

## **Appendix B. Progress Indicator Graphs for Undergraduate Programs (1999 – 2001 - 2003)**

This document reports a set of indicators representing UNL's progress on outcomes assessment. Indicators were identified based on the The Higher Learning Commission/North Central Association's "Levels of Implementation" framework. See Appendix A for a complete description of how and why these progress indicators were identified and developed.

Data for determining progress on the indicators is based on assessment reports from academic colleges and their departments. Although information from reports is rich, it is not comprehensive. These reports do not always capture the varied and complex ways in which evidence of student learning is a part of the understanding, discussions, and decisions about educational programs. Although our understanding of the role that outcomes assessment does and will play at our institution has increased significantly, establishing a cohesive relationship between outcomes assessment and improving educational programs is an on-going effort. The following charts present the extent to which we have achieved this goal.

Progress for outcomes assessment activities in undergraduate and graduate programs are presented separately because of how UNL gradually rolled out its outcomes assessment plans. Initial efforts in 1997 focused on the undergraduate major. Assessment of graduate programs, although already occurring in some programs, was formally initiated in 2000. Therefore, these two efforts occur at different paces as represented in the document.

Reports from 1999 (1998-99 Academic Year), 2001 (2000-01 Academic Year), and 2003 (2001-02/2002-03 Academic Years) are used to document progress on each indicator. These dates were chosen to: 1) compare information on assessment efforts that were shared with a HLC/NCA focus visit team in Fall 1999 and in progress report submitted to the HLC/NCA in December 2002 and 2) the most current information UNL has from the 2001-02 and 2002-03 academic years.

The unit of analysis for the undergraduate charts is the level at which UNL's colleges conduct and report outcomes assessment activities. The total number of units for 1998-99 is 67 units, the total number of units for 2000-01 is 70 units, the total number of units for 2001-02/2002-03 is 69 units. This total is slightly below the total number of undergraduate majors. This is because outcomes assessment activities are conducted at the college level rather than the department or program level for several smaller colleges resulting in a unit analysis of one for those colleges. In these particular college's majors share a core curriculum.

The charts are shared in the following logical order:

- B1. Percentage of Undergraduate Units Implementing an Outcomes Assessment Plan
- B2. Percentage of Undergraduate Units Using Outcomes Assessment Results
- B3. Description of How Results from Outcomes Assessment Methods are Used
- B4. Contribution of Different Types of Evidence to Results
- B5. Types of Issues Raised about Educational Program from Outcomes Assessment Results
- B6. Types of Actions taken in response to Issues raised in Outcomes Assessment Results

## Appendix B1. Percentage of Undergraduate Units Having and Implementing an Outcomes Assessment Plan

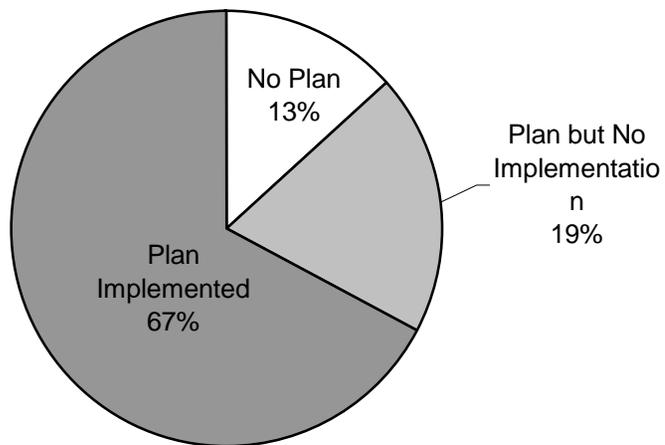
Purpose of the Graph: Represents the percentage of units:

- who do not have a plan/do not report a plan,
- who have a plan but have not implemented or reported on the assessment activities of that plan, or
- who have implemented to some extent the assessment activities of their plan.

