

Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) Charter

The University of Maryland is dedicated to creating strategies, systems, and methods for achieving excellence. Toward that purpose, the Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) was created in 1996. It is charged with developing and promoting a culture of evidence in the campus community through:

- Assessment planning and design
- Consultation about data needs and survey assessment methodologies
- Access, dissemination and utilization of information
- Maximizing collaboration opportunities and resources within the campus community

Specifically, the Campus Assessment Working Group:

- Identifies and explores key student, faculty, and staff issues
- Promotes and collaborates in routine campus-wide efforts to collect and analyze customer-driven data and information
- Ensures sound methodology using current technologies
- Ensures that collected data are analyzed, interpreted, and disseminated to campus decision-makers
- Organizes to continually address selected needs and demands of the campus
- Responds to urgent or unforeseen information requests that are of campus concern
- Provides support for campus-wide data collection and analytic projects
- Facilitates comparisons of campus survey data to peer institutions and national trends to provide a context for UM data

Structure

Chair: Michelle Appel, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment and Chief Data Officer

Campus Assessment Working Group membership is cross-divisional and cross-functional, and can include faculty, staff and students. Currently there is a Steering Committee and two subgroups within CAWG, each with its own focus.

Subgroups

- Studies of Student Entry (Beginnings): Incoming and first-year students
- Assessing Campus Experiences (ACES): Large-scale surveys and polls of junior and senior students

The Work of CAWG Encompasses

Assessment Planning and Design

- Selects and develops core topics that will be tracked longitudinally primarily through survey data
- Establishes a multi-year schedule for monitoring survey samples, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of results
- Facilitates assessment of the campus community, including studies of sub-populations
- Selects and develops survey instruments and data collection methods
- Facilitates warehousing of data collection projects
- Responds to non-routine data needs of the campus

Data Access, Dissemination, and Utilization

- Addresses and collaborates in development of policies about data access and dissemination
- Promotes targeted distribution of data and findings
- Compares campus survey data with data from other universities and with nationwide trends to provide a context
- Encourages cataloguing of past survey efforts by the campus community
- Provides assistance to campus data users in accessing CAWG and other catalogued data

Consultation and Referral

- Publicizes CAWG's mission and services
- Engages potential data providers and data users
- Provides technical assistance and advice regarding assessment and evaluation processes
- Promotes learning opportunities for data collection and evaluation, and the assessment process

History of CAWG

The Continuous Quality Improvement Council was established in June 1993 to develop a system for taking action in a constantly changing environment. The Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) was established in 1996, and was one of three coordinating groups linked to the Continuous Quality Improvement Council. CAWG's founding Chair was the Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. William L. Thomas, and he remained chair until May 2000. The CQI Council has ceased to exist, but CAWG continues to function through the support of the Vice Presidents for Academic and Student Affairs, and is housed in and supported by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment.

(revised: 3/31/2025)