



Institutional Effectiveness Map Planning Guide

RIT

Division of
Academic Affairs
**Office of
Educational
Effectiveness
Assessment**

rit.edu/educationaleffectiveness/

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Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Overview

Institutional effectiveness is a systematic, data-informed process for evaluating an institution's success in achieving its mission and purpose. This process involves the collection, analysis, and application of data to guide strategic planning, decision-making, and resource allocation. The institutional effectiveness process documents **how well the institution's performance aligns with its purpose.**

RIT's institutional effectiveness processes and practices are designed to:

- Utilize assessment results to guide continuous improvement toward meeting unit, division, and university goals (i.e., including operations, planning, decision-making, and resource allocation)
- Provide evidence of systematic processes for continuous quality improvement
- Demonstrate how effectively administrative units support RIT's vision, mission and [Strategic Framework 2035, Transforming Lives Through Creativity and Innovation](#)

The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Map

The IE Map is a planning tool designed to help administrative and academic support units plan and identify measurable goals aligned with university, division, or department strategic plans and scorecards. The Office of Educational Effectiveness Assessment and the University Assessment Council work with administrative units to complete their IE Maps. A template is available on the EEA website for units to document their assessment planning (Appendix A).

IE Map Core Elements

The IE Map includes eight core elements:

1. [A clearly defined Mission Statement](#)
2. [Measurable goals/outcomes](#)
3. [Aligning the goals/outcomes to RIT's Strategic Framework and Organizational Strategies](#)
4. [Data sources/activities identified for assessing goals/outcomes](#)
5. [Set benchmarks and timelines](#)
6. [Developing and tracking action plans to meet benchmarks \(if they are met, not met, or other\)](#)
7. [Analyzing assessment results and documenting Key Findings](#)
8. [Using the results to guide continuous improvement](#)

1. A Clearly Defined Mission Statement

An administrative unit's charge or mission is *a broad statement of purpose identifying its services, programs, and contributions to the institution*. The statement should be brief (three to five sentences) and reflect the unit's role within the division and/or institution, its mission and goals, and how it supports primary stakeholders.

A mission statement will:

- Explain how the unit's mission and supporting activities align with RIT's vision, mission, and Strategic Framework

- Identify and describe **primary stakeholders**—the groups who receive or benefit from the unit's key services (e.g., students, faculty, staff, parents, employers, community organizations)
- Include services provided by the unit to support institutional mission, vision, and student success. It is recommended to list only those services within the reporting unit over which the unit has control or influence

Mission Statement Example:

The Controller's Office. We support RIT's strategic goals by working together to provide accurate, timely, and actionable information while acting as good stewards of the university's financial resources. By utilizing efficient, effective, and innovative processes, we strive to accomplish the following:

- Protect and enhance the university's financial resources
- Provide reliable information to all stakeholders for decision-making
- Deliver a wide range of services to the RIT community
- Meet regulatory requirements

2. Measurable Goals/Outcomes

A **goal or outcome** (may also be referred to as an **objective**) is a statement that provides a specific, detailed description of the desired quality or expectation of key functions, operations, and services within an administrative unit. Begin statements with an **action verb** that describe an **observable, measurable, and results-oriented** process (See Appendix B for examples of action verbs).

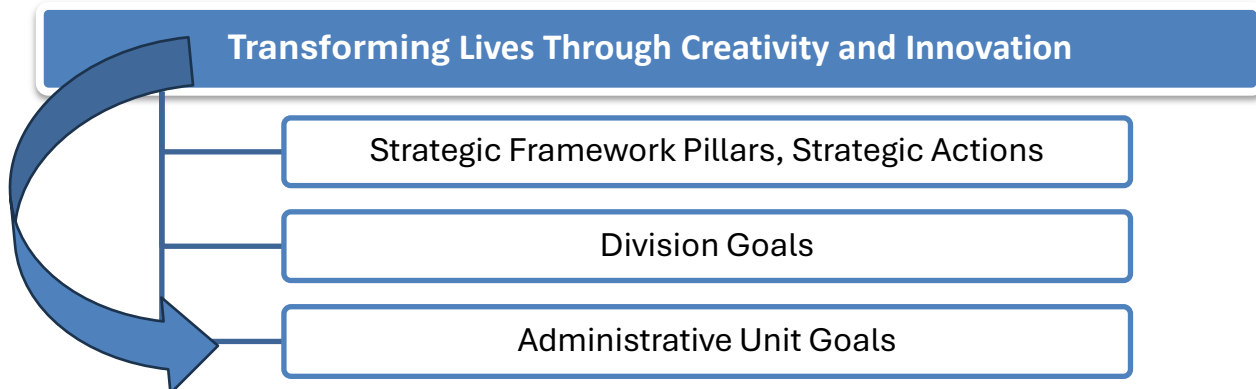
Outcome Examples:

Improve the security of confidential/personal employee data by strengthening HR access controls

Provide an intentional advising model to meet the academic needs of students

3. Aligning the Goals/Outcomes to RIT's Strategic Framework and Organizational Strategies

An institution's strategic framework operationalizes its vision and mission to the campus community and its stakeholders. RIT's [Strategic Framework 2035, Transforming Lives Through Creativity and Innovation](#) serves as a blueprint for the university. Units align their goals to the Strategic Framework's four Pillars and corresponding Strategic Actions, as applicable (Appendix C).