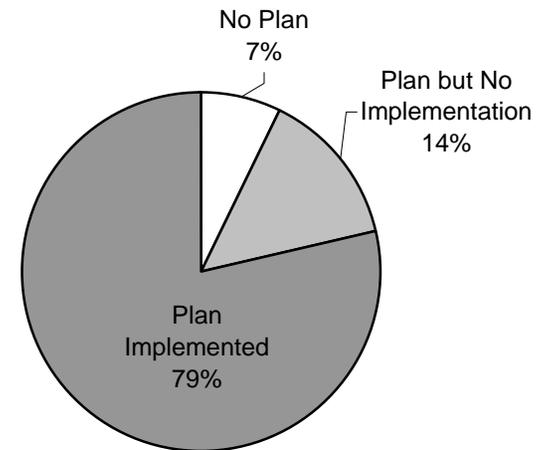
Comment on Results: In 2003 slightly fewer undergraduate units submitted a report on their assessment activities than in 2001. Without a report it is unclear whether these undergraduate units implemented any assessment activities. Despite this slip in reporting the number of undergraduate units who are implementing assessment activities continues to remain steady. Three-quarters of all undergraduate units reported implementing assessment activities.

### Appendix B1 Percentage of Undergraduate Units Having and Implementing an Outcomes Assessment Plan

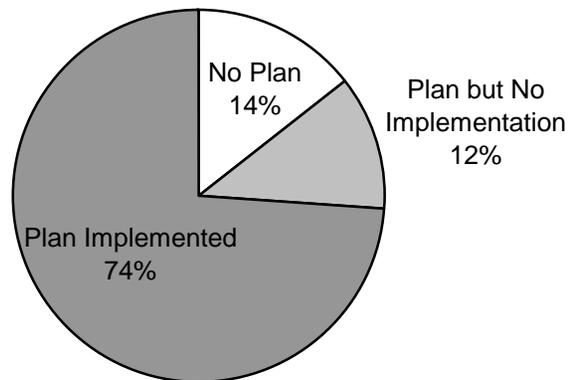
**1999 N = 67**



**2001 N = 70**



**2003 N = 69**

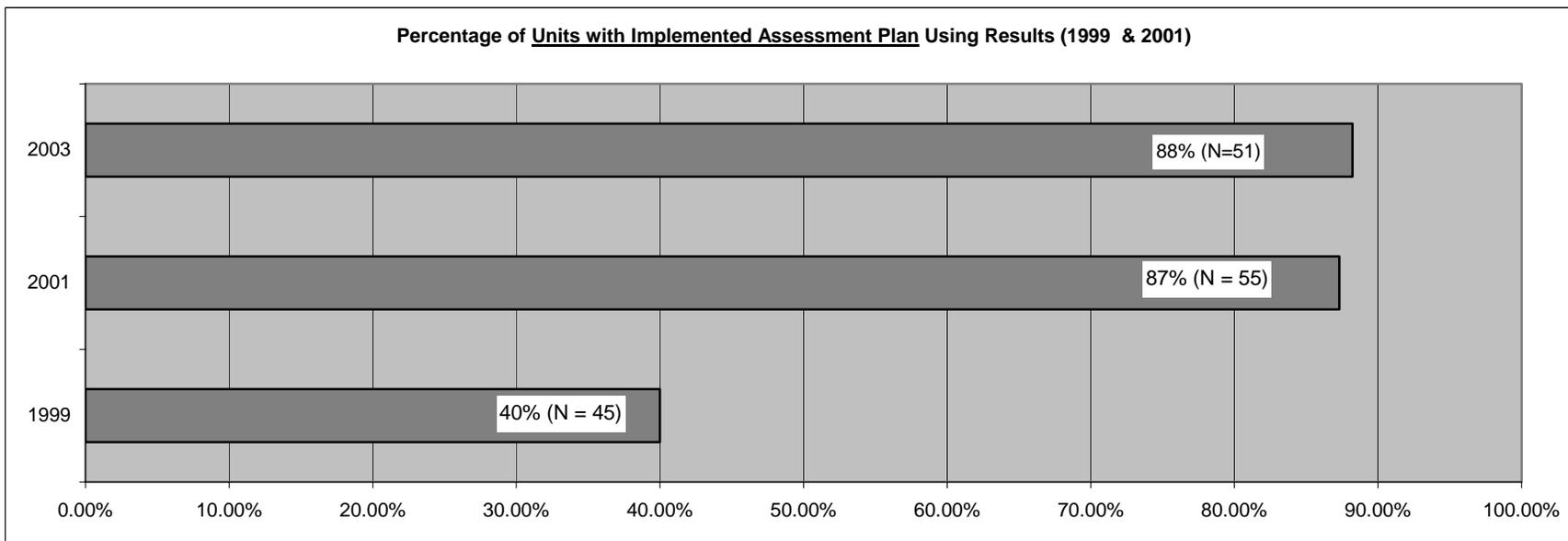
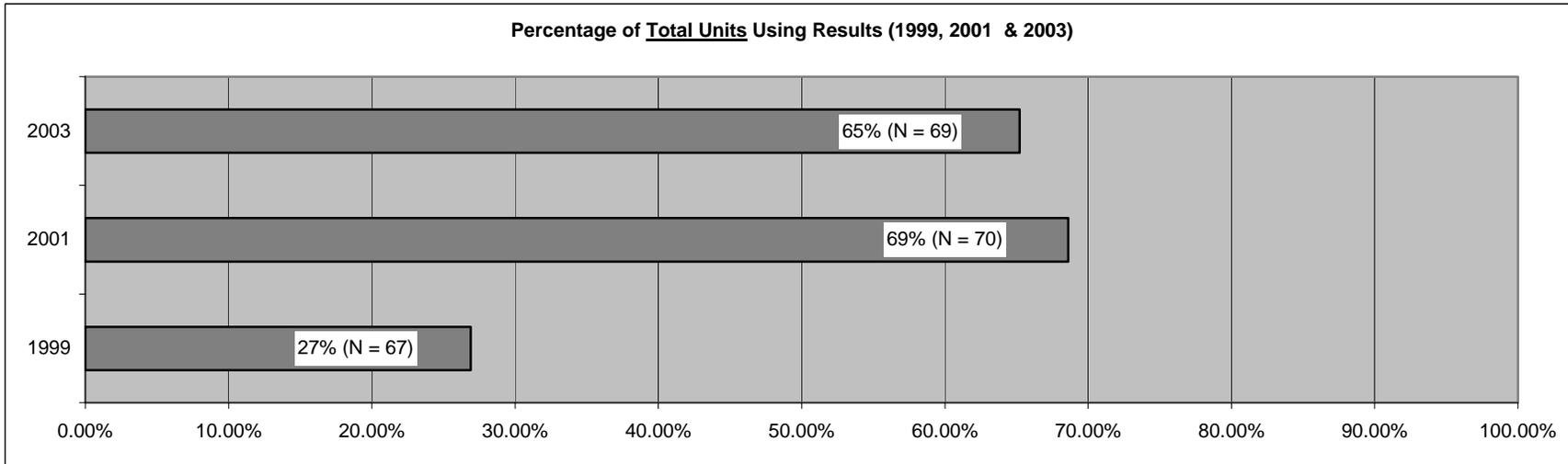


## Appendix B2. Percentage of Undergraduate Units using Outcomes Assessment Results

Purpose of Graph: Represents the extent to which outcomes assessment activities result in some sort of action by the unit. These actions span from modifying assessment plans to making changes to their educational programs.

Comment on Results: The percentage of undergraduate units that use their assessment results for improvement continues to hold steady in 2003. At least 65% of the 69 undergraduate units are using assessment results for improvement. If only those undergraduate units who are implementing assessment activities are considered, 88% of those undergraduate units are using results for improvement.

## Appendix B2 Percentage of Undergraduate Units Using Assessment Results



## Appendix B3. Description of How Results from Outcomes Assessment Methods are Used

Purpose of Graph: Represents the varied ways programs are using the results of assessment methods. Actions have been categorized into four groups representing increasing levels of engagement with assessment results. The four categories are:

