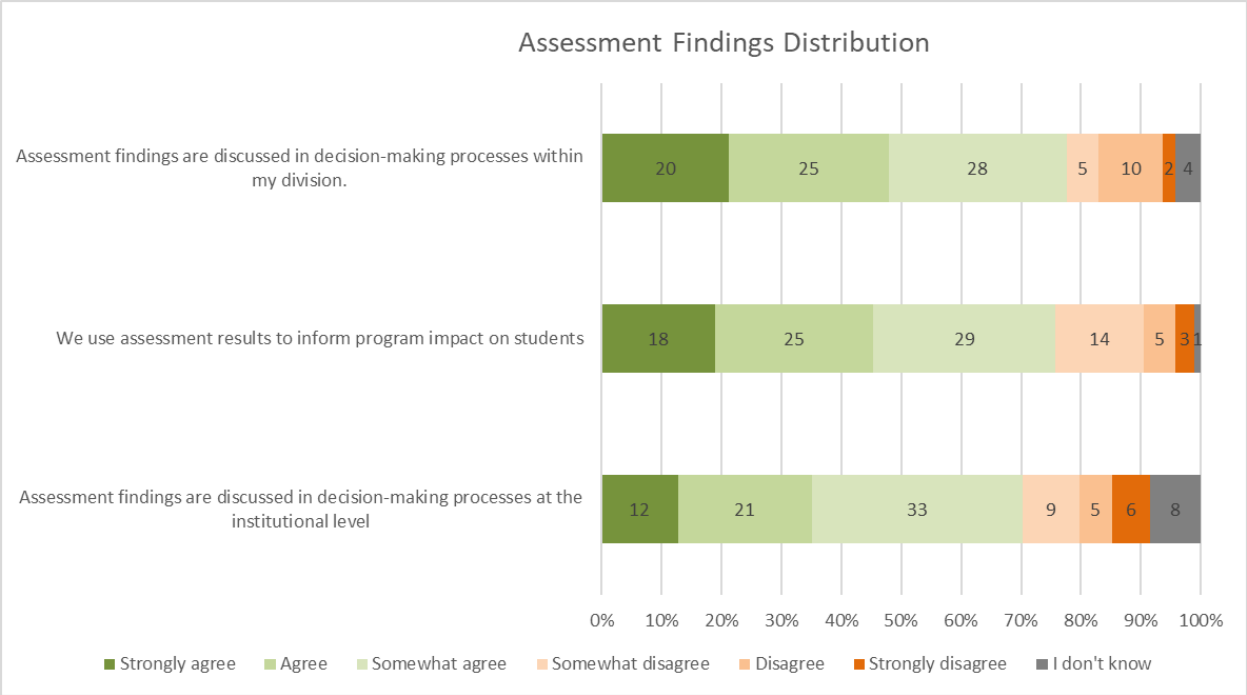
To better understand what is happening within the environment of the respondents' institutions, we explored the responses to some items about the use and impact of assessment in student affairs. There is a noticeable and distinct difference between responses to items about senior leaders; it is perceived that these leaders support assessment; however, it is less distributed that those leaders use assessment for decision-making. Similarly, the engagement of student affairs assessment in divisional strategic planning is supported in most respondents' institutions. While a majority of respondents indicated that they at least somewhat agree that senior leaders use assessment data in decision-making and engage student affairs assessment staff in divisional strategic planning, this is not in complete alignment with the proportion feeling that senior leaders support assessment.



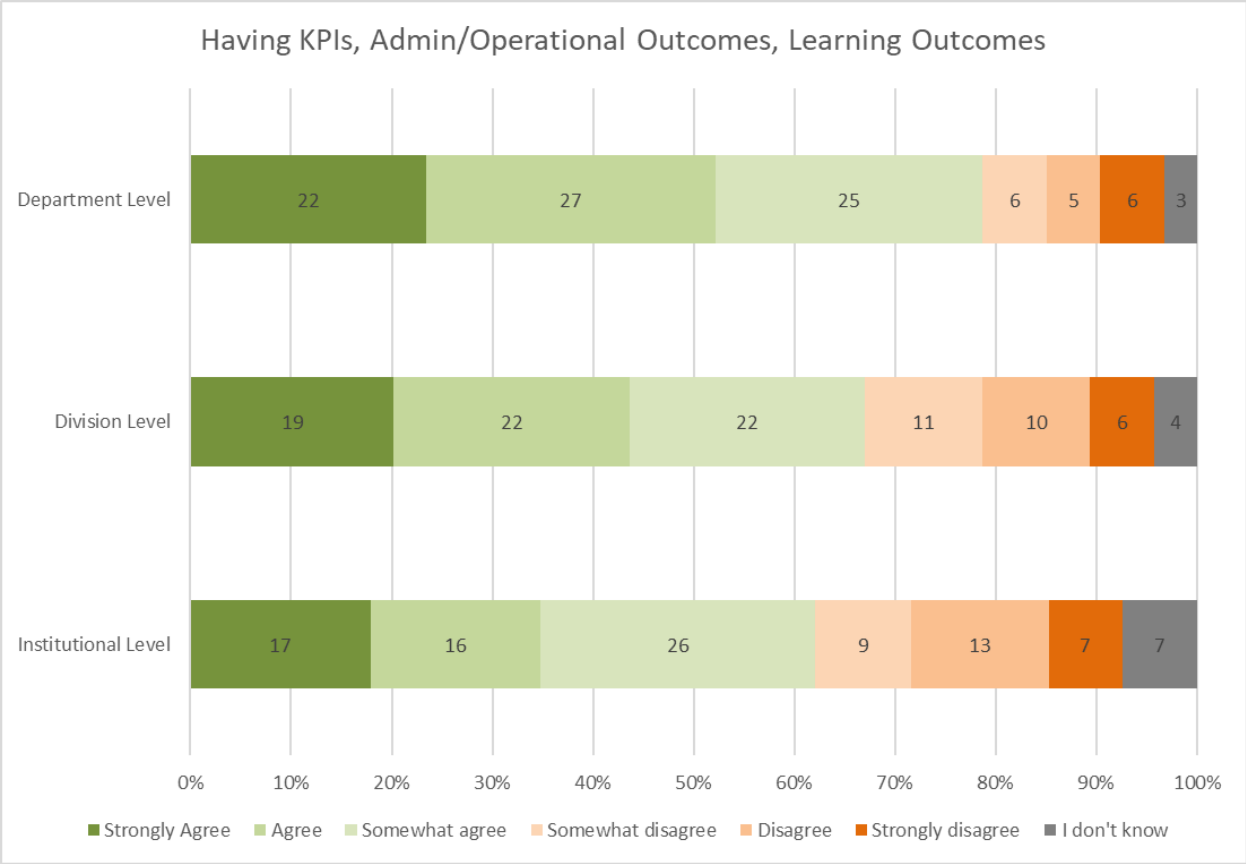
Assessment reaches beyond senior leadership engagement at our respondents' institutions; at the majority of institutions, there is at least somewhat agreement that there are efforts to measure student learning in co-curricular experiences, that assessment results are used to identify areas for program improvement, and that there is a demonstrable culture of assessment within the division of student affairs. These results are consistent with expectations; however, only 18% of respondents "strongly" agreed that their institution has a demonstrable culture of assessment in student affairs, with slightly more than half at least "somewhat" agreeing, noticeably less than the other items in this category.



In most respondents' institutions, assessment findings are discussed at the division level and used to inform program impact on students. Fewer respondents are aware of, or, if aware, indicated that assessment findings are discussed at the institutional level.



In terms of established learning outcomes, key performance indicators, administrative unit outcomes, and/or operational outcomes, the highest percentage of respondents indicated established outcomes at the departmental level, followed by the divisional level, and finally the institutional level.



Perspectives on the Field of Student Affairs Assessment

Challenges

The challenges in student affairs assessment can be grouped into three main themes: institutional support, staff resources and development, and financial constraints. These themes are discussed in more detail below.

Under institutional support, the challenges include buy-in and commitment from both student affairs and academic affairs, leadership's willingness to collaborate and adjust approaches for different groups, lack of clear and measurable strategic priorities from university leadership, ending silos and promoting collaborative data sharing, and lack of support from leadership. To address these challenges, there is a need for shared knowledge across all levels, dedicated human resources, and appropriate resources to fund staffing and professional development for staff. Additionally, there is a need to establish consistent standards, differentiate between assessment and evaluation, and teach folks that as one respondent stated, “it should be about setting student-focused goals first, and then measurement

comes second". Some respondents were clear that "doing assessment for assessment's sake" was unfortunately how they perceived their organizational focus.