Units also have the option of aligning goals to RIT's Organizational Strategies:

- **Grow and Steward Financial Resources** to ensure sustainable support for institutional priorities. Through strong enrollment, funded research, strategic partnerships, philanthropic giving, and effective stewardship of existing assets, we will enhance RIT's ability to shape the world through creativity and innovation.
- **Increase Velocity and Resilience.** Cultivate an agile, forward-looking organization that empowers individuals and teams to experiment, learn, and adapt quickly. Foster a culture of continuous improvement and leverage technology to improve systems and structures to adapt quickly in a rapidly changing world.
- **Enhance Storytelling.** Leverage the power of storytelling to strengthen connections within and across RIT's communities, and to elevate RIT's reputation among prospective families, peer universities, employers, community leaders, alumni, and donors.

4. Data Sources/Activities Identified for Assessing Goals/Outcomes

Every administrative unit goal needs corresponding data sources or activities to measure success. These sources vary widely depending on the unit's function and can include:

- **Operational Metrics:** Enrollment, attendance, event counts, submission volumes, and revenue
- **Service Performance:** Details on services offered and unit response times
- **Surveys:** Feedback from faculty, students, alumni or employers
- **Focus Groups:** Detailed qualitative insights

Review current unit practices for gathering information on services, programs, and activities. Then, select data sources that are both informative and efficient.



Tips: Data Sources

- ✓ What methods does the unit use to collect information?
- ✓ Are current data sources directly related and aligned to measure the unit's outcomes/objectives?
- ✓ What other information does the unit need to gather in order to determine whether the unit is achieving its objectives?

Methods of Measurement

Units should identify reliable, accurate measures of goals/outcomes which provide evidence about operations, performance, and achievements. Identify **existing data sources** that can be used to measure progress or consider whether new methods should be established. There may be opportunities to use one method to measure more than one unit goal or outcome.

- **Direct Methods** assess demand, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. This may include completion and/or productivity of service and efficiency of individual points of service. Examples of direct methods include program attendance, number of students receiving service, revenue, and post-graduation employment.
- **Indirect Methods** assess student or stakeholder perception of services, programs, and activities. Examples of indirect methods include student ratings of their experience or knowledge, exit interviews, and focus groups.

5. Set Benchmarks and Timelines

Benchmarks determine the acceptable level of achievement or success for each unit objective. A benchmark is required for every goal/outcome on the IE Map. Setting benchmarks is an iterative process to help explain how well the administrative unit is performing. Once benchmarks have been set, administrative units measure and determine performance based on the established success metrics. Benchmarking is a continuous process. Once units have measured performance in comparison with the initial benchmark, adjustments or modifications can be made based on an analysis of results.



Tips: Setting Benchmarks

- ✓ Research and identify external benchmarks from sources using appropriate professional associations or standards and peer programs
- ✓ Review pre-existing internal benchmarks (annual reports, divisional expectations)
- ✓ Involve others in the standards-setting process; work with division and unit leadership and staff

Benchmark Examples:

Goal: Students will report a positive experience playing intramural sports.

Data Source: Student surveys were conducted for intramurals participants each semester.

Benchmark: 90% of respondents will agree or strongly agree each semester (Q.2 on survey: *"My overall experience playing intramurals this semester was positive."* Strongly Agree/Agree).

Goal: Deliver exceptional client service and support to Employer Partners

Data Source: Career Fair Employer Partners Survey

Benchmark: 80% of employers will rate students Prepared or Very Prepared for the Career Fair

6. Developing and Tracking Action Plans to Meet Benchmarks

Plan the administrative unit's approach for gathering institutional data. Include who will collect the data and identify the most opportune times throughout the year for data collection and analysis. Be selective, strategic, and realistic. Develop a cycle that will match competing demands, internal requirements, and external commitments. It is recommended that a unit assess two or three goals, outcomes, or objectives on an annual basis. A staggered approach over a period of time (e.g., a two-year cycle) maximizes unit resources and capacity.

7. Analyzing Assessment Results and Documenting Key Findings

Interpret assessment results and document major conclusions that emerge from the data. Consider how the results compare to benchmarks, what they reveal about current practices, and whether any trends or areas of concern are evident. Findings should be specific enough to guide discussion, decision-making, and continuous improvement.