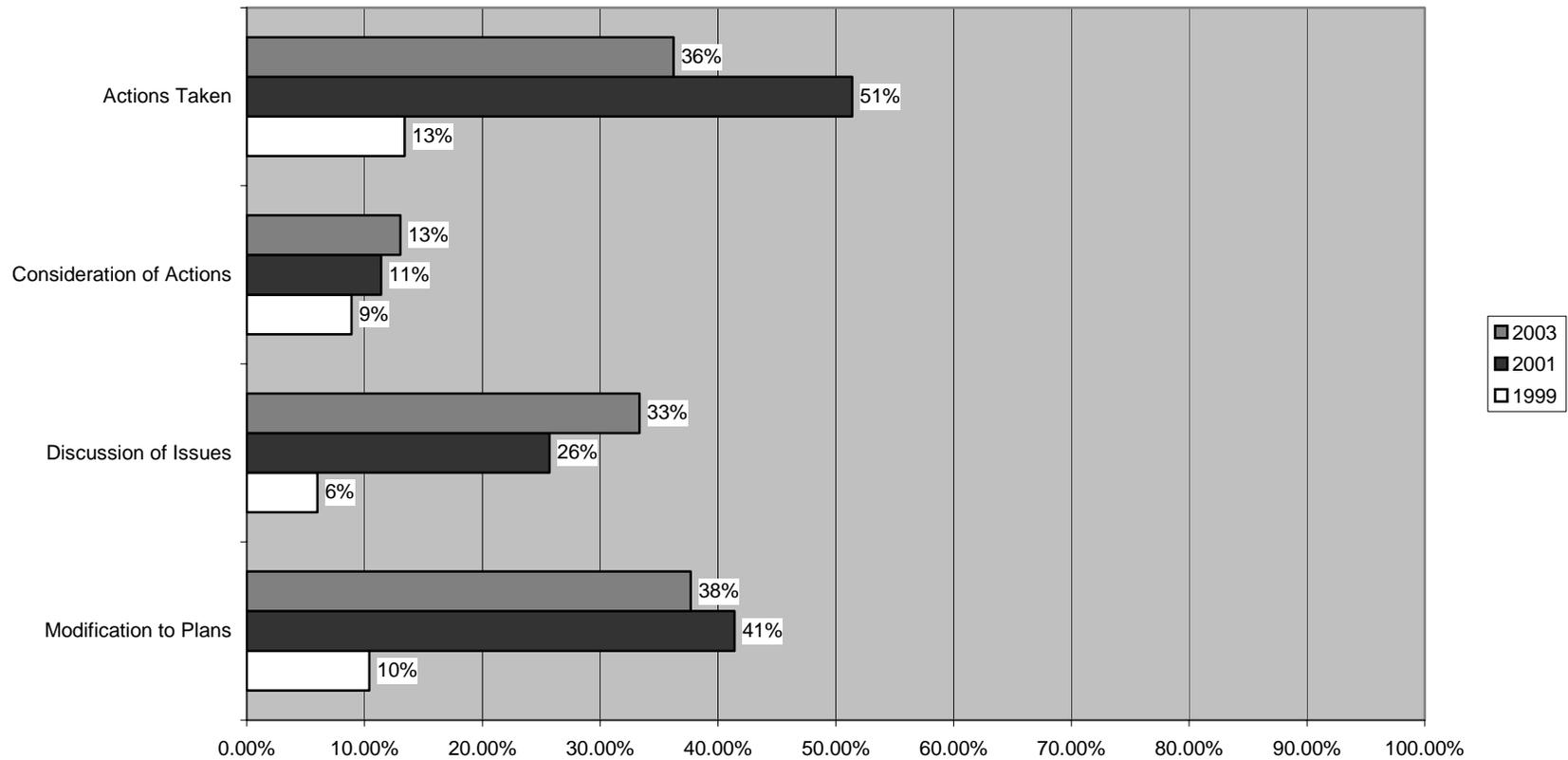
- Category 1: Modifications to assessment plans based on results,
- Category 2: Issues identified and discussed based on results,
- Category 3: Consideration of actions to address identified issues,
- Category 4: Actions taken to address identified issues,

The bars represent the percentage of all units that used results as specified by each category. Note that one unit may be represented in more than one category.

Comment on Results: Approximately one-third of all undergraduate units use assessment results to take actions that address educational issues, identify and discuss educational issues, and/or improve methods for assessing student learning/educational experience. Although in 2003 there were fewer undergraduate units taking actions there were more undergraduate units identifying and discussing educational issues.

