

Institutional Effectiveness Progress Report 2015-2016



INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AT RIT

In today’s higher education landscape, colleges and universities are responding to the call to demonstrate institutional effectiveness. A process and tool was designed to facilitate opportunities for RIT’s administrative units to showcase internal quality control practices. RIT is in its second year of issuing the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Progress Report. This report summarizes the assessment practices and continuous improvement efforts embraced by RIT’s divisions this past year.

The University Assessment Council (UAC), which is comprised of representatives from RIT’s seven divisions, provides oversight for this systematic quality assurance process. Administrative units annually articulate how data are used to inform or guide decisions, make changes to improve services, operations, processes, or impact resource allocation. Based on feedback and data collected following the initial pilot, the university’s process was advanced in the following ways:

- Refined the web-based survey tool through which administrative units report their assessment and continuous improvement efforts from the prior year
- Refined the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Rubric used to evaluate units’ demonstration of data-driven continuous improvement

RIT received external feedback on the process via the MSCHE Final Team Report 2017. The Annual Institutional Effectiveness Progress Report was included as one of the initiatives that provided evidence of continuous improvement of student success, programs, and services. The report indicated it was one of the “prominent indicators of a culture of continuous improvement and all touch the student experience in some important respects.” The team also commended RIT for “a mature culture of assessment” based on its review of RIT’s annual procedures.



Initial University Results

An *Institutional Effectiveness Continuous Improvement Rubric* is used to rate each progress report submission on continuous quality improvement efforts. It is based on a four point scale, from *No Evidence to Exemplary* (see Table 1). The university goal is for all administrative units to be rated as *Effective* or higher on their annual progress reports as this provides strong evidence of effective practices that promote continuous improvement. This year, RIT advanced closer to its goal with a 4% increase from 67% to 71% over the pilot year.

Another highlight from this year’s results is that three divisions had 100% of their administrative units rated *Effective* or *Exemplary*, which is an increase from two last year. The percentage of administrative units rated *Effective* or *Exemplary* for the past two years are provided below.

Table 1: Two-Year Rubric Rating Trends

Rubric Rating	Year 1 (2014.15) n=55	Year 2 (2015.16) n=58	Percent Change
	% (#)	% (#)	+ or -
Exemplary	14.6% (8)	29.3% (17)	+14.7%
Effective	50.9% (28)	41.4% (24)	-9.5%
Developing	30.9% (17)	13.8% (8)	-17.1%
No Evidence	3.6% (2)	15.5% (9)	+11.9%



Essential Question

How well are we achieving our mission and goals?

Highlights

RIT's divisions strive to improve operations, services, and programs. Four divisions provided examples that showcase how their administrative units are using data to inform decisions or guide changes that lead to departmental and institutional improvements.

Diversity & Inclusion: Satisfaction survey data were analyzed to measure the goal - *Implement high quality diversity programming to cultivate a climate that is supportive, respectful and values differing perspectives and experiences.* From the results, the department determined efforts to increase student attendance were met with some success. To capitalize on progress, they will continue to build partnerships to identify effective means of engaging students to promote their involvement and attendance at signature events (door hangers, social media, and direct e-mail to previous attendees). The department will enhance the ticketing system through online retrieval, as this will assist in getting accurate contact information from attendees to boost the effectiveness of the outreach effort. Additionally, they will continue to explore web-based and other alternatives to capture accurate attendee information. The department will monitor the satisfaction data to determine if these changes improve the results.

Finance & Administration: Based on an analysis of the results from measuring the goal - *Employ effective data management processes,* a core team from two departments came together to create vision and mission statements for the program, outline a three-year roadmap, define program scope, and clarify governance. The departments defined a joint objective for the following year and identified specific tasks to ensure achievement of the objective.

Academic Affairs: Based on an analysis of NSSE data, one department made progress on the goal - *Foster cultural knowledge and competency,* but determined the need to enhance student engagement outside the classroom. As a result, the department developed new funding opportunities to enhance participation and access global mobility. They worked with Student Government to communicate with students about opportunities and engage them in programming and outreach. The department also collaborated with Student Affairs on marketing and events (OneSpiRIT, International Education Week) to encourage involvement in RIT's global locations and international perspectives. The goal will be reassessed to determine the impact of the expanded opportunities.

Development & Alumni Relations: One department reviewed multiple social media data to determine if they had met the goal - *Acquire new social media members.* The analysis revealed Twitter attracted fewer new followers in FY17 than anticipated. Compared to other social media channels, Twitter continues to attract fewer alumni and the rate of growth is slowing. The department indicated they will continue to have a presence on Twitter and work to engage alumni, but they determined they will pursue other channels including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram that have become more central to the RIT Alumni Association social strategy. They will reassess the goal to determine if this strategy is successful.



Reflections

RIT faces demands for accountability, quality assurance, and accreditation. RIT's internal institutional effectiveness processes provide opportunities to demonstrate how we are using data to guide decisions and changes that lead to department and institutional improvement. Ultimately, this process provides evidence of how divisions support RIT's mission and goals.

The UAC met to discuss administrative units' use of data for continuous improvement, particularly the clarity of objectives and analysis and use of assessment data for program improvement. In addition, the UAC noted:

- Improved integration of this assessment process into other ongoing operational practices including: budget requests, program/process improvement, and departmental strategic planning
- Better alignment across the objective, benchmark, and assessment methods
- More thorough descriptions of how findings were used to guide decisions or changes
- Increases in both the *Exemplary* and *No Evidence* categories suggest differentiated support is needed to assist administrative units in demonstrating assessment and continuous improvement
- A need for an additional norming session for UAC based on two year rating trends and rater feedback
- Support should be provided to administrative units to work on alignment of objective, data, benchmark, and reporting on the findings and re-assessment to determine if the change or decision led to an improvement



Summary

The UAC was pleased with the positive results of the annual reporting process but will also be focused on addressing RIT's internal suggestion in its MSCHE self-study to **"initiate steps to ensure that by 2018, 100% of administrative units develop and implement assessment plans (Institutional Effectiveness Maps) and use results to improve unit efficiency."** (Standard VI: Suggestions 10)

To this end, the UAC will work with RIT's new division, Marketing and Communication, and any additional administrative units that need to develop and implement assessment plans. The UAC will conduct a summer norming session to promote rater consistency given the two year trends and rater questions and feedback. The UAC has an ongoing goal to develop support and resources that are rooted in best practices, consistent across the university, and are flexible given the different types of work across administrative units.

RIT's University Assessment Council 2017-18 Members

Academic Affairs: Laurie Clayton and Anne Wahl (UAC co-chair)

Development and Alumni Relations: Sharon Lonchair

Enrollment Management and Career Services: Manny Contomanolis

Finance and Administration: Joan Graham (UAC co-chair)

Government and Community Relations: Lynn Rowoth

Marketing and Communication: TBD

NTID Office of the President: Richard Dirmyer

Diversity and Inclusion: David Wick

Student Affairs: Jodi Boita and Jennifer Maltby

RIT Dubai: Marie Ghanime

