

## **Institutional Effectiveness at Averett Summary Report September 2007**

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Averett submitted a response to recommendations from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Sections addressing institutional effectiveness (recommendation one) and general education (recommendation ten) document a developing *culture of inquiry* evidenced by:

- I. campus wide planning and assessment processes, and
- II. improvements in student learning and academic/administrative support based on evidence from assessment.

The full text of Averett's response to recommendations one and ten is available for internal use by faculty, staff, and trustees at <http://www.averett.edu/ir>.

This summary report outlines planning and assessment processes, assessment plans for 2007-08, and evidence that the university is fulfilling its mission.

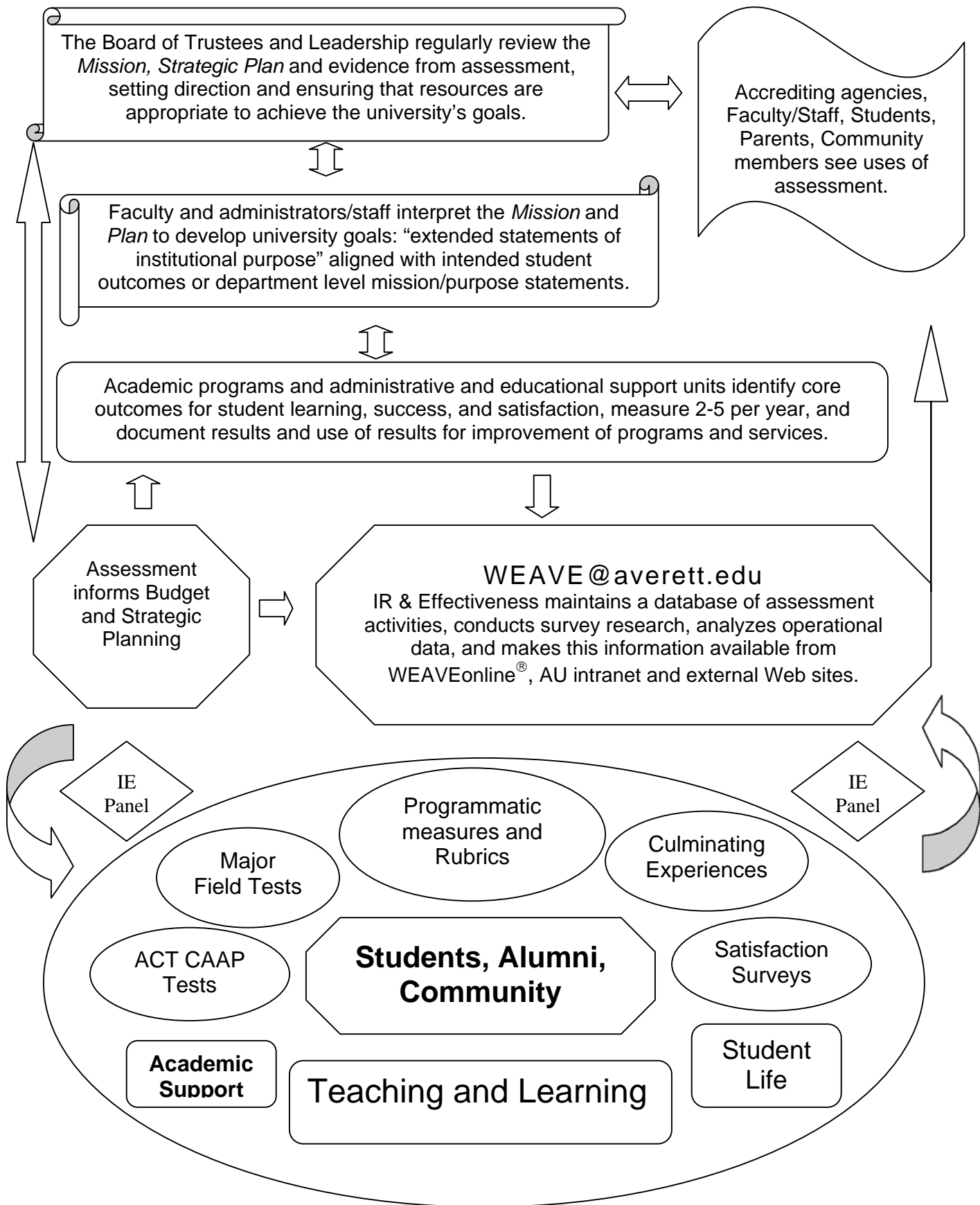
At the close of the 2007-08 academic year, we will determine whether shared responsibility for institutional effectiveness with a part-time director and faculty/staff committees will facilitate the level of campus-wide assessment, use of results and documentation required for ongoing accreditation and institutional effectiveness.