Within staff resources and development, the challenges include a lack of staff and resources, a lack of training and development, a lack of understanding of assessment among colleagues, insufficient data literacy, and a lack of reward systems. To address these challenges, there is a need for dedicated human resources, appropriate resources to fund staffing and professional development for staff, and a focus on developing a culture of assessment that values and recognizes staff for their contributions.

Across financial constraints, the challenges include limited funds, reducing funding for assessment infrastructure, and a struggle to compete for talent in assessment due to low salaries. To address these challenges, there needs to be high expectancy, high value, and reduced costs to motivate practitioners to engage in assessment. Additionally, there is a need for appropriate resources to fund staffing and professional development for staff, and a focus on building a culture of assessment that values and recognizes unit and individual contributions while also being mindful of reductions in state and federal funding for education. The graphic in Appendix B provides an overview of the frequency of all codes from which these "challenge" themes emerged. Twenty-five percent of the codes were related to challenges faced due to assessment not being valued by administrative leaders or the campus cultures.

Successes

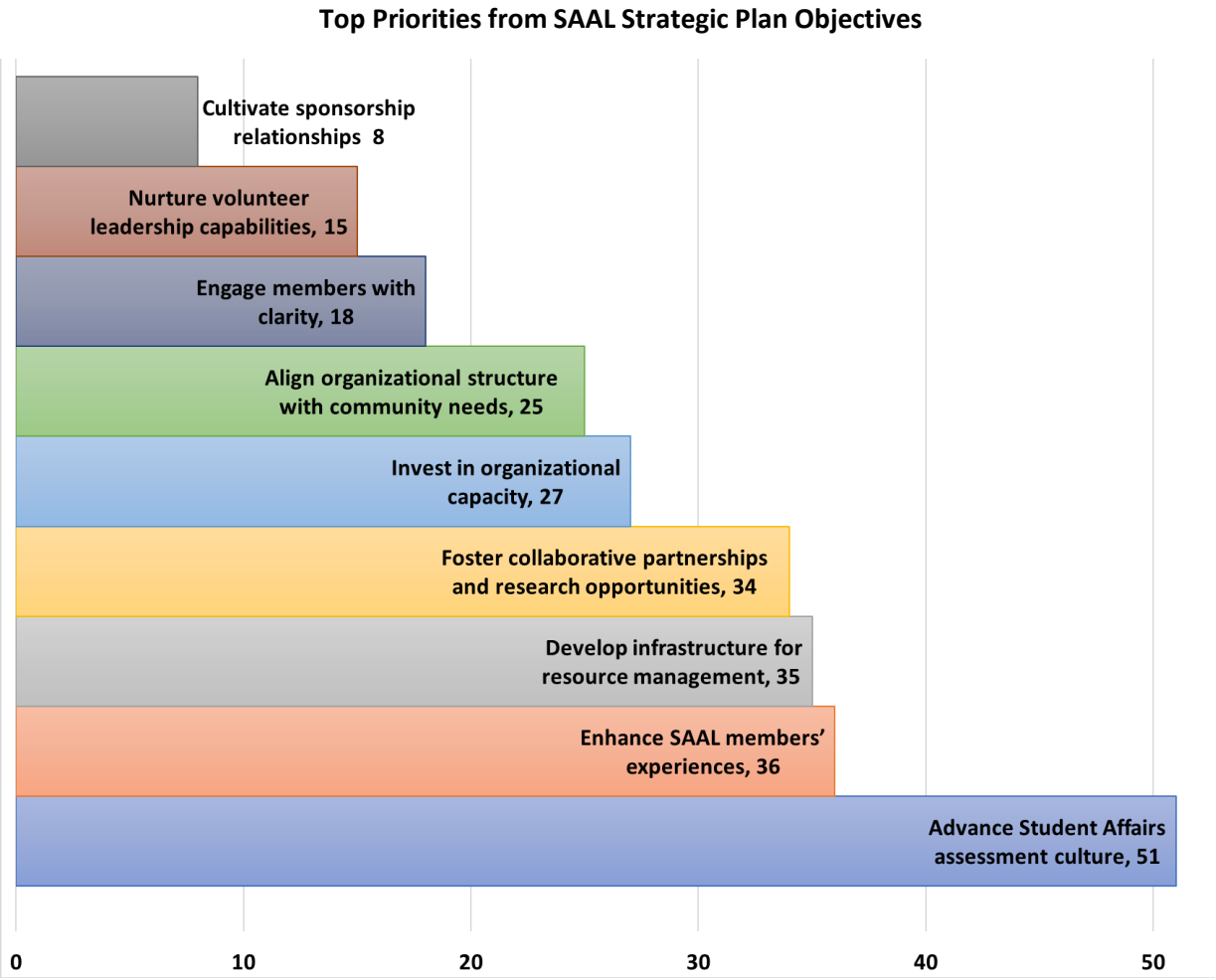
The themes which emerged from the top three successes respondents listed are centered around improving accessibility to data for staff, establishing better service processes, and sharing meta-level reports. These successes have resulted in higher engagement for program reviews, accurate data for decision-making, and an enhanced focus on student learning outcomes. Other successes included building relationships, establishing *data teams*, and advocating for more time spent on assessment. The organizations represented by these responses have also prioritized training staff in sound assessment practices, developing plans for incorporating an assessment culture, and identifying compelling ways to communicate findings. Equity-centered assessment was another area of focus, with efforts to break down barriers for engaging in assessment. SAAL professionals are also working towards establishing unit-level assessment plans, connecting goals to institutional core objectives and outcomes, and creating division-wide goal-setting processes. Overall, the successes in student affairs assessment have resulted in more streamlined and effective approaches to decision-making, with enhanced focus on improving the student experiences and promoting equity. The figure in Appendix C lists the code frequencies from which the "successes" themes emerged. Most codes were related to successes in leadership, demonstrated impact, building relationships, and empowering professional development of teams; those four successes accounted for nearly 80% of all successes coded for by the committee.

What excites you the most about working in assessment?

The individuals who responded to this prompt are passionate about their work in student affairs assessment. They enjoy hearing the stories and voices of students, demonstrating student success, and defending resources for students. They collaborate with colleagues who care about equity and impact for students, and help staff develop strategies for assessment. They find fulfillment in using assessment results to improve the student experience, making equitable changes through data-informed decision

