RIT | Rochester Institute of Technology

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PROGRESS REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, 2018 - 2020

Over the past decade, RIT has established an institutional effectiveness process designed to showcase continuous quality improvement practices and demonstrate our commitment to strategic planning. This process, the *Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Progress Report*, is now in its fifth year.

The annual Progress Report process is facilitated by the University Assessment Council (UAC). UAC is comprised of representatives from RIT's nine divisions, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), and RIT Dubai. UAC provides oversight for this process and determines how well administrative units are achieving our mission and goals. The Progress Report, completed by each administrative unit, articulates how data are used to inform or guide decisions, impact resource allocation and make changes to improve services, operations, and processes. An *Institutional Effectiveness Continuous Improvement Rubric* is used to rate each report submission. The rubric has a four-point scale ranging from *No Evidence to Exemplary* (see Table 1).

The 2018-2020 reporting cycle was unique in that it followed a planned "gap" year so that administrative units could refine and align Institutional Effectiveness maps to RIT's revised strategic plan. Goals, objectives, and corresponding data could be selected from either year, one of which was challenging given the pandemic.

All divisions and NTID are represented in the annual progress reporting process, and 100% participation was achieved. RIT Dubai participated in a pilot project during this cycle. The university goal is that 100% of RIT's administrative units are rated as "*Effective*" or higher on their annual progress reports. Findings include:

- 86% of administrative units achieved a rating of "Effective" or higher which is a 14% increase from the prior reporting cycle
- 98% of administrative units were rated as "Developing" or higher which is a 7% increase from the prior reporting cycle
- The first multi-divisional collaboration and continuous improvement results were submitted

Table 1 provides five-year trend data on the overall percentage of administrative units rubric ratings.

Table 1: Five-Year Rubric Rating Trends

Rubric Rating	2014.15 (n=55) % (#)	2015.16 (n=58) % (#)	2016.17 (n=60) % (#)	2017.18 (n=67) % (#)	2018.20 (n=66) % (#)
Exemplary	15% (8)	29% (17)	35% (21)	30% (20)	32% (21)
Effective	51% (28)	41% (24)	52% (31)	42% (28)	54% (36)
Developing	31% (17)	14% (8)	13% (8)	19% (13)	12% (8)
No Evidence	4% (2)	16% (9)	0% (0)	9% (6)	2% (1)
Total Administrative Units Rated Effective or Higher	**65% (36)**	**71% (41)**	**87% (52)**	**72% (48)**	**86% (57)**

Reflections and Continuous Improvement Highlights

Institutional Effectiveness Annual Progress Report (IE PR5) results were very positive following a planned gap year and a year during which we navigated remote learning and work environments. This is a significant accomplishment as the administrative units' service delivery models were ever-evolving as part of RIT's Covid-19 response. These results reaffirm RIT's commitment to demonstrating its continuous quality improvement practices.

The following examples highlight how administrative units used data to inform decisions or guide changes that led to departmental and institutional improvements.

Example 1: Student Affairs – Center for Leadership and Engagement

The Center for Leadership and Engagement assessed the Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program outcome that attendees would be able to *articulate how community organizations identify and address community needs* as *a result of their participation*. Journal responses to guided questions were analyzed to determine if the benchmark (65% of participants are able to articulate the learning outcome) was achieved at an Intermediate or Advanced level. Findings show 66% of participants met the benchmark, indicating that the ASB program was successful in exposing students to nonprofits' organizational missions and how they work to address community needs.

Journal analysis revealed that students who provided meaningful reflection of the day's work did so after receiving guidance from the student trip leader and the staff advisor, affirming the importance of frequent facilitated dialogue. Based on these findings, the program will (1) revamp the student leader training to include additional content related to the importance of dialogue as well as skill development in the area of facilitation and (2) clarify the role of staff advisors vis-a-vis the dialogue process to better prepare staff advisors to step in when the discussions are either not happening or are superficial.

Example 2: Finance and Administration - Institutional Research, Data & Analytics
Academic Affairs – Office of the Registrar

The Division of Finance and Administration's Office of Institutional Research, Data & Analytics and the Division of Academic Affairs' Office of the Registrar partnered to achieve two objectives: 1.) *increase the alignment between student interest and summer course offerings through the addition of summer classes requested by students via a student survey* and *2.) increase student enrollment and credit hours taught (generated) in the 2198 summer term.*

The established benchmarks were to maintain FTE enrollment and credit hours taught between the 2188 and 2198 summer terms with an aspirational goal of increasing FTE enrollment and credit hours taught by any amount as compared to the prior summer term and to add requested classes based on student survey results. The student survey was developed and implemented in the spring 2020 to collect information about student interest in summer courses, and the Student Information System (SIS) data was used to evaluate previous summer course offerings. Both objectives and benchmarks were achieved.