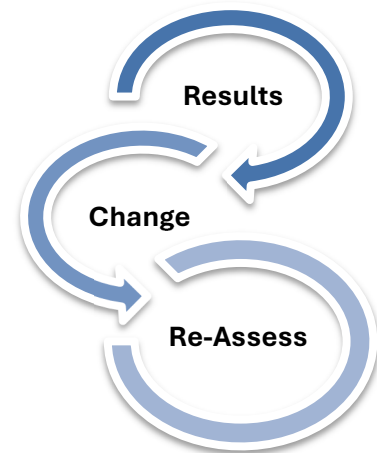
Tips: Use Results to Drive Conversations

- ✓ Share assessment results with team members to foster transparency and collaboration
- ✓ Use discussions to identify trends, celebrate successes, and prioritize areas for improvement
- ✓ Align next steps with your unit's strategic goals and upcoming planning cycles

8. Using the Results to Guide Continuous Improvement

Use the results to guide decisions and next steps/action plans to improve programs and services and inform planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. A primary goal of assessment is to support continuous quality improvement by uncovering and addressing issues. An important aspect of assessment is “closing the loop,” using the data to inform and reflect upon current practice and facilitate change.

- Use results to confirm alignment with RIT’s institutional initiatives, guide discussions, validate goals, outcomes, or improve administrative unit performance.
- Identify what, if any, next steps or actions will be taken as a result of the assessment findings.
- Ensure that proposed actions directly connect to specific findings—clearly articulate how the proposed change addresses the identified gap or supports the observed success.
- Close the loop by re-assessing after a change has been implemented to determine if the change had the desired effect.



IE Progress Report and Timeline for Administrative Units

As part of its commitment to integrated strategic planning, RIT’s University Assessment Council (UAC) developed a reporting tool and process to highlight how administrative units contribute to institutional effectiveness. The Institutional Effectiveness Progress Report (IE PR) provides the opportunity to demonstrate how each administrative unit is supporting the university’s mission and goals and using data to drive improvement processes on an annual basis. The following timeline provides guidance in supporting the administrative unit annual IE progress report process.



Office of Educational Effectiveness Assessment

The Office of Educational Effectiveness Assessment (EEA) provides leadership and centralized support for assessment processes focused on fostering academic quality and advancing institutional effectiveness. We collaborate with all RIT divisions to ensure that administrative units are measuring their goals and using assessment results to inform and guide continuous improvement (enhancing operations, planning, guiding decision making, allocating resources, etc.) in support of the Vision, Mission, and RIT’s Strategic Framework.

EEA provides specialized consulting related to assessing administrative unit goals. Visit our [website](#) for information about the Annual Progress reports and other resources, or contact us to schedule a meeting with your department.

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Appendix A. Institutional Effectiveness Map Template

Administrative Unit	Division	Assessment Cycle
Mission Statement		

Date Updated
Department Contact

Strategic Framework 2035											
Goals/ Outcomes	Pillar 1: Transformative Student Experiences and Success	Pillar 2: World- Changing Research	Pillar 3: Culture of Well-Being and Belonging	Pillar 4: Global Reach and Mindset	Organizational Strategies	Data Source	Benchmark	Action Plans Completed	Achievement of Outcome	Key Findings	Next Steps/ Action Plan

Appendix B. Action Verbs for Goals/Outcomes/Objectives Statements

Administer	Coach	Guide	Monitor
Address	Demonstrate	Increase	Organize
Advise	Develop	Institute	Perform
Allocate	Diagnose	Instruct	Plan
Assess	Direct	Interview	Prepare
Balance	Ensure	Introduce	Process
Budget	Establish	Investigate	Produce
Calculate	Evaluate	Implement	Promote
Collaborate	Explain	Improve	Provide
Communicate	Expedite	Illustrate	Research
Conduct	Facilitate	Interpret	Strengthen
Coordinate	Forecast	Manage	Support
Counsel	Generate	Market	Systematize

Appendix C. [Strategic Framework 2035, Transforming Lives Through Creativity and Innovation](#)

Vision and Mission

RIT is a dynamic, globally connected university committed to cultivating a community that transforms ideas into action. Our vision and mission guide us as we inspire creativity, advance technology, and design solutions to improve the world.

We shape the future and improve the world through creativity and innovation. We leverage the power of technology, the arts, and design for the greater good.

Pillars and Strategic Actions:

Pillar 1: *Transformative Student Experiences and Success* – Empower students to lead and thrive in a rapidly evolving world by expanding our experiential, interdisciplinary, and collective approach to education and fostering their development as well-rounded, future-ready individuals.

