



**ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY**

# Institutional Assessment Plan

Amended: October 2014

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## INTRODUCTION

Systematic assessment is a requirement for institutional accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and MSCHE specifically addresses institutional assessment in three of its 14 standards <http://www.msche.org/publications.asp>:

### Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

*An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.*

### Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

*The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.*

### Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

*Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.*

At St. John's University, our strategic planning and institutional assessment processes are in complete accord with Middle States standards, with institutional assessment being completely integrated into our most recent two strategic plans (2008-2013 and 2011-2014 repositioning of the strategic plan). These plans have been structured around institutional vision, mission, goals, priorities, objectives, strategies and institutional measures to track accomplishments and identify gaps for improvement.

This institutional assessment planning document has the following elements:

- An extract and summary of our institutional assessment planning process from the strategic plans;

- An overview of the institutional approach to learning outcomes assessment;
- Academic program review;
- National and internally developed surveys from which various assessment measures are derived; and
- Resources, tools, timelines and responsibilities associated with the above.

In addition to these institutional level assessments, there are various operational and unit level plans. However, these will not be addressed in this document.

## **INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **2004-2008 Strategic Plan Assessment Summary**

In the context of our mission, vision, values, institutional goals, academic and admission standards, institutional reputation, and fiscal strength, the University established a framework of 14 strategic priorities in the 2004-2008 Strategic Plan <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/leadership/strategic-planning>. Each priority was listed under one of the four institutional goals.

- I. Develop our academic and institutional culture to be student-centered and committed to lifelong learning.
- II. Enhance resource development and prioritize resource allocation to achieve our vision.
- III. Build an organization of strong leaders where faculty, administrators and staff are enabled, motivated and engaged.
- IV. Institutionalize our new vision and planning culture in the context of missions and external challenges.

Approximately 100 institutional success measures – 88 with targets – were developed under the four institutional goals and monitored to identify annual and cumulative progress toward academic and institutional priorities. This comprehensive list of indicators, measures, benchmarks, comparative data and targets was developed with input from the academic, operations and mission sectors and became the basis for assessing the University's progress. The measures consisted of a variety of internal and external data and instruments including national student and faculty surveys (HERI, NSSE),

student evaluations of courses (SIR II), and external licensure examination rates. The complete matrix of measures was included in the strategic plan in Appendix K.

Ongoing reviews and refinements of the plan were made in light of progress against these institutional success measures as well as from feedback from the Middle States self-study and re-accreditation process. A progress report published in December 2007 gave the University the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the 2004-2008 Plan and to begin to shape the priorities for the next planning cycle.

Progress against the measures revealed that:

- One-quarter of the institutional success measures with targets, reached or exceeded those targets including
  - Academic - SAT scores; Honors eligibility; Licensure exams pass rates for the Bar, Teacher Certification and Pharmacists
  - Financial – Capital Campaign, Net Assets and Bond Ratings
  - Service - Participants in Service Day and community service
  - Enhancing the University’s national image as a high priority
  
- One-quarter had gaps between targets and current values including
  - Retention and graduation rates
  - Tuition dependency
  - Annual alumni giving rate
  - Some elements of instructional methods and student engagement, including cooperative learning, student-faculty interaction, academic challenge and a supportive campus environment
  - Overall and resident student satisfaction
  
- Approximately one-half were on track to meet targets
- A few had only baseline data (e.g. Facilities, Alumni)

## 2008-2013 Strategic Plan Assessment Summary

After careful review and analysis of the foundational elements and strategic direction outlined in the 2004-2008 Strategic Plan, it was determined that the Vision, Institutional Goals and Academic Profile outlined in that plan would remain unchanged, as the University entered this new planning cycle. Based on feedback from the assessment process and results of the 04-08 plan, some institutional success measures were deemed more critical than others and more reflective of the institutional goals. These were retained. Others were revised or deleted. Additional measures and targets were included at the beginning of the planning cycle or added subsequently to track the success of our Mission, Global, and Student Engagement priorities. The main sources for these additional measures were the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the 2009 and 2010 Graduating Student Surveys. For example:

**Goal 1: Develop our academic and institutional culture to be student-centered and committed to lifelong learning.**

NSSE – Have had practicum, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment.

Measure	Baseline STJ (04'-08')	Baseline STJ (2006)	Updated: STJ (2008)	Comparative Data: Doctoral Intensive		Target/Standard 2008-2013
				2006	2008	
Senior students (%)	N/A	54%	55%	49%	54%	60%

These measures which were included in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan as Appendix H are monitored and updated regularly, and appropriate action steps taken. Both the original plan and measures, as well as updated versions of the measures are available online at: <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/leadership/strategic-planning>.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Starting in September of 2007, in accordance with the standards for assessment by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, St. John's University expanded its assessment efforts to include all academic programs within the University using WEAVE Online.

WEAVE Online is an assessment management software application that helps manage accreditation, assessment, planning and quality improvement processes for many colleges and universities. Faculty, department chairs, deans, and administrators meet regularly to discuss the results and strategies for improvement.