## Appendix B3 How Academic Units are Using Outcomes Assessment Results

1999 - 2001 - 2003

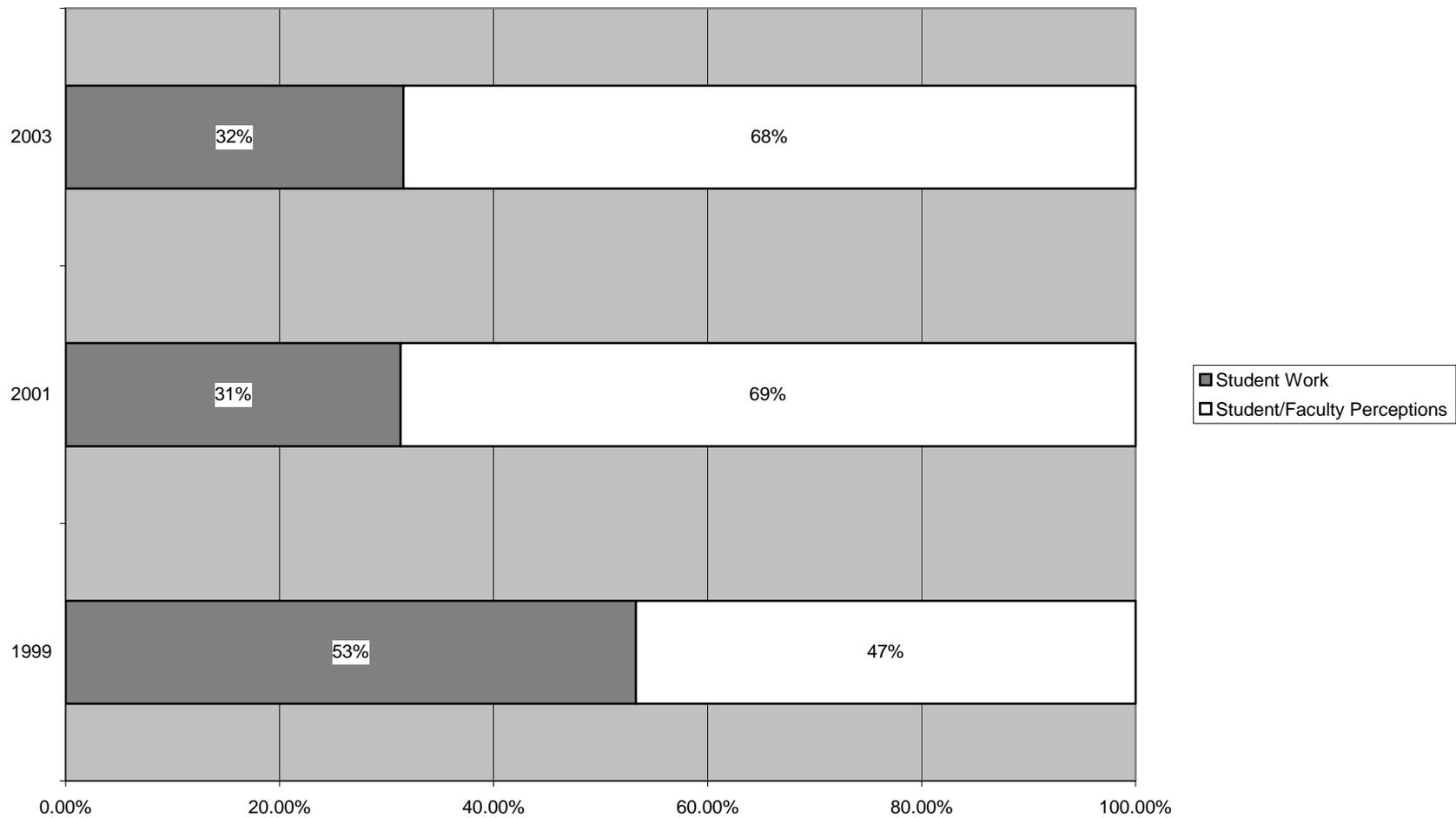


## Appendix B4. Contribution of Different Types of Evidence to Results

Purpose of Graph: Represents the extent to which student work (e.g. capstone course products, portfolios, essays, and exams) and student perceptions (e.g. student surveys, alumni surveys, and reflections on learning) contribute to discussions and actions. When both student work and student perceptions were used, the evidence that contributed primarily to the discussion or action was used for classifying.