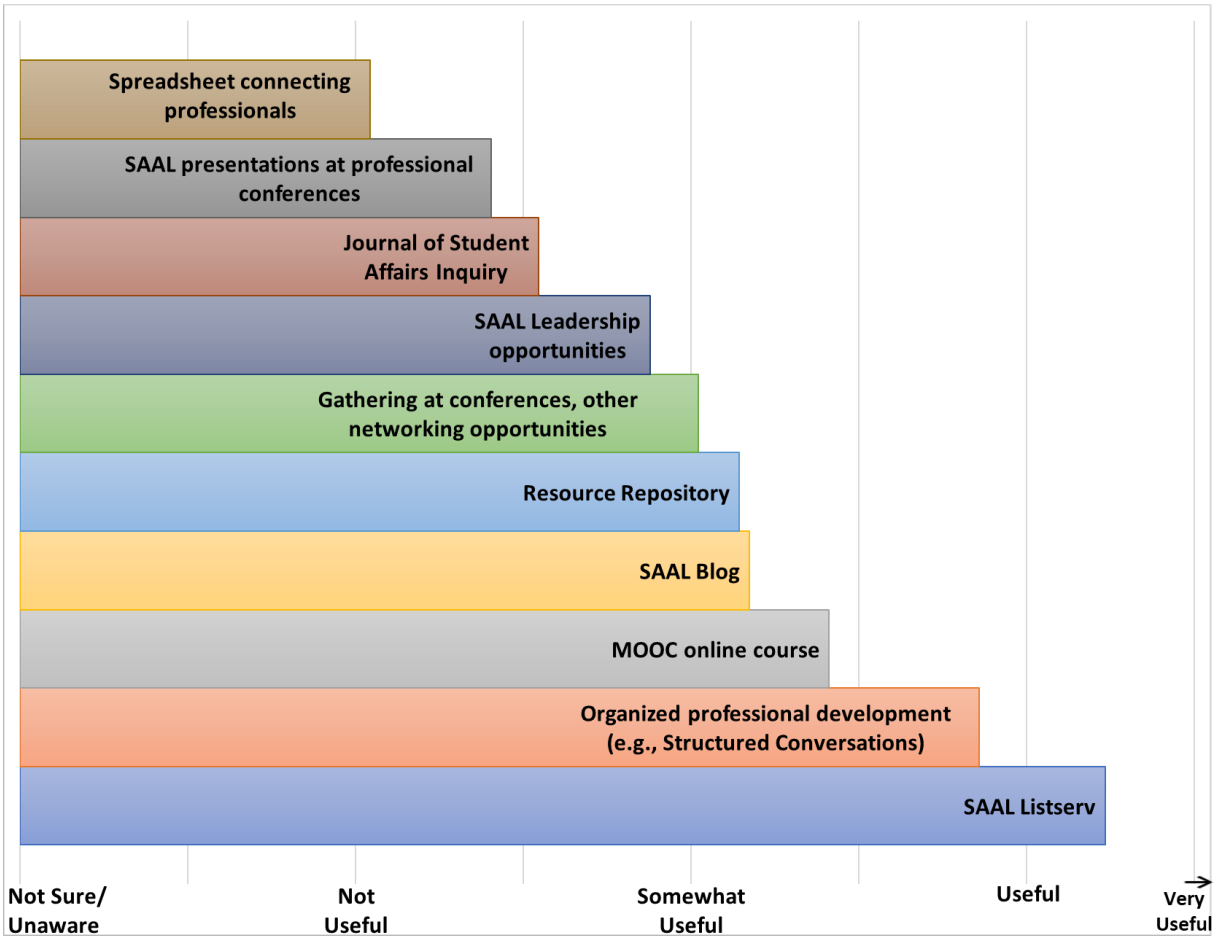
making, which contribute to enhancing and improving student learning and development outcomes. They appreciate the opportunity to be creative in their approach to this work, identify trends, and effect meaningful change for students. Despite the challenges and frustrations (one person even stated they had become so frustrated they were now excited to leave the profession!) that seem to come with this field's territory, they are motivated by the prospect of helping students and colleagues make real progress and demonstrating the positive impact of student development on student learning, retention, and success. The figure in Appendix D provides frequencies for the codes from which the committee developed these themes. Overwhelmingly, impact and improvement were the codes that were most often identified by the committee, 45% of the 17 codes identified were in these two areas.

SAAL Strategic Priorities



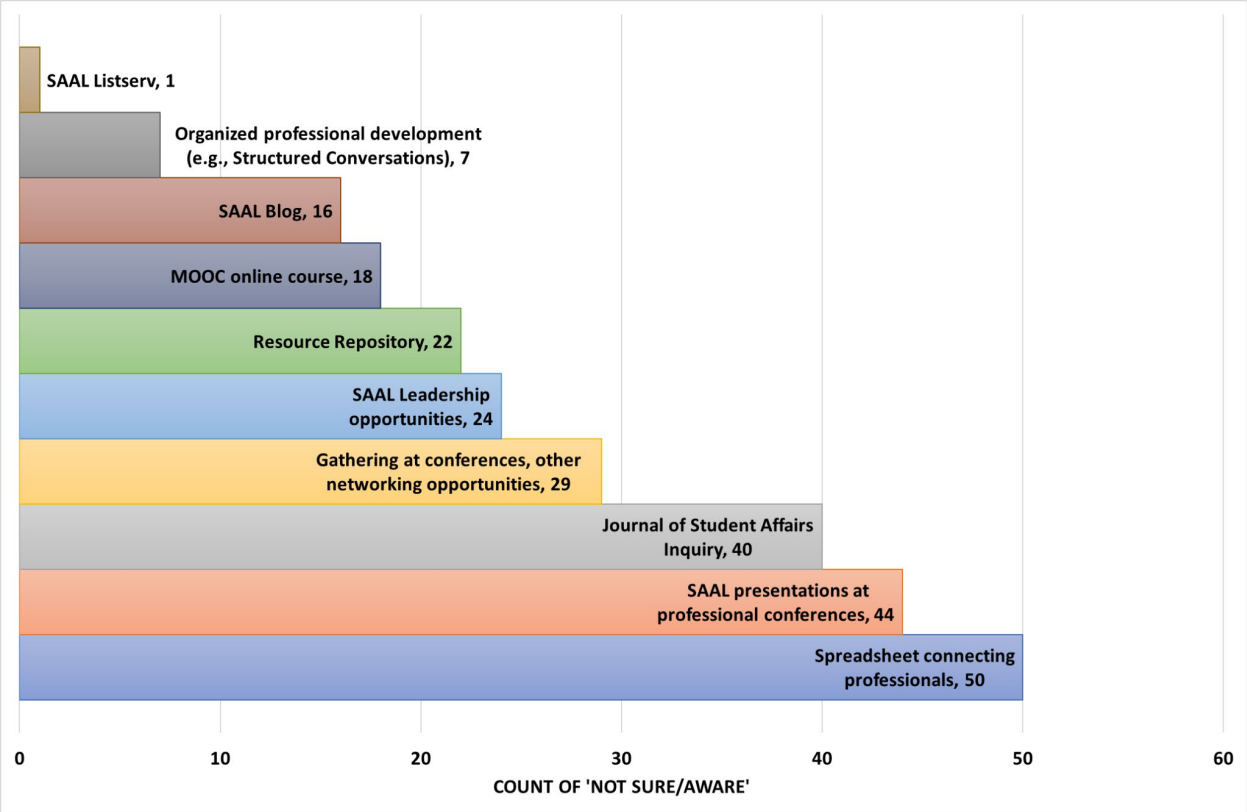
The top priorities from the SAAL Strategic Plan objectives that respondents indicated the SAAL Board should prioritize were advancing student affairs assessment culture, followed by enhancing SAAL members' experiences, developing infrastructure for resource management, fostering collaborative partnerships and research opportunities, investing in organizational capacity, and aligning organizational structure with community needs.

Usefulness of SAAL Resources



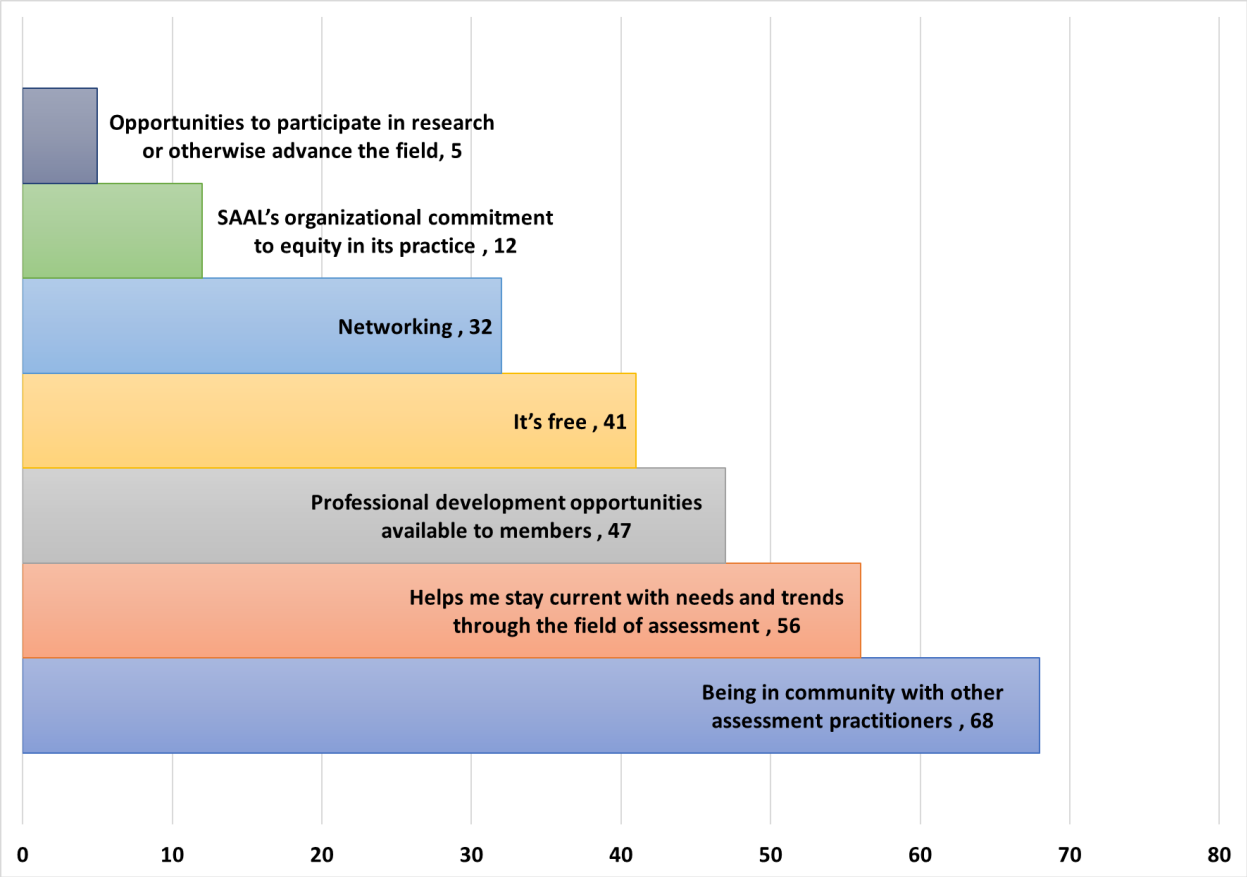
Respondents indicated that they found the SAAL listserv as being most useful to them in their professional role, followed by organized professional development (e.g., SAAL Structured Conversations, etc.), the SAAL MOOC, SAAL blog, resource repository, and gathering at conferences and other networking opportunities.