We currently use WEAVE Online to collect and manage data for each of the following areas for each program or unit for every academic year: Mission/Purpose; Goals; Outcomes/Objectives; Measures and Achievement Targets; and Findings and Action Plans. We also generate various assessment, audit, and other reports from the system.

Each year, the data is reviewed and suggestions are made to enhance individual programs. This ensures that St. John's University is continually monitoring, assessing, and improving all programs the University offers.

Although we currently use WEAVE Online almost exclusively for assessing learning outcomes, as indicated on their website: *WEAVEonline is a powerful software application that addresses the need to develop and maintain continuous improvement processes for both the academic and administrative structures within an institution. It guides and provides for the alignment of multiple processes, including assessment, planning, accreditation, budgeting and institutional priorities.*

More information on WEAVE Online can be found at: <https://app.weaveonline.com/login.aspx>. You will need a password and ID to access WEAVE Online that's specific to each college at St. John's University. This information can be found at: <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research/assessment/surveys>

### **Assessment at the College or Unit Level**

All colleges and units currently have outcomes assessment plans in various stages of development and implementation. These assessment plans are periodically reviewed by the appropriate parties within each individual college.

### **Assessment at the Department Level**

Department chairs are responsible for developing common goals and objectives based on the courses within their departments. These are reviewed annually and changes are made accordingly based on analysis of Weave Online data & course evaluation data.

### **Assessment at the Program Level**

As previously mentioned, Weave Online is the assessment tool used across program to measure outcomes on a year-to-year basis. The mission, goals, outcomes/objectives, measures, findings, and action plans are reviewed at the end of each cycle, and a report is generated for each program.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW**

To ensure the quality of undergraduate and graduate academic programs, it is important that we periodically undertake a full-scale review of all of our programs. The primary focus of the academic program review is to improve the quality of programs, advance the quality of core teaching and learning, research, professional/creative activity, and service/academic outreach. The process also promotes linkages between Academic Program Planning, Assessment, and the University's Strategic Plan. Results of the review are expected to provide a basis for future planning and resource allocation decisions. The most recent (2014-2015, currently underway) program review has seven criteria / standards that form the framework for the self-study of each program.

The Academic Program Review Guidelines, individualized self-study template, program development plans (PDPs), resources, calendar, accompanying materials and completed self-studies are available at: <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research/academic-program-review-overview>

## OUTCOMES SURVEYS

St. John's University participates in a number of national and internally developed outcomes surveys at various scheduled timeframes. Results from these surveys are included in the institutional success measures (baselines, comparative data, targets and progress). An inventory of these surveys, reports (which can be used for national level comparison) and other information can be found at: <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research/assessment/surveys>. This inventory is updated regularly to reflect current and future evaluation periods.

**National Surveys** The following lists some of these surveys with links to where information can be found on a National Level.

<u>National Surveys</u>	<u>National Level Information</u>
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	<a href="http://www.nsse.iub.edu/">http://www.nsse.iub.edu/</a>
Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)	<a href="http://fsse.iub.edu">http://fsse.iub.edu</a>
Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey (HERI)/Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP Freshmen)	<a href="http://www.heri.ucla.edu/">http://www.heri.ucla.edu/</a>
Student Satisfactory Inventory (SSI)/Institutional Priority Survey (IPS)	<a href="https://www.noellevitz.com">https://www.noellevitz.com</a>

## **Internally Developed Surveys / Evaluation**

### **St. John's Course Evaluation**

The Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) form at St. John's University is used to gauge the effectiveness of various teaching and classroom components. Furthermore, in an effort to enhance the educational experience, it is an essential tool used to identify areas for professional development. Participating in the SET ensures that students' feedback influences the academic quality of our programs going forward. These evaluations are administered twice a year (at the end of the Spring and Fall semesters) to courses which have at least 3 students. Information pertaining to the Student Evaluation of Teaching can be found at: <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research/student-course-evaluation>

### **The Graduating Student Survey**

The Graduating Student Survey (GSS) is a brief survey designed to obtain information from St. John's graduating students about their college experience and learning outcomes. The survey was developed by the Office of Institutional Research with input from senior managers. It was incorporated into the online process used by students - other than School of Law - to register for participation in commencement exercises. This has been administered since 2009. The following GSS items have been added to the Institutional Success Measures:

- Students' overall satisfaction
- Quality of instruction
- Tuition paid as a worthwhile investment
- Global experience
- Level of integration of technology into learning environment
- Internships and job placement
- Impact of our mission and development of a faith dimension

Reports and appendices relating to the GSS can be found at:

<http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research/graduating-student-survey-gss>

## **ASSESSMENT RESOURCES**

**Office of Institutional Research (OIR):** <http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research>

The Office of Institutional Research is a centralized resource to develop and provide timely, accurate, and consistent quantitative and qualitative information and analyses to internal and external constituents.

Activities include:

- Providing statistical data to administrative and academic units to support planning efforts, program reviews, outcomes assessment, and proposals for external funding.
- Assisting administrative and academic units in areas such as, retention analysis, enrollment projections and special studies.
- Initiating and supporting the development, administration, and analyses of outcomes related surveys. If an individual wishes to conduct his or her own survey, the first step is to complete a request form available on OIR's website.