As stated in our response to SACS, by summer 2010, Averett will document improvements based on two or three annual assessment cycles for all academic programs and administrative units.

**SACS Recommendation 1:** The committee recommends that Averett University demonstrate that it systematically engages in planning and assessment processes and maintains documentation to illustrate an ongoing, integrated, and institution wide research-based institutional effectiveness process for all academic and administrative support programs and uses the results to make modifications and to illustrate continuous improvement.

**SACS Recommendation 10:** The committee recommends that Averett provide evidence that both its traditional and nontraditional students achieve the identified college-level competencies within the general education core.

# Averett University Institutional Effectiveness Plan



Activity or Report	Institutional Effectiveness Annual, Recurring Time Line											
	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Review Mission, Strategic plan, IE Executive summary report <sup>1</sup>				Board						Board		
Planning/Budgets/Resource allocation					LT	LT	LT	LT	LT			
Review Core Outcomes					GPS						A&S	
Document Intended Outcomes and Measures in WEAVE <sup>2</sup>						GPS						A&S
Teach / Learn / Measure	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
Document Assessment Results and Use in WEAVE <sup>2</sup>			All									
Implement Improvements	A&S						GPS					
Annual Faculty/Staff Meetings		All				GPS						
IE Planning Meetings <sup>3</sup>		GPS		A&S	GPS			GPS			GPS	
Academic Support Unit Assessment <sup>3</sup>	GPS			A&S GPS			GPS			GPS		
Faculty Meetings		GPS	A&S	A&S GPS	A&S	GPS	A&S	A&S GPS	A&S	A&S GPS		GPS
ACT CAAP Tests <sup>4,5</sup>		Reading		Writing/Math/Reading					Sci & CritThink			
IE Surveys (every third year)								All				
Student Services Surveys							GPS					
Graduation Surveys						All				All		
Alumni and Community Surveys					All							All
Update Intranet & Web Facts			IR									

<sup>1</sup> Report based on assessment results and use documented through September 15th.

<sup>2</sup> Excel documentation will transition to WEAVEonline, beginning in 2007-08.

<sup>3</sup> GPS follows a quarterly, and A&S an annual planning and assessment process.

<sup>4</sup> Freshmen (Sept.) and Seniors (November) will take the CAAP Reading Test for QEP assessment.

<sup>5</sup> Juniors will take the CAAP Writing or Math test in November and the CAAP Science or Critical Thinking test in April (goal: 50% of juniors will take each of the four tests).

**Board** = Board of Trustees

**LT** = Leadership Team

**A&S** = Arts & Sciences

**GPS** = Graduate and Professional Studies

**IR** = Institutional Research

**ALL** = All Departments

**Special Meetings Held in 2007:**

University Planning Day, April 27th

Institutional Effectiveness Consultation, July 17th

Community Meeting, July 19th

General Education Planning and Rubric Writing workshops, August 23rd and 24th

**Mission:** Averett University, founded in 1859, offers courses of study leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Danville and at regional centers in Virginia. Through personal attention for all students, Averett prepares them for successful lives by encouraging them, in the liberal arts tradition, to ask and answer important questions, form and defend judgments, and evaluate diverse views thoughtfully. In accordance with our Christian heritage, we value academic and religious freedom, spiritual growth, academic excellence, diversity, and tolerance. (April 2006)

	<b>Extended Statements of Institutional Purpose</b>
courses of study	Averett will ensure that the university has sufficient supplemental resources to carry out its mission.
	Averett will maintain efficient and effective administrative services to support its instructional, student development, and public service programs.
personal attention for all students	Averett students will find that advising, instruction and student services are predicated on attention to their individual characteristics and criteria for success.
	Averett students will develop life-long relationships with faculty, fellow students, and university service units.
prepare for successful lives	Averett graduates will be prepared for successful careers.
	Averett graduates will be prepared for advanced studies in their major disciplines.
	Averett graduates will be prepared for successful lives as contributing members of their communities.
Encourage in the liberal arts tradition	Graduates of the traditional baccalaureate program will be capable of demonstrating the knowledge and abilities defined as goals for General Education.
	Graduates of the nontraditional baccalaureate program will be capable of demonstrating the knowledge and abilities defined in the <i>Graduate and Professional Studies Catalog</i> goals for General Education.
... to ask and answer important questions, form and defend judgments, evaluate diverse views thoughtfully	Graduates of baccalaureate programs will be capable of demonstrating knowledge and abilities reflected in the definition of an Averett education: to ask and answer important questions, form and defend judgments, and evaluate diverse views thoughtfully.
	Graduates of professional programs will be capable of transferring research into practice, identifying and resolving important issues based on evidence, and communicating effectively with colleagues and public constituencies.
	The university will develop campus wide assessment practices to demonstrate that it is fulfilling its mission
value academic and religious freedom, spiritual growth, academic excellence, diversity, and tolerance	Graduates will uphold and apply academic and religious freedom, spiritual growth, academic excellence, diversity, and tolerance.
	Averett graduates will be capable of reflecting thoughtfully on the cultural viewpoints and values of colleagues whose traditions differ from their own.