Unawareness of SAAL Resources



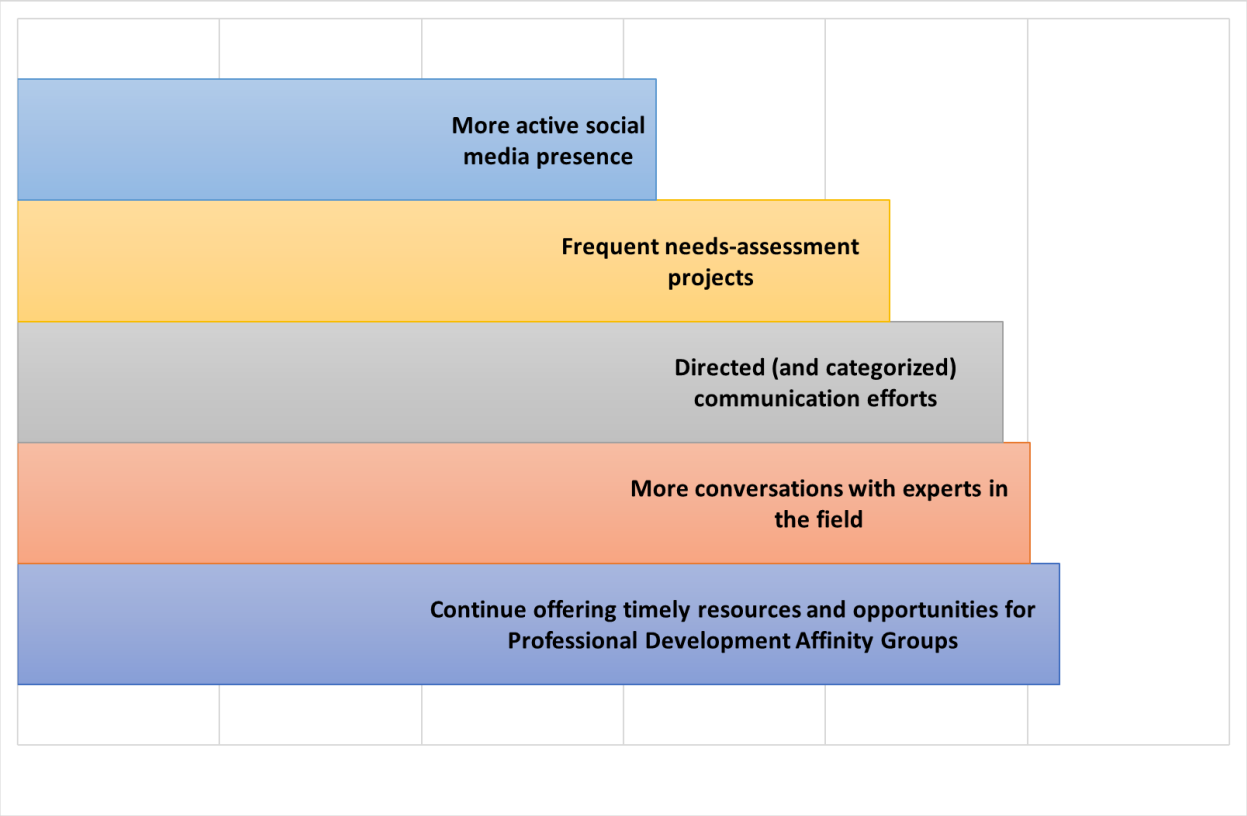
It should be noted that a substantial percentage of respondents were not aware of the following resources available to them from SAAL: spreadsheet connecting professionals, SAAL presentations at professional conferences, JSAII, gathering at conferences and other networking opportunities, SAAL leadership opportunities, and Resource Repository.

Member Motivations



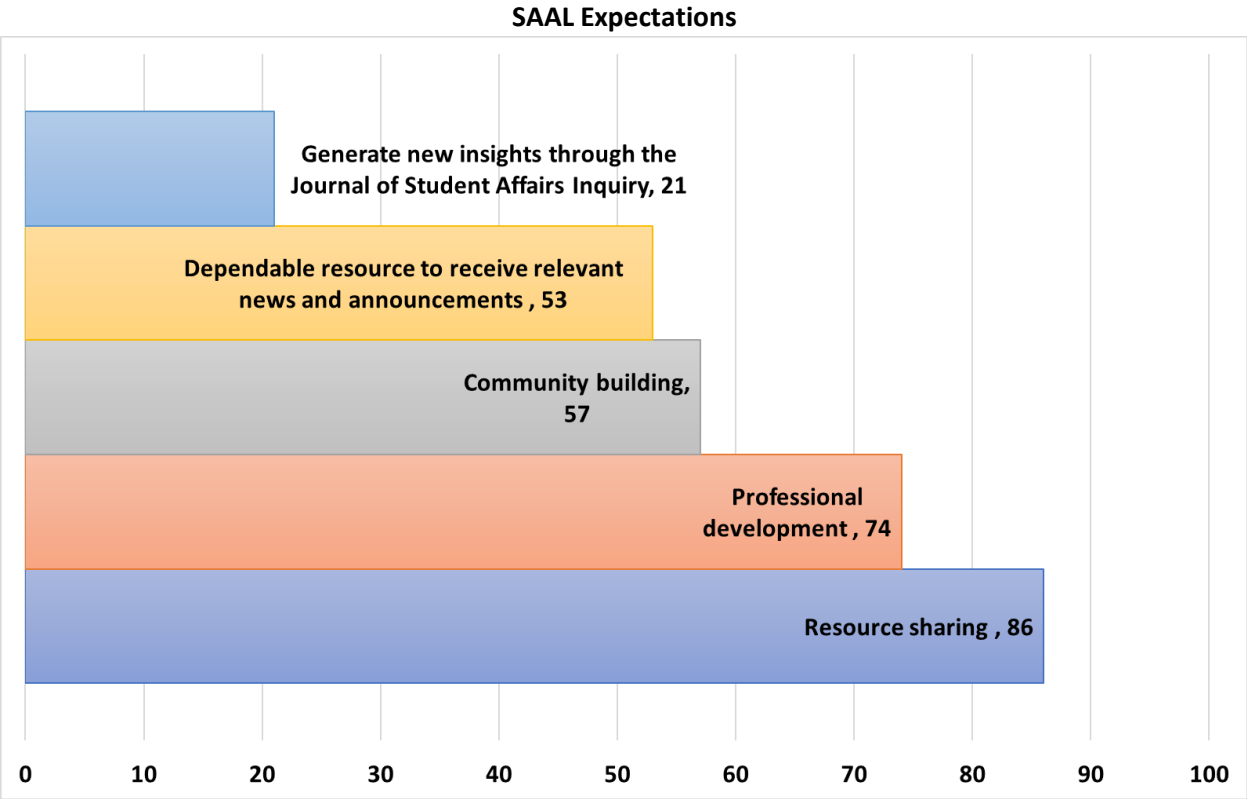
Respondents indicated that the top reasons they are a member of SAAL are to be in community with other assessment practitioners, followed by it helps them to stay current with needs and trends in the student affairs assessment field, professional development opportunities, it's free, and networking.