Comment on Results: About one-third of all the actions and discussions reported by undergraduate units are based on evidence from student work (e.g. capstone course products, portfolios, essays, and exams). The other two-thirds of actions and discussions reported by undergraduate units are based on evidence from student perceptions (e.g. student surveys, alumni surveys, and reflections on learning).

### Appendix B4 Contribution of Different Types of Evidence to Outcomes Assessment Results



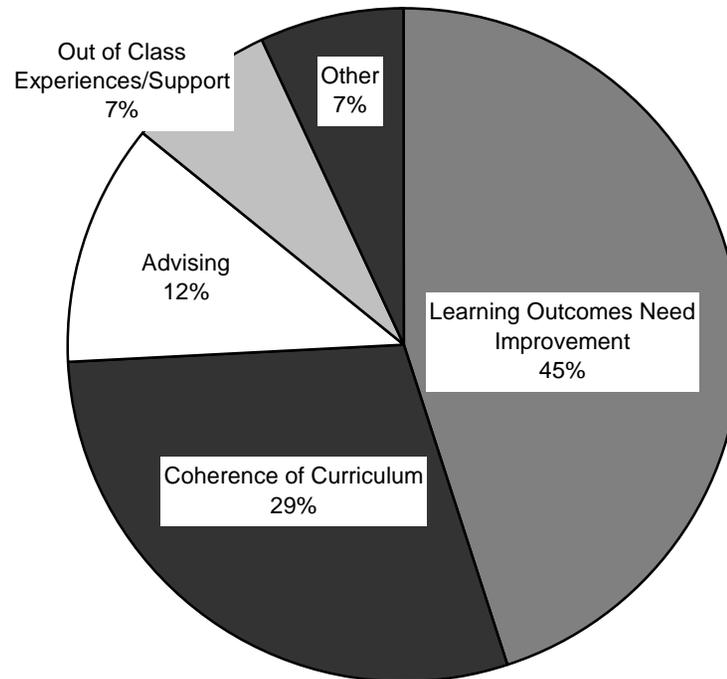
## Appendix B5. Types of Issues Raised about Educational Program from Outcomes Assessment Results

Purpose of Graph: Describes the types of issues reportedly raised based on outcomes assessment results. Issues are sorted into five categories:

- Learning Outcomes Need Improvement – Students not achieving expected knowledge or skills
- Coherence of the Curriculum – Structure of the curriculum provides prerequisite knowledge and skills for successfully completing courses
- Advising – Dissatisfaction or failures of the advising process
- Out of Class Experiences or Support – Student engagement in learning outside the curriculum
- Enhance Community: Better communication between students or students and faculty

Comment on Results: Learning outcomes that need improvement and the coherence of the curriculum continue to account for a majority of the issues raised about educational programs (74%) but advising received more attention in 2003 (12%).

### Appendix B5 Type of Issues Raised about Educational Program from Outcomes Assessment Results (2003)



## Appendix B6. Types of Actions taken in response to Issues raised in Outcomes Assessment Results

Purpose of Graph: Describe the types of actions taken in response to issues raised by outcomes assessment results. Actions are sorted into five categories:

- Changes to Course(s) – changing course outcomes, emphasis of certain skills
- Changes to Curriculum – addition or removal of courses in curriculum
- Changes to Program Structure – changing program requirements, program restructuring
- Changes to Out of Class Education – changes to program don't involve courses or curriculum but other educational experiences (e.g. internships)
- Improved Communication – clarifying purpose of curriculum among students/faculty, publishing outcomes in syllabi

Comment on Results: Changes in courses, the curriculum, and the program continue to account for a majority of the actions taken by undergraduate units (73%) but there also continues to be some variety. Other changes involve enhancing education that occurs outside of courses (10%) and improving communication (17%).

Appendix B6  
Types of Actions Taken in Response to Issues Raised in Outcomes Assessment Results  
(2003)