Assessment tools - the Office of Institutional Research maintains an ongoing, comprehensive list of national and internally developed outcomes surveys utilized by the University. This inventory of assessment instruments is updated regularly, and is available online.

### **St. John's University Fact Book**

The University Fact Book is prepared by the Office of Institutional Research on an annual basis, with contributions from other offices and individuals at the University. It contains texts, tables, and graphs of current and historical information on students, employees, and finances. Fact books dating back to 2009 can be found at:

<http://www.stjohns.edu/about/administrative-offices/institutional-research/fact-book>

## **RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSESSMENT**

The Office of the Provost established a faculty and staff University Assessment Committee (UAC, October 2014) charged with providing advice, recommendations and strategies to University administration and academic units regarding all activities associated with the assessment of student learning. The UAC will be responsible for re-examining extant practices, suggesting new and different strategies where the committee believes change is warranted, and providing counsel aimed at improving and enhancing the effectiveness of all St. John's University assessment practices in the undergraduate, graduate, professional and online education. The UAC will meet on a quarterly basis throughout the year.

### **Initial Committee Composition (October 2014):**

#### **Co-Chairs**

Elizabeth Ciabocchi, Ed.D., Vice Provost for Digital Learning  
Simon Moller, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Graduate Education & Research  
Derek Owens, D.A., Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

#### **Members**

St. John's College – Laura Schramm, Michael Wolfe  
College of Professional Studies - Ying Liu, Ellen Tufano  
Tobin College of Business - Rodger (Mitch) Casselman, Sylwia Gornik-Tomaszewski  
School of Pharmacy - Marc Gillespie, Sandy Zito  
School of Education - Nancy Garaufis, Aliya Holmes  
School of Law - Larry Cunningham, Elyse Pepper\*  
Institutional Research - Steven Glogocheski

\* To be replaced with Director of Academic Support Services in Jan 2015, TBA

### **Strategic Plan /Institutional Assessment**

Ms. Mary Harper Hagan, SVP for Human Resources and Strategic Planning, and Dr. Clover Hall, VP of Institutional Research and Academic Planning, have primary responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the Strategic Plan and Institutional Success Measures. Dr. Yuxiang Liu, Director of Institutional Assessment, and Steven Glogocheski, Associate Director of Academic Assessment, regularly update these measures and upload them to the St. John's University website.

The Institutional Success Measures are also available via the Combined Outcomes Measures; a document updated quarterly to reflect progress on the Repositioning of the Strategic Plan. Finally, Amy Filadelfo, Research Analyst, has overall responsibility for analyzing and disseminating results of various national and internally developed outcomes surveys, and for conducting comprehensive research and analysis on retention and graduation rates for subsets of the student population. This position reports to the Director of Institutional Assessment.

Responsibility for assessment of the Core Curriculum resides in the University Core Curriculum committee (UCCC), comprised of faculty members and chaired by Dr. Derek Owens, Vice Provost.

### **Learning Outcomes –WEAVE Online**

The primary administrator of the WEAVE Online assessment management system is Steven W. Glogocheski, Associate Director of Academic Assessment. Mr. Glogocheski continually monitors the inputting of assessment data and reports on the progress at the college, department, and program level. He also assigns IDs and passwords as requested and provides group or individual training and consulting on the effective use of WEAVE Online . This position reports to the VP of Institutional Research and Academic Planning.

Each school/college has WEAVE Online Coordinators, who are the primary individuals responsible for inputting (or assigning appropriate individuals to input) and encouraging the use of programmatic data for improvement of student learning within their schools/colleges. **Below are the WEAVE Online Coordinators as of October 2014 –**

St. John's College: Dr. Michael Wolfe, Dr. Laura Schramm – Associate Deans

College of Professional Studies: Dr. Ellen Tufano (Associate Dean)

College of Business: Dr. Victoria L. Shoaf (Dean), Dr. Adrian Fitzsimons (Professor), Christine Torres (Assistant to Director of Budgets and Compliance)

School of Education: Nancy Garaufis (Coordinator of Accreditation and Program Registration)

School of Pharmacy: Dr. Sandy Zito (Professor), Anthony C. Marziliano (Assistant to the Dean), Dr. Marc. E. Gillespie (Associate Professor)

**University-wide Course Evaluation:**

Steven W. Glogocheski, Associate Director of Academic Assessment

**Administration and Analysis of Outcomes Surveys :**

Dr. Yuxiang Liu, Director of Institutional Assessment

Amy Filadelfo, Research Analyst

**Academic Program Review:**

Judy Chen, Assistant Provost for Academic Resource Management and Planning or Dr. Clover Hall, Vice President of Institutional Research and Academic Planning

## **REPORTING/PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

All of the assessments mentioned above are reported on a regular basis, and information is disseminated to appropriate parties. In addition, as noted in the 2011-2014 Repositioning of the Strategic Plan (page 45) “we will continue to be proactive in learning about, and responding to external priorities and challenges, as well as looking at targets that were not met in the 2008-2014 planning/repositioning period.”