Priorities for Driving Listserv Engagement



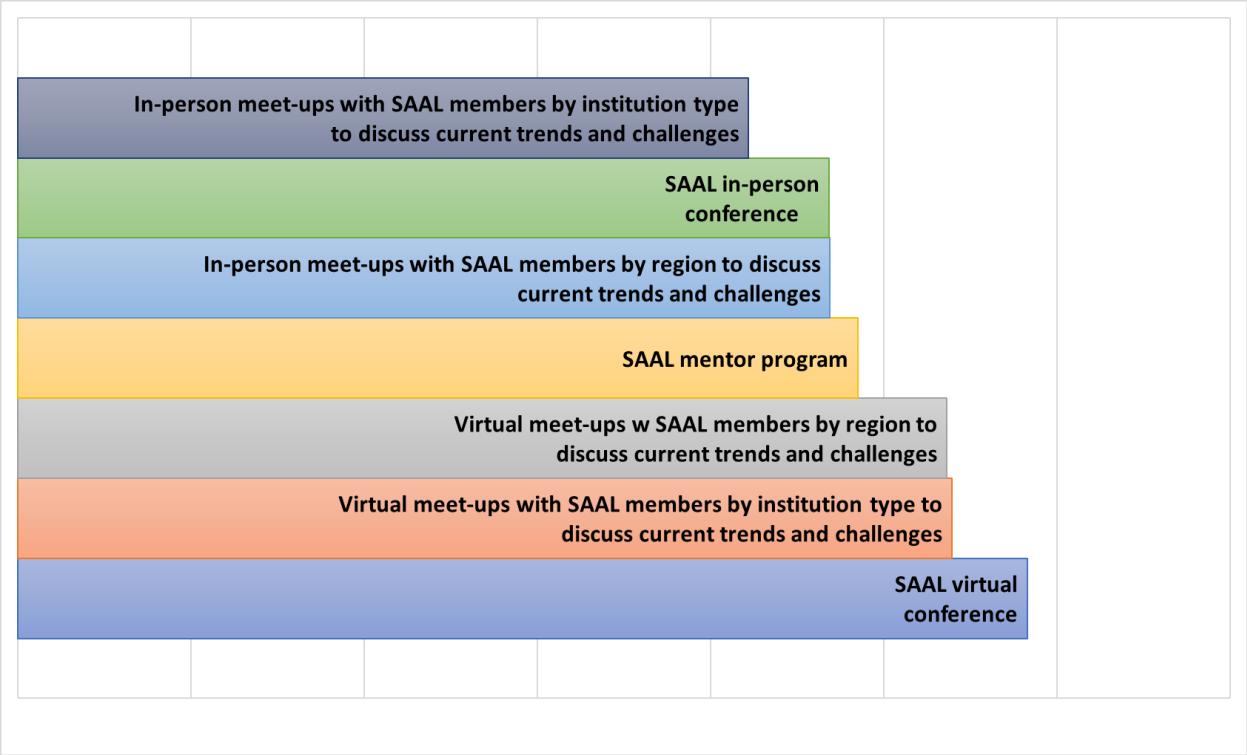
Respondents indicated that SAAL should prioritize the following to increase engagement with listserv members:

1. Continuing to offer timely resources and opportunities for professional development affinity groups,
2. More conversations with experts in the field,
3. Directed (and categorized) communication efforts, and
4. Frequent needs-assessment projects.



In terms of expectations of SAAL, respondents indicated that resource sharing is their top expectation, followed somewhat closely by professional development.

Interest in Potential Offerings



If offered through SAAL, respondents indicated that they would be most interested in a SAAL virtual conference, followed by virtual meet-ups with SAAL members by institution type and by region.

What else should SAAL be doing?

The suggestions for what else SAAL should be doing can be grouped into several themes. One theme is expanding the focus of SAAL beyond student affairs to include other co-curricular assessment work at institutions. Another theme is improving the organization and accessibility of resources, including sharing survey instruments and creating a repository of resources or links to literature. A third theme is increasing engagement with and input from practitioners in the field - including providing opportunities for new professionals and hearing from practitioners about their experiences and challenges. Other suggestions include partnering with other organizations and providing more advocacy for student affairs assessment offices. Overall, many members appreciate SAAL's current offerings and community, but suggest ways to improve and expand its impact.

Identify other areas of interest that SAAL may be able to offer you.

Respondents provided suggestions and feedback related to how to improve the SAAL community. Some suggestions included having panels of journal article authors to summarize their articles, improving the organization and usefulness of the resource folder, offering assessment-related workshops and curriculum development partnerships with graduate programs, and creating virtual meet-ups with SAAL members by position-level. There were also suggestions for implementing membership fees and staggering them for those with limited resources. Additionally, there is a concern about the overwhelming volume of resources and the need for clear communication pathways for new

members. Overall, the suggestions aim to improve engagement and support for assessment professionals within the SAAL community.

What are you not getting from professional development learning in student affairs assessment that you wish SAAL could offer you?

SAAL members have various needs and suggestions for professional development. Some members want more concrete examples and guidance on assessment processes, while others want support on planning and managing assessment at the division level. Some members want to learn more about data analysis and reporting, while others want to navigate politics at the board and senior leadership levels. There is also a need for mentorship, partnership opportunities, and communities of practice. Some members want to focus on technical skill building, while others want to incorporate equity and diversity into their assessment work. Overall, SAAL members appreciate the resources and webinars provided by SAAL, but also want more opportunities for networking and sharing experiences.

Other comments/ideas/thoughts that are important for the SAAL Board to know or better understand.

Comments and ideas expressed by respondents are focused on their appreciation for the resources and community provided by SAAL, particularly for those new to the field or with limited professional development budgets. Some members suggested expanding resources to include more senior members or those not in assessment roles. In terms of the possibility of charging a fee for membership, some members expressed concern that it would limit access for emerging professionals. Overall, members expressed a desire for SAAL to continue promoting a culture of assessment in Student Affairs and providing resources.

Membership Fee

The majority of SAAL members (n=50, 53.8%) indicated that they would be willing to pay a minimal membership fee while 36.6% of SAAL members (n=34) indicated that they were not sure. Only 9.6% of SAAL members (n=9) indicated that they were not willing to pay a minimal membership fee. The majority of SAAL members who indicated that they *were* willing to pay a minimal membership fee selected that they would be willing to pay on an annual basis $31-$50 (42.9%), followed by $81-$100 (26.5%). A much smaller percentage of SAAL members indicated that they were willing to pay on an annual basis $21-$30 (12.2%), followed by $51-$80 (8.2%), $101-$150 (6.1%), $200+ (2.0%), and up to $10 (2.0%), respectively.

Trends in the Student Affairs Assessment Field: Changes over the last five years

Changes in Characteristics of Student Affairs Assessment Professionals and Offices

Results revealed a cultural shift in student affairs assessment over the past five years. In particular, the changes we've seen through the Landscape survey is that the field of student affairs assessment is growing. In 2019, the majority of respondents indicated there was one or less dedicated assessment professional for their division of student affairs while currently, over 60% of respondents indicated at least two assessment professionals work within their division. We also see that students are being increasingly utilized to support assessment offices now more than five years ago. Another interesting finding is that we are seeing trends where years of experience working in student affairs assessment is increasing while student affairs assessment professionals having previously worked in other roles in student affairs is decreasing - although we are also seeing more student affairs assessment

folks having previously worked in institutional research or academic assessment. Interestingly, trends are showing a rise in the number of folks entering the student affairs assessment field with experience outside of higher education.