Survey results informed scheduling changes, and the Registrar worked with the associate deans to add courses that were in high demand, since students said they were likely to enroll (58%). Results further informed the decision to offer a financial discount for the summer term, the development of a summer session website, and additional outreach to students. These modifications led to an increase in summer term enrollment and the number of summer class sections offered. Between the 2188 and 2198 summer terms, the number of summer class sections offered increased from 235 to 303 (29%), FTE enrollment increased by 46%, and student credit hours taught increased by 75%.

Example 3: Diversity & Inclusion- Multicultural Center for Student Success

The LSAMP and McNair Scholars programs offer workshops, panel discussions, graduate school visits, and other academic and cultural activities to help students from under-served backgrounds with high academic potential attain graduate degrees. Engagement in these activities helps students apply for graduate school, find funding, and be competitive candidates for admission.

One of its objectives, *the McNair and LSAMP students will participate in two academic and/or cultural awareness activities per year,* is designed to strengthen graduate school preparation. A 75% student participation rate was established as a benchmark to determine if the objective was met. Based on a 46% participation rate in the previous assessment, the LSAMP and McNair Scholars program tied financial benefits (such as funding for professional conferences or research stipends) to program participation. For the 2019-2020 academic year, McNair and LSAMP students were given the financial benefits of the program if they participated in the minimum amount of program activities.

Program staff began moving services online in March 2020 offering students recorded online program activities that they could access on demand. Students were allowed to watch a recorded program workshop, then submit a written summary of the workshop to earn credit for attending. This on-demand structure in addition to the live (in-person prior to March and over Zoom after March) workshops and activities gave students increased flexibility in engaging with the program activities and also boosted participation. After analyzing activity participation data, the program found 86% of McNair and LSAMP students had participated in two academic and/or cultural awareness activities during the 2019-2020 reporting year. This metric aligns with another program objective to *increase the number of students in the program who are able to enroll in graduate education immediately following their graduation from RIT.* The corresponding benchmark is that 30% of program participants enroll in a graduate program by the fall semester following graduation from their RIT undergraduate program. The number of graduating students enrolled in a graduate program by the following fall was up to 31% from 23% in 2017-2018. This objective was met and affirms current programming efforts with the modification of participants receiving the program's financial benefits based on participation.

Example 4: University Advancement - Advancement Services

Advancement Services' FY2020 objective was to *reduce the number of gift modifications from the 3-year average for fiscal years 2017-2019 of 1,443 to the established FY20 benchmark of 1,371*. By reducing manual gift modifications, data entry is streamlined, accuracy is increased, and staff productivity is higher. The ability to reduce the number of gift modifications will allow for the implementation of new processes and efficiencies in other areas of the operation and to improve the donor's overall experience when making a gift to RIT.

The Modification Details Report was the primary data source and serves as the division's donor system of record. The report is run routinely to analyze increases or decreases in certain types of modifications. This work flow analysis guides the next course of action (process changes to eliminate the need for modification) by the Gift Office Manager and the gift processors and was used to determine if the benchmark was met.

In FY20, the gift office reduced the number of modifications to 964, a 33% reduction from the 3-year average and the lowest since they began tracking modifications in FY15, thereby meeting the objective. Based on this achievement, new processes have been implemented in several areas: matching gifts, donor advised funds, better data fed into the accounting department for booking gifts to the general ledger, training revisions, and communications to gift officers where gifts are prone to be improperly booked.

In addition, the gift office staff will use the FY20 data to establish a new benchmark to ensure that the work done in previous years has indeed reduced the number of required gift modifications on an ongoing basis. Year over year data will ensure consistency and validate that the steps and processes adjusted to reduce the gift modifications have been effective.

UAC Next Steps

The University Assessment Council's focus areas for the next academic year will include:
- Developing best practices and identifying high-quality examples of continuous improvement among administrative units
- Identifying opportunities to intentionally connect the IE process to existing internal reporting processes
- Launching the sixth iteration of the *Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Progress Report* in August 2021 and expanding (as appropriate) administrative units for inclusion in the IE process

2020-2021 University Assessment Council Members

Academic Affairs: Laurie Clayton (chair)
University Advancement: Sharon Lonthair
Enrollment Management: Edward Lincoln
Finance and Administration: Joan Graham
Government and Community Relations: Kristina Owens
Marketing and Communications: Shelley Yehl
NTID: Denise Wellin
Diversity and Inclusion: David Wick and Liz Bremer
Student Affairs: Jennifer Maltby
RIT Dubai: Dezzil Castelino