### **Campus-wide Planning, 2006-07**

- Beginning in January 2007, the director of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) gathered assessment records from academic programs and administrative units. This information was available to the SACS committee during their March 2007 visit.
- On April 27<sup>th</sup>, within four weeks of the SACS visiting committee report and recommendations, 150 faculty and staff met for an overview of SACS and AU leadership expectations and separate discussions on core outcomes and measures. After lunch, faculty met in discipline groups, and staff met by division or department to draft intended outcomes and measures for 2007-08.
- On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, a WEAVEonline<sup>®</sup> live demonstration was attended by several faculty and staff. Responses were positive, indicating that the service will be acceptable to faculty and of great benefit for organizing, preserving, and highlighting key elements of the assessment process. GPS Administration agreed to enter assessment records in the same system. The contract was executed on July 10, 2008, with implementation scheduled for early adopters in late 2007, and campus-wide in Spring 2008.
- On July 17<sup>th</sup>, a consultant recommended by our SACS liaison visited Danville, meeting with administrators, faculty, and staff, including the chair of Faculty Council, chief academic officer, Leadership Team, and IE director. This consultation was instrumental in guiding the form of our response to SACS recommendations.
- On July 19<sup>th</sup>, university staff working in Danville and between 10 and 20 faculty attended “Community Day” presentations from members of the Leadership Team and the IE director.
- As of September, an internal web page for Institutional Research is available to faculty, staff and trustees at <http://www.averett.edu/ir>.
- In September, Faculty Council will propose formation of a committee to lead assessment and strategic planning in general education. Academic Affairs has appointed a panel on institutional effectiveness and assessment to address research methodology.
- On October 8<sup>th</sup>, academic department chairs and administrative department heads will convene in separate planning sessions to discuss assessment results for 2006-07, 2007-08 assessment plans, and resources needed to effect improvements.

## **Student Learning Assessment**

### **Standardized Tests**

- The Collegiate Learning Assessment was administered to graduating “native” seniors, beginning in April 2006, as a measure of improvements in critical thinking that can be attributed to the general education program. Preliminary results suggesting low levels of improvement in critical thinking were presented to faculty in August 2007. The program is designed to examine a three year period, and AU is now entering the third year.
- Beginning in 2007-08, juniors will take ACT CAAP tests for Writing Skills, Mathematics, Science, and Critical Thinking as measures of four general education goals. The Writing Center will use ACT CAAP Writing Test scores to measure writing skills of students who participated in tutoring compared to those who did not.
- The English Department included the Educational Testing Service Major Field Test (MFT) “Literature in English,” in its 2007-08 assessment plan for English majors. Sociology/Criminal Justice and Business (traditional and GPS) have also scheduled major field tests. Academic Affairs accordingly developed a budget for standardized testing intended to support ACT CAAP testing for general education assessment and rotate MFTs through departments selecting any of the 16 tests for assessment of student learning in the major disciplines.

### **Culminating Experiences**

- Art majors are required to develop exhibition portfolios and document creative endeavors in an annual portfolio assessment interview. Education majors develop working and professional portfolios. A pilot e-portfolio project, led by the associate registrar, is focused on implementation of learning portfolios by students in the general education program.
- Theatre implemented a senior capstone course in 2001-2002. The course syllabus defines competencies expected of graduates. Video recordings of student performances are retained by the department, and all faculty participate in assessing student performances.
- Students majoring in voice, piano, or organ complete a videotaped music jury, with evaluation forms completed independently by multiple reviewers on each student.

- Psychology majors present a scientific poster session as a requirement for graduation, at an event open to the university community.
- Students graduating in History, Political Science, Physical Education, and Mathematics participate in exit interviews conducted by at least two members of the faculty.
- A senior thesis is required in Religion and scored using a rubric. Research papers and oral presentations required of graduates in history and political science are scored with a similar rubric for writing skills, organization and clarity, mastery of subject, and scholarly form.

### **Administrative Assessment (highlights)**

- GPS administration has a separate assessment practice, including explicit goals, criteria for success, results and use of results. Since January, 2007, GPS staff have met at the beginning of each quarter to report and discuss outcomes of assessment.
- Student Life administered the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey to entering freshmen from 2002 through 2005, and shared results on the gap between curriculum expectations and student academic and social interests/behaviors with faculty in a Curriculum Development Seminar in Spring 2006. Statistics on male and female reading behaviors of entering AU freshmen strengthened faculty interest in a QEP focused on improving student reading.
- Institutional Research administered a comprehensive survey of traditional faculty/staff and student opinions on institutional effectiveness in February 2006. Results are being used as baseline data by several departments in 2007-08.
- The library surveyed traditional students and faculty in November 2004, and GPS students and faculty in January 2007. Results and use of the 2004 library student survey were published on the library's public web pages.
- A member of the social sciences faculty consulted with IE director on development of the April 2007 graduating student survey, which was administered confidentially on Survey Monkey with a 74% response rate. IE has offered support to administrative units on survey planning and online administration. We will also support development and administration of paper "point of service" surveys requested by department heads.