Most significant changes in the field of Student Affairs Assessment

The most significant changes in the field of student affairs assessment over the last five years are related to specific practices within institutions. Since 2019, we have evidenced a significant increase in the perceptions that student affairs participates meaningfully in institutional accreditation efforts; students are engaging in the assessment process; results are being discussed in decision-making processes; divisions are moving toward building a culture of assessment within student affairs; and that division leaders are utilizing assessment results in decision-making. Though the quantitative responses indicated that this meaningful engagement was happening across institutions, when we asked respondents to indicate their biggest challenges to advancing student affairs assessment, themes that emerged included lack of leadership support; needing buy-in from staff that assessment is important; assessing impact of programs; access to data, and need for integrated data to truly inform value and impact on student success; being seen as legitimate by academic affairs; and recruitment of student affairs professionals into the field. Specifically, respondents indicated that higher education student affairs programs typically do not include robust assessment and data management or analysis courses where students coming from higher education student affairs programs are often lacking that experience making it difficult to progress in the field that is becoming more and more data driven and requiring robust data analysis.

Interestingly, what emerged as themes for challenges also emerged as themes when asked about successes such as leadership support and staff buy-in, integrated Student Affairs data, and being able to demonstrate the impact of Student Affairs programs and services on student success. For those themes that emerged from the challenges and success questions and the fact that themes were similar, that tells us that we still have work to do but that we are progressing as a field. It takes a lot of time and work in building a culture of assessment and it cannot be achieved by one person, it cannot be achieved overnight, but rather it requires a total culture shift and that takes substantial time. So, while we are not where we want to be yet, results indicate that student affairs assessment is evolving and that we will continue to see our field advance.

Recommendations/Next Steps

The Research On and Advancing Knowledge Committee proposes recommendations that will nurture and support the evolving field of student affairs assessment and the professional growth of its leaders and practitioners. These recommendations address three key themes of needed improvements that emerged from the Landscape Survey: (1) supporting professionals in building a culture of assessment (on their campuses), (2) expanding and enhancing SAAL member resources, and (3) strategically instituting a membership fee to support SAAL's evolving infrastructure.

Building a Culture of Assessment

The committee first recommends **tailoring future structured conversation topics to** fit the following list of **current challenges** identified most by respondents, which all connect to and promote building a culture of assessment:

- Navigating politics/bureaucracy
- Managing up
- Building and sustaining meaningful relationships
- Strategies for staff buy-in
- Assessing impact of programs (and powerfully communicating impact)
- Recruitment into the Student Affairs assessment field
- Integrated systems of Student Affairs data
- Leverage accreditation to create a culture of assessment
- Using results to inform program improvement

Better Support SAAL Members

The committee's next set of recommendations would expand and enhance current SAAL offerings and opportunities to better support SAAL members. The first recommendation is to consider strategies for **expanding networking opportunities for SAAL members**. Several respondents who are newer to the field indicated that they would benefit from connecting with seasoned professionals and experts in the field to learn from their experiences and approaches to navigating challenges. Some strategies might include mentoring programs, unstructured conversations, and/or virtual meet-ups (by institution type and/or region).

Second, it is recommended that the SAAL Board prioritize **revamping the SAAL Resource Repository**. Several respondents indicated that the resource repository was a valuable resource but that it needed to be updated and better organized.

A third recommendation is to **enhance marketing and communication strategies to better inform members of the resources** available to them. The majority of respondents were not familiar with JSAII, the contacts spreadsheet, and myriad professional development opportunities. Considering the value that each of these benefits provide to members, consideration should be given to new strategies for enhancing messaging about member benefits and opportunities.

The fourth recommendation is intended to address **current challenges with data literacy, analysis, and management**, a theme that emerged in the survey data. The committee recommends the Board consider developing a **series of workshops** that help build skills in data management, data analytics, quantitative analysis, and statistical analysis. It is also recommended that this professional development series be offered by varying levels of expertise: foundational, intermediate, and advanced. Considering this seems to be a significant gap in skill set among a substantial number of student affairs assessment professionals and practitioners, this type of professional development could prove to be incredibly valuable to SAAL members, especially considering that it is not widely offered through other higher education organizations or institutions. By directly influencing this current skill gap, such targeted professional development could easily distinguish SAAL from other higher education (assessment) organizations.

Support SAAL Infrastructure

The committee's final recommendation is for the Board to consider **implementing a SAAL membership fee**. The primary reason we included this as a final recommendation is to support the current and future infrastructure of SAAL. The majority of respondents indicated that they would be

willing to contribute a minimal SAAL membership fee. However, there were respondents who indicated concern around access for newer professionals if a membership fee were established. Therefore, the committee recommends that the Board consider the following options:

1. Staggered SAAL membership fee - below is an example of how this could be structured:
    - $0 annual fee for students;
    - $25 annual fee for new professionals [0-2 years];
    - $50 annual fee for professionals [3+ years].
2. Membership levels that influence access to benefits - below is an example of how this could be structured:
    a. $0 annual fee will allow access to the listserv and select Structured Conversations;
    b. $25 annual fee will allow access to the listserv, resource repository, and select Structured Conversations;
    c. $50 annual fee will allow access to all SAAL benefits and opportunities.

Appendix A

Table 1. Institutional Characteristics		
Question	Response Category	2023 (%)
My institution is a: (2023 only)	2-year private/public <10,000	8.7
	2-year private/public >10,000	1.9
	4-year private/public <10,000	19.2
	2-year private/public >10,000	63.5
	Faith-based <10,000	3.9
	Faith-based >10,000	0
	For profit <10,000	1
	For profit >10,000	0
Please indicate if your institution is designated as (2023 only):	Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)	0
	Tribal College	0
	Federally designated minority serving	24.1
	My institution does not hold any of these designations	67.6
My institution's accrediting organization (2023 only):	ACCJC	0
	HLC	28.9
	MSCHE	16.4
	NECHE	6.7
	NWCCU	2.9

	SACSCOC	21.2
	WSCUC	14.4
	Not sure	9.6

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
Full-time assessment professionals in Student Affairs (2019); 2023 changed to functional roles in assessment, eval, and/or data management/analytics	0	29.7%	Not asked	
	1	32.6	30	-2.6
	2-3	21.7	30	+8.3
	4-5	6.9	16.3	+9.4
	6+	9.1	15	+5.9
	Unsure	Not asked	8.8	
How many GAs contribute to assessment efforts in Student Affairs	0	66.1	45	-21.1
	1	14.4	18.8	+4.4
	2-3	13.8	15	+1.2
	4-5	2.3	2.5	+0.2

Table 2. A Bit About You				
A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
	6+	3.4	3.8	+0.4
	Unsure	Not asked	15	
Years experience working full-time in SA assessment (2019); 2023 asks how many years of experience working in assessment in Student affairs	0	20.6	3.9	-16.7
	<1 year	Not asked	9.7	
	1-2	20.6	20.4	-0.2
	3-5	31.0	18.5	-12.5
	6-7	8.4	19.4	+11.0
	8-10	11.6	13.6	+2.0
	11+ years	7.7	14.6	+6.9
Years experience working in other roles or areas in Student Affairs	0	12.7	22.1	+9.4
	<1 year	Not asked	6.7	
	1-2	7.3	10.6	+3.3
	3-5	16.7	14.4	-2.3
	6-7	8.7	9.6	+0.9

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
	8-10	12.7	10.6	-2.1
	11+ years	42.0	26.0	-16.0
Years experience in IR or academic assessment (2019); 2023 asks about these separately rather than combined	0	28.8	52 (IR); 55.2 (AA) (Average=53.6)	+24.8
	<1 year	Not asked	8 (IR); 5.2 (AA) (average=6.6)	
	1-2	9.4	18 (IR); 7.3 (AA) (average=12.7	+3.3
	3-5	17.3	12 (IR); 13.5 (AA) (average=12.8)	-4.5
	6-7	4.3	6 (IR); 7.3 (AA) (average=13.3)	+9.0
	8-10	5.8	1 (IR); 5.2 (AA) (average=3.1)	-2.7
	11+ years	2.9	3 (IR); 6.3 (AA) (average=4.7)	+1.8
Years of experience in assessment outside of higher education	0	71.5	63.6	-7.9
	<1 year	Not asked	8.1	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
	1-2	15.4	10.1	-5.3
	3-5	6.9	5.1	-1.8
	6-7	2.3	3	+0.7
	8-10	2.3	4	+1.7
	11+ years	5.4	6.1	+0.7
Highest degree earned	Bachelors	4.9	3.9	-1.0
	Masters, academic (MA, MS)	20.7	21.2	+0.5
	Masters, professional (MBA, MFA, MSW, M.Ed.)	24.4	23.1	-1.3
	Doctorate, academic (PhD, EdD)	45.7	48.1	+2.4
	Doctorate, professional (MD, JD)	3.0	2.9	-0.1
	Student Affairs	not asked	73.6	

