

How Do We Know?

New Mexico Junior College Builds a Connected Approach to Assessment, Planning, and Institutional Improvement



The Question Behind the Work

When the team at New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) began preparing for the institution's 10-year Higher Learning Commission (HLC) comprehensive evaluation, assessment work was already well established. Faculty were measuring outcomes, departments were completing reports, and leadership was advancing strategic priorities. Yet one question continued to surface across those conversations:

How do we know?

- + How do we know that our initiatives align with strategic priorities?
- + How do we know that resources are supporting meaningful impact?
- + How do we know that progress is visible institution-wide?

By bringing assessment, planning, and strategic initiatives into a shared system and process, NMJC began building a unified framework for documenting progress, measuring impact, and supporting data-informed decision-making institution-wide.

“Integrated, data-informed planning is central to NMJC’s operational effectiveness. Strategic, academic, enrollment, and facilities planning, alongside the program review process and assessment tools such as Nuventive, guide resource allocation and continuous improvement.”

- Excerpt from Peer Review Team Report, HLC Comprehensive Evaluation (Peer Review Team Report)

Nuventive supports this work through the Nuventive Improvement Platform as well as a Professional Services Team. This provides the infrastructure to connect assessment and planning to institutional strategy, supported by configuration and guidance grounded in higher education practice.

Connecting Assessment, Planning, and Reporting

Before implementing the Nuventive Improvement Platform, NMJC’s assessment work was documented across a variety of formats. Faculty and departments were capturing outcomes and reporting results in

Customer Profile

New Mexico Junior College is a public junior college located in Hobbs, New Mexico. Serving students across southeastern New Mexico and neighboring regions, NMJC offers associate degrees, certificates, and workforce training programs designed to support academic transfer, career advancement, and regional economic development. The college is committed to strengthening institutional effectiveness through aligned planning, assessment, and data-informed decision-making.

Opportunity

As NMJC prepared for its 10-year Higher Learning Commission (HLC) comprehensive evaluation, leaders saw an opportunity to strengthen how assessment, planning, and strategic priorities were connected throughout the institution.

Nuventive provided a single platform to standardize assessment reporting, improve visibility into institutional progress, and support stronger alignment between strategic goals, measurable outcomes, and decision-making processes.

documents, spreadsheets, and other tools.

As NMJC's assessment efforts expanded across campus, consolidating results for reporting and institutional visibility required significant coordination.

"It was always my job to pull it all together," said Charlotte Schmitz, Academic Assessment Coordinator and full-time mathematics faculty member. "Whatever format they used, I had to consolidate it."

Departments documented outcomes in ways that supported their work, while institutional leaders continued advancing planning and budgeting priorities.

- + Assessment was happening.
- + Planning was happening.
- + Budgeting was happening.

The opportunity was to bring these efforts together in a more connected framework.

"The transition from a paper-based system to Nuventive, which will enable all programs to engage more actively with their data, is a positive step toward integrating these processes." - Peer Review Team Report

Aligning Institutional Strategy

When William F. Brown, DBA, Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness, joined NMJC more than two years ago, the institution was looking for ways to strengthen alignment between assessment, planning, and institutional strategy.

Brown was tasked to explore systems that could bring together these processes and connect them more clearly to the college's mission and strategic plan.

"We needed something that could cast a wide net," Brown said. "Not just assessment, but program review and strategic planning."

The Nuventive Improvement Platform emerged as a strong fit—but success required academic leadership buy-in.

After speaking with peer institutions and seeing how other colleges were using the system, confidence in the Nuventive Improvement Platform grew.

Schmitz became a key champion, helping evaluate the Platform and lead implementation for academic assessment across campus.

"What convinced me was hearing from other campuses," Schmitz

Improvement

New Mexico Junior College is building a more connected approach to institutional effectiveness by bringing assessment, planning, and strategy together within the Nuventive Improvement Platform.

With standardized reporting, centralized documentation, and improved visibility into institutional work, NMJC is strengthening alignment across campus and supporting a culture focused on measurable progress and continuous improvement.