## Evidence of Effectiveness

As of September 15, 2007, 97% of academic programs and 95% of AES units have documented 2007-08 intended outcomes that appear to meet SACS standards and requirements detailed in the literature on assessment. Comprehensive matrices of documentation for academic programs and administrative units are provided at the end of this document and in Appendices B through E of Averett's response to the SACS recommendations.

- Results from the AU Writing Proficiency Exam indicate that Averett graduates attain writing competency. In 2007-2008, students completing the general education curriculum will also take the ACT CAAP Writing Skills Test. Much effort lies before us in documenting student attainment for each of the 12 general education goals published in the *Undergraduate Catalog*.
- We find that the professional programs (Equestrian Studies, Aeronautics, Business, Education, Physical Education) are meeting external standards and responding to assessment results with incremental and programmatic improvements.
- History, political science, and religion faculty emphasize the importance of scholarship for their majors, and employ rubrics to score student performance on writing skills and scholarly form and methods. Beginning in Spring 2007, history and political science papers were scored by a jury of English and history faculty, with passable to satisfactory results.
- Art majors continue to recognize their unique talents through formal portfolio assessment interviews with the art faculty. In 2007-08, they will participate in the annual Averett Student Art show at the Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History, and document their work in exhibition portfolios. They will also participate in art collection inventory and documentation activities at the Museum.
- Biology students consistently participate in field and distance study courses, though not at the levels desired, largely due to the cost of overseas travel. The Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences has been asked to form a committee in 2007-08 to expand study abroad opportunities through cooperation with other institutions.

In 2005-06 and 2006-07, the average rating of psychology poster sessions per 7 point "anchor scores" from a jury of faculty ranged from 4.52 – 4.7 (4.7 predicted) for "professional

appearance” and from 4.5 – 4.64 (4.6 predicted) for “scientific merit.” Psychology faculty report the following programmatic changes in the poster session project required of all graduates:

- 2005-06: The psychology department implemented changes in its curriculum to allow more of the faculty in the department to mentor students in the planning of their research projects. This was done with the goal of improving especially the scientific merit of the experiments chosen by the students.
- 2006-07: The psychology faculty fine-tuned its procedures for mentoring students as they planned their experiments, and the instructor of Computing in Psychology made changes in the procedures for use of our software for data analysis.
- 2007-08: We will make it possible for more faculty to become involved in the supervision of student research. The instructor of record for Senior Research and Research Practicum II, the courses where our students conduct their original experiments, will change the grading structure of these courses. As a result of these changes a portion of the final grade will be contributed by a supervising faculty member who may or may not be the instructor of record. This portion of the final grade will be based on the day to day conduct of the research and analysis of the data and judged by the supervising faculty member (Appendix D:43).

Documentation of research-based planning for all majors, modes of delivery, and units on the organizational chart will require another year of negotiation with faculty and administrators. Averett will document changes and improvements based on two to three complete assessment cycles for all academic programs and administrative departments by summer 2010.

Prepared by Elaine L. Day

Director of the Library and Institutional Effectiveness

### **Recommended Readings:**

Maki, Peggy L. *Assessing for Learning: Building a Sustainable Commitment Across the Institution*. American Association for Higher Education, 2004.

Walvoord, Barbara. *Assessment Clear and Simple*. Jossey-Bass, 2004.

Graduating Student Survey, April 2007. Question #8 (Traditional Students)

On a scale of 0-4, with 4 indicating the greatest amount of change, and 0 no change at all, please rate the degree to which your Averett education has helped you become							
	4	3	2	1	0	Rating Average	
Ready for a successful career	40.2% (41)	40.2% (41)	11.8% (12)	8.9% (7)	1.0% (1)	3.12	102
More effective in human relations	31.7% (32)	36.6% (37)	20.8% (21)	5.9% (8)	5.0% (5)	2.84	101
More tolerant of behaviors different from your own	27.5% (28)	41.2% (42)	16.7% (17)	6.9% (7)	7.8% (8)	2.74	102
Ready for success in an advanced degree program	23.0% (23)	47.0% (47)	18.0% (18)	5.0% (5)	7.0% (7)	2.74	100
Better able to consider ideas from the perspective of another discipline	19.8% (20)	42.6% (43)	29.7% (30)	6