Table 2. A Bit About You				
A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
Which division(s) do you currently work? (2023 only)	Academic Affairs	not asked	19.1	
	Other	not asked	7.3	
At what organizational level are you currently positioned (2023 only)?	College or university level (all or multiple divisions)		24.5	
	Division		52.9	
	Unit		20.6	
	Other		2.0	
Which of the following captures your official title?	VP/VC	1.8	0	-1.8
	Provost	not asked	0	-
	Dean	3.7	2	-1.7
	Asst/Assoc VP/VC	4.3	4.9	+0.6
	Asst/Assoc dean	6.7	2.9	-3.8
	Exec Director/senior director/director	44.5	43.1	-1.4

Table 2. A Bit About You				
A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
	Asst/Assoc director	20.1	15.7	-4.4
	Coordinator	8.5	7.8	-0.7
	Senior analyst/researcher	4.3	6.9	+2.6
	Research analyst/associate	not asked	3.9	-
	Other	6.1	12.8	+6.7
Which of the following captures who your position reports to	President/Chancellor	1.8	1.0	-0.8
	Chief of Staff	0.6	5.9	+5.3
	VP/VC	32.9	25.5	-7.4
	Provost	not asked	2.9	-
	Dean	7.3	3.9	-3.4
	Asst/Assoc VP/VC	20.7	18.6	-2.1
	Asst/Assoc dean	1.2	2.0	+0.8

Table 2. A Bit About You				
A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
	Exec Director/Senior Director/Director	21.3	24.5	+3.2
	Asst/Assoc director	6.7	7.8	+1.1
	Coordinator	not asked	0	-
	Senior analyst/researcher	0.6	1.0	+0.4
	Research Analyst/associate	not asked	0	-
	Other	6.7	6.9	+0.2
Percentage of role dedicated to leading SA assessment (2023-changed to leading/coordinating)	0	7.5		-
	<10%	21.1	23.5	+2.4
	11-25%	16.5	13.7	-2.8
	26-50%	11.3	14.7	+3.4
	51-75%	6.0	7.8	+1.8
	76-100%	37.6	32.4	-5.2
	Always		28	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Developing a culture of evidence (2023 only)	Often		36.6	
	Sometimes		22.6	
	Rarely		10.8	
	Never		2.2	
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Professional Development (2023 only)	Always		9.8	
	Often		31.5	
	Sometimes		43.5	
	Rarely		13	
	Never		2.2	
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Consultation, knowledge sharing and dissemination (2023 only)	Always		33.3	
	Often		45.2	
	Sometimes		12.9	
	Rarely		8.6	
	Never		0	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Strategic planning (2023 only)	Always		15.1	
	Often		34.4	
	Sometimes		29	
	Rarely		18.3	
	Never		3.2	
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Accreditation (2023 only)	Always		6.6	
	Often		5.5	
	Sometimes		34.1	
	Rarely		35.2	
	Never		18.7	
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Relationship building and collaboration with stakeholders (2023 only)	Always		47.3	
	Often		33.3	
	Sometimes		14	
	Rarely		4.3	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
	Never		1	
What level of frequency is your time spent on (within a given year) leading/coordinating: Technology (2023 only)	Always		17.4	
	Often		39.1	
	Sometimes		25	
	Rarely		15.2	
	Never		3.3	
How frequently do you partner with Institutional Research for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		20.8	
	Often		26.7	
	Sometimes		31.7	
	Rarely		9.9	
	Never		2	
	Unsure		1	
	N/A		7.9	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
How frequently do you partner with Institutional Effectiveness for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		20.8	
	Often		17.8	
	Sometimes		12.9	
	Rarely		6.9	
	Never		5	
	Unsure		5.9	
	N/A		30.7	
How frequently do you partner with Academic Affairs Assessment for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		12.9	
	Often		10.9	
	Sometimes		21.8	
	Rarely		21.8	
	Never		16.8	
	Unsure		4	
	N/A		11.9	

Table 2. A Bit About You				
A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
How frequently do you partner with Research for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		3	
	Often		6.9	
	Sometimes		19.8	
	Rarely		27.7	
	Never		21.8	
	Unsure		5	
	N/A		15.8	
How frequently do you partner with General Counsel/FERPA for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		1	
	Often		2	
	Sometimes		10.9	
	Rarely		26.7	
	Never		32.7	
	Unsure		10.9	
	N/A		15.8	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
How frequently do you partner with Alumni for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		0	
	Often		1	
	Sometimes		9	
	Rarely		28	
	Never		46	
	Unsure		4	
	N/A		12	
How frequently do you partner with IT for assessment efforts (2023 only)	Always		4	
	Often		20	
	Sometimes		26	
	Rarely		29	
	Never		12	
	Unsure		4	
	N/A		5	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
Assessment findings are discussed in decision-making processes within my division (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		47.4	
We use assessment results to inform program impact on students (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		44.8	
We use assessment results to identify areas for program improvement (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		45.3	
Student Affairs assessment personnel/groups are involved in divisional strategic planning initiatives (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		50.5	
My institution has established student learning outcomes, KPIs, Administrative Unit Outcomes, and/or Operational Outcomes (institution-level) (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		34.4	
My institution has established student learning outcomes, KPIs, Administrative Unit Outcomes, and/or Operational Outcomes (division-level) (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		43.2	

Table 2. A Bit About You

A Bit About You				
Question	**Response category**	**2019 (%)**	**2023 (%)**	**Change from 2019 to 2023**
My institution has established student learning outcomes, KPIs, Administrative Unit Outcomes, and/or Operational Outcomes (department-level) (2023 only)	Strongly agree + agree		51.5	

Table 3. Trends: Assessment in your institution

Assessment in your institution						
Question	2019 *M*(SD)	2023 *M*(SD)	*df*	*F*	*t*	*p*
Student Affairs participates meaningfully in institutional accreditation efforts	2.74 (1.11)	**3.02** (.69)	243	24.21	-2.15	***p*<.001***
Student Affairs assessment is involved in conversations about the assessment of student learning at my institution	2.71 (1.11)	2.86 (.85)	246	2.37	-1.23	p=.125
Students are engaged in assessment processes and practices at my institution	1.82 (.99)	**2.13** (.77)	240	9.98	-2.54	***p*=.002****

Table 3. Trends: Assessment in your institution

Assessment in your institution						
Question	2019 *M*(SD)	2023 *M*(SD)	*df*	*F*	*t*	*p*
Results from assessment projects are discussed in decision-making processes at my institution	2.65 (.96)	**2.82** (.75)	240	7.75	-1.47	***p*=.006****
My institution takes steps to measure student learning in co-curricular experiences	2.95 (.91)	2.96 (.67)	246	3.14	-.172	p=.08
We have a demonstrable culture of assessment within our division of student affairs (SA+A)	2.62 (.98)	**2.77** (.83)	245	3.82	-1.21	***p*=.05***
Senior division leaders demonstrate support for assessment	2.96 (.97)	3.15 (.75)	246	2.04	-1.68	p=.15
Senior division leaders utilize assessment data and results in decision making	2.62 (1.14)	**2.89** (.78)	245	20.82	-1.98	***p*<.001*****

Note:* *p*<.001*, *p*<.01**, *p*<.05*

Table 4. Strategic Priorities	
Please select up to three Student Affairs Assessment Leaders (SAAL) strategic plan objectives that you think should be the SAAL Boards' highest priorities for the next year:	**Count**
Advance Student Affairs assessment culture	51
Enhance SAAL members' experiences	36
Develop infrastructure for resource management	35
Foster collaborative partnerships and research opportunities	34
Invest in organizational capacity	27
Align organizational structure with community needs	25
Engage members with clarity	18
Nurture volunteer leadership capabilities	15
Cultivate sponsorship relationships	8

Table 5. Please indicate how useful you find the following SAAL resources are to you in your professional role: Frequency tables