Key Benefits

- + **Standardized Assessment Reporting**
Consistent reporting formats reduce manual consolidation and streamline institutional reporting.
- + **Improved Accreditation Readiness**
Centralized documentation supports HLC preparation with clear, organized evidence of institutional progress.
- + **Stronger Alignment Across Institutional Processes**
Assessment, planning, and strategy connect within a shared system, strengthening alignment between priorities and outcomes.
- + **Greater Visibility for Leadership**
Leaders can more easily see how initiatives, assessment results, and planning efforts connect across the institution.
- + **A Foundation for Data-Informed Improvement**
Connected assessment, planning, and institutional goals support a more sustainable approach to documenting progress and continuous improvement.

explained. “They spoke very highly of Nuventive and how the Platform worked for them.”

Standardizing Assessment and Reporting

Once implemented, the Platform helped bring greater consistency to NMJC’s academic assessment reporting.

Assessment data could now be entered into a standardized system, making it easier to capture, manage, and present information in a uniform way.

“The real strength is what happens after the data goes in. I can quickly pull reports and make them presentable without spending weeks consolidating everything.”

- Charlotte Schmitz

During preparation for NMJC’s HLC comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation, this capability proved especially valuable.

Using the Nuventive Improvement Platform, Schmitz produced 18 uniform assessment reports for the Vice President of Instruction, providing consistent documentation in time for the accreditation review process.

“Nuventive introduced uniformity,” she said. “The reporting timeline was significantly reduced.”

Assessment work was no longer scattered across documents. It became visible across the institution.

From Assessment Tool to Institutional Infrastructure

What began as an effort to strengthen academic assessment is evolving into something broader: a more connected approach to institutional effectiveness.

NMJC is implementing new processes that align planning, budgeting, and institutional strategy more closely than before.

Under the institution’s evolving strategic framework:

- + Budget requests must align directly with strategic priorities
- + Units must demonstrate measurable outcomes
- + Documentation must be centralized and accessible
- + Leadership must be able to see progress across initiatives

“That documentation has to live somewhere,” Brown said. “And Nuventive is that place.”

As these processes mature, the Nuventive Improvement Platform is becoming the central system for institutional alignment, connecting

Peer Review Team Report

As part of Higher Learning Commission’s 10-year comprehensive evaluation, a peer review team visited the NMJC campus for an on-site peer review visit.

Feedback from the peer review team’s report highlighted the institution’s use of the Nuventive Improvement Platform to support multiple initiatives campuswide.

“The implementation of Nuventive as a centralized source for program review has streamlined workflow processes, strengthened the connection between program review and assessment, and provided the academic programs with better tracking of outcomes in a user-friendly report format.”

“NMJC provided strong evidence of the student success measures it uses to identify gaps and areas of opportunity for student success. Their transition to the Nuventive system will continue to provide them with additional data to support this work.”

“The implementation of Nuventive, a campus-wide assessment tool, has further strengthened assessment and strategic planning to ensure college-wide collaboration.”

initiatives, assessment results, and strategic goals in one place. This shift is helping NMJC provide clearer visibility into how work campuswide contributes to measurable progress and student success.

Building Adoption Across Campus

As NMJC continues expanding how assessment information is used across the institution, faculty and staff are engaging with the system in ways that support their work and reporting cycles.

Assessment data is entered as part of ongoing academic work, with resulting reports and documentation used to better understand outcomes, trends, and institutional progress.

“We still need point people in each unit to make sure the data gets entered regularly,” Schmitz said.

As engagement grows, the ability to access consistent reports and longitudinal data is helping leaders and departments see how individual efforts connect to broader institutional priorities.

“Once people see how it simplifies reporting and helps connect work to the bigger picture,” Brown explained, “buy-in improves.”

A Partnership Approach to Improvement

The Nuventive Professional Services Team’s extensive experience working with higher education institutions has played an important role in the implementation process.

“It’s been exceptional,” Brown said. “I’ve worked with Nuventive before and knew what to expect.” Schmitz echoed that perspective.

“The support has been prompt, thorough, and consistent. We have our dedicated consultant who understands our institution.”

- Charlotte Schmitz

For NMJC, that level of engagement from their Professional Services Team helps ensure the Platform continues to meet the institution’s evolving needs.

From Question to Institutional Visibility

As NMJC continues strengthening the alignment between assessment, planning, and strategy, the institution is gaining a clearer view of how work across campus connects to measurable outcomes.

For Brown, the effort often returns to the question that first framed the institution’s work: “How do we know?”

With stronger alignment and clearer visibility into institutional initiatives, NMJC is increasingly poised to answer that question with clarity and confidence—connecting evidence, planning, and strategy in ways that make institutional progress more visible.

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