1. **Enhance Our Signature Learning Approach** – Enhance our experiential learning approach, deepening the integration of technology, the arts, and design in our curricula to educate students who will lead with creativity and purpose in a rapidly changing AI enabled world.
2. **Create and Expand Academic Programs with Industry and Community Insight** – Build on RIT's strong reputation for career readiness, expanding academic programs in high-demand fields. We will deepen collaboration with industry and community partners to prepare students for the future of work and to meet evolving workforce needs.
3. **Increase Flexibility in Existing Academic Degree Programs** – Increase flexibility within existing degree programs and encourage curricular innovation, boundary crossing, and exploration by breaking down barriers and incentivizing collaboration across departments and colleges.
4. **Build on Our Strength in Cooperative Education, Enhance and Refine Our Approach to Experiential Learning** – Elevate RIT's commitment to experiential learning through a broader set of beyond-classroom experiences, embedding research, co-ops, service, and project-based learning within local and global ecosystems.
5. **Ensure Student Success and Growth** – Ensure high student retention and graduation rates, and equip students with the tools, resilience, and leadership skills needed to thrive in their educational journey and beyond.

Pillar 2: *World-Changing Research* – Advance knowledge, pursue groundbreaking discoveries, and shape the future through research, scholarship, and creative endeavors that amplify our interdisciplinary strengths and address pressing global challenges.

1. **Advance Creative and Technological Frontiers** – Conduct world-changing research by strategically investing in interdisciplinary research and creative endeavors that harness RIT's unique strengths in technology, the arts, and design—transforming existing fields, pioneering new ones, and shaping the frontiers of AI and beyond.
2. **Attract and Retain Exceptional Research-Active Faculty** – Attract and retain exceptional faculty whose research excellence, scholarly impact, and creative inquiry advance breakthrough discoveries that not only fuel innovation but serve as a catalyst for a better future.
3. **Strengthen the Research Ecosystem** – Build a world-class research and scholarship support infrastructure that spans the spectrum—from funding to impact.
4. **Cultivate the Next Generation of Scholars** – Expand and sustain a strong pipeline of student scholars who actively contribute to discovery, creative inquiry, and the growth of the university's research enterprise.

5. **Increase Translational and Entrepreneurial Activities** – Support and encourage the translation and dissemination of research into intellectual property, commercialization opportunities, and entrepreneurial ventures to amplify the societal and economic impact of our discoveries.

Pillar 3: *Culture of Well-Being and Belonging* – Cultivate a culture where individual growth, holistic well-being, and a deep sense of belonging—within our community and in harmony with the natural world—are integral, making it a defining element of how we learn, teach, work, and thrive together.

1. **Enhance Our Inclusive and Welcoming Campus Culture** – Continue building a campus culture that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful of all individuals—strengthening our commitment to access, engagement, and success—fostering a deep sense of belonging and connection to one another.
2. **Empower All Community Members to Grow and Thrive** – Work together to enhance the access and well-being of all students, faculty, and staff, empowering them to grow, thrive, and achieve their full potential.
3. **Attract, Develop, and Retain Exceptional Faculty and Staff** – Attract, develop, and retain exceptional faculty and staff whose teaching, research, creativity, and service drive student success and foster innovation at the intersection of technology, the arts, design, and beyond.
4. **Strengthen Lifelong Connections** – Strengthen lifelong connections to RIT by creating opportunities for alumni, retirees, and friends that foster a sense of belonging and a culture of giving back, ensuring they remain integral to the university’s vibrant community and future success.
5. **Accelerate Progress Toward a Sustainable Future** – Advance sustainability as a foundation for wellbeing—creating healthy, inclusive environments, increasing access to nature, and accelerating progress toward a resilient and decarbonized future.

Pillar 4: *Global Reach and Mindset* – Leverage and enhance RIT’s role as a globally engaged organization, creating a cohesive and interconnected university with a deep commitment to cross-cultural understanding, engagement, and community prosperity.

1. **Deliver a Globally Informed and Engaged Education** – Integrate global perspectives and engagement opportunities into curricular and co-curricular experiences, fostering cross-cultural understanding and preparing students to lead, engage, and drive inclusive prosperity in an interconnected world.
2. **Create a Globally Connected Research Ecosystem** – Develop a globally integrated research ecosystem that leverages the distinct strengths of each RIT campus and community. Promote cross-location collaboration on regionally relevant and globally significant challenges that align with institutional strengths and priorities.
3. **Enhance the Student Experience Through Global Engagements** – Provide students with learning and research experiences around the world by strengthening and scaling partnerships with industry and government. Tailor opportunities to the strengths of each location, ensuring relevance to local economies and alignment with RIT’s academic and research goals.
4. **Deepen Community Connections** – Advance RIT’s role as a collaborative, community-engaged university by fostering reciprocal relationships between campuses and their surrounding communities. Co-create initiatives that promote shared social and economic progress in all places that we operate, with a bold and enduring commitment to Rochester as our founding home.