Resource Repository

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	22	5.0	24.2	24.2
	Not useful at all	6	1.4	6.6	30.8
	Somewhat useful	19	4.3	20.9	51.6
	Useful	25	5.7	27.5	79.1
	Very useful	19	4.3	20.9	100.0
	Total	91	20.6	100.0	

MOOC online course

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	18	4.1	20.0	20.0
	Not useful at all	5	1.1	5.6	25.6
	Somewhat useful	15	3.4	16.7	42.2
	Useful	26	5.9	28.9	71.1
	Very useful	26	5.9	28.9	100.0

	Total	90	20.4	100.0	

SAAL Listserv

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	1	.2	1.1	1.1
	Not useful at all	1	.2	1.1	2.2
	Somewhat useful	18	4.1	19.4	21.5
	Useful	28	6.3	30.1	51.6
	Very useful	45	10.2	48.4	100.0
	Total	93	21.1	100.0	

Organized professional development (e.g., Structured Conversations, etc.)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	7	1.6	7.5	7.5
	Not useful at all	1	.2	1.1	8.6
	Somewhat useful	20	4.5	21.5	30.1
	Useful	35	7.9	37.6	67.7
	Very useful	30	6.8	32.3	100.0

	Total	93	21.1	100.0	

SAAL presentations at professional conferences

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	44	10.0	49.4	49.4
	Not useful at all	4	.9	4.5	53.9
	Somewhat useful	9	2.0	10.1	64.0
	Useful	25	5.7	28.1	92.1
	Very useful	7	1.6	7.9	100.0
	Total	89	20.2	100.0	

SAAL Blog

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	16	3.6	17.4	17.4
	Not useful at all	6	1.4	6.5	23.9
	Somewhat useful	25	5.7	27.2	51.1
	Useful	36	8.2	39.1	90.2
	Very useful	9	2.0	9.8	100.0
	Total	92	20.9	100.0	

Journal of Student Affairs Inquiry

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	40	9.1	44.4	44.4
	Not useful at all	2	.5	2.2	46.7
	Somewhat useful	19	4.3	21.1	67.8
	Useful	17	3.9	18.9	86.7
	Very useful	12	2.7	13.3	100.0
	Total	90	20.4	100.0	

Spreadsheet connecting professionals

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	50	11.3	54.9	54.9
	Not useful at all	8	1.8	8.8	63.7
	Somewhat useful	16	3.6	17.6	81.3
	Useful	13	2.9	14.3	95.6
	Very useful	4	.9	4.4	100.0
	Total	91	20.6	100.0	

SAAL Leadership opportunities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	24	5.4	26.7	26.7
	Not useful at all	6	1.4	6.7	33.3
	Somewhat useful	28	6.3	31.1	64.4

	Useful	21	4.8	23.3	87.8
	Very useful	11	2.5	12.2	100.0
	Total	90	20.4	100.0	

Gathering at conferences and other networking opportunities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not sure - I am not aware of this resource	29	6.6	33.0	33.0
	Not useful at all	3	.7	3.4	36.4
	Somewhat useful	14	3.2	15.9	52.3
	Useful	21	4.8	23.9	76.1
	Very useful	21	4.8	23.9	100.0
	Total	88	20.0	100.0	

Table 6. SAAL Member Motivation

Please select up to the three top reasons that you are a member of SAAL?	Count
Being in community with other assessment practitioners	68
Helps me stay current with needs and trends through the field of assessment	56
Professional development opportunities available to members	47
It's free	41
Networking	32
SAAL's organizational commitment to equity in its practice	12
Opportunities to participate in research or otherwise advance the field	5

Table 7. Please indicate your level of agreement that SAAL should prioritize the following to increase engagement with listserv members?

Statistics

		Frequent needs-assessment projects	Directed (and categorized) communication efforts	More conversations with experts in the field	Continue offering timely resources and opportunities for Professional Development Affinity Groups	More active social media presence
N	Valid	88	90	89	89	88
	Missing	353	351	352	352	353
Mean		4.3182	4.8778	5.0112	5.1573	3.1591
Median		4.0000	5.0000	5.0000	5.0000	3.0000
Mode		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		1.16012	.90972	.91072	.73699	1.29443

Frequent needs-assessment projects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	.5	2.3	2.3
	Disagree	3	.7	3.4	5.7
	Somewhat disagree	15	3.4	17.0	22.7
	Somewhat agree	26	5.9	29.5	52.3
	Agree	29	6.6	33.0	85.2
	Strongly agree	13	2.9	14.8	100.0
	Total	88	20.0	100.0	

Directed (and categorized) communication efforts

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	.5	2.2	2.2
	Somewhat disagree	2	.5	2.2	4.4
	Somewhat agree	25	5.7	27.8	32.2
	Agree	37	8.4	41.1	73.3
	Strongly agree	24	5.4	26.7	100.0
	Total	90	20.4	100.0	

More conversations with experts in the field

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	.2	1.1	1.1
	Somewhat disagree	3	.7	3.4	4.5
	Somewhat agree	21	4.8	23.6	28.1
	Agree	33	7.5	37.1	65.2
	Strongly agree	31	7.0	34.8	100.0
	Total	89	20.2	100.0	

Continue offering timely resources and opportunities for Professional Development Affinity Groups

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat agree	18	4.1	20.2	20.2
	Agree	39	8.8	43.8	64.0
	Strongly agree	32	7.3	36.0	100.0
	Total	89	20.2	100.0	

More active social media presence

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Strongly disagree	12	2.7	13.6	13.6
	Disagree	13	2.9	14.8	28.4
	Somewhat disagree	27	6.1	30.7	59.1
	Somewhat agree	24	5.4	27.3	86.4
	Agree	9	2.0	10.2	96.6
	Strongly agree	3	.7	3.4	100.0
	Total	88	20.0	100.0	

Table 8. SAAL Expectations

What are your expectations of SAAL?	Count
Resource sharing	86
Professional development	74
Community building	57
Dependable resource to receive relevant news and announcements	53
Generate new insights through the Journal of Student Affairs Inquiry	21

Table 9. Please indicate your level of interest if the following were offered through SAAL

SAAL mentor program

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	22	5.0	23.9	23.9
	Somewhat interested	28	6.3	30.4	54.3
	Interested	23	5.2	25.0	79.3
	Very interested	19	4.3	20.7	100.0
	Total	92	20.9	100.0	

SAAL virtual conference

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	4	.9	4.3	4.3
	Somewhat interested	28	6.3	30.4	34.8
	Interested	32	7.3	34.8	69.6
	Very interested	28	6.3	30.4	100.0
	Total	92	20.9	100.0	

Virtual meet-ups with SAAL members by region to discuss current trends and challenges

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	12	2.7	13.2	13.2
	Somewhat interested	28	6.3	30.8	44.0
	Interested	28	6.3	30.8	74.7
	Very interested	23	5.2	25.3	100.0
	Total	91	20.6	100.0	

Virtual meet-ups with SAAL members by institution type to discuss current trends and challenges

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	13	2.9	14.1	14.1
	Somewhat interested	24	5.4	26.1	40.2
	Interested	33	7.5	35.9	76.1
	Very interested	22	5.0	23.9	100.0
	Total	92	20.9	100.0	

SAAL in-person conference

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	20	4.5	22.0	22.0
	Somewhat interested	34	7.7	37.4	59.3
	Interested	23	5.2	25.3	84.6

	Very interested	14	3.2	15.4	100.0
	Total	91	20.6	100.0	

In-person meet-ups with SAAL members by region to discuss current trends and challenges

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	24	5.4	25.8	25.8
	Somewhat interested	28	6.3	30.1	55.9
	Interested	26	5.9	28.0	83.9
	Very interested	15	3.4	16.1	100.0
	Total	93	21.1	100.0	

In-person meet-ups with SAAL members by institution type to discuss current trends and challenges

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not interested at all	30	6.8	32.6	32.6
	Somewhat interested	32	7.3	34.8	67.4
	Interested	20	4.5	21.7	89.1
	Very interested	10	2.3	10.9	100.0
	Total	92	20.9	100.0	

Appendix B

Codes from which the "Challenges" themes emerged

Please click this link to view the full-sized graphic

Appendix C

Codes from which "Successes" Themes Emerged

Please click this link to view the full-sized graphic

Appendix D

Codes from which "Excitement" Themes Emerged

Please click this link to view the full-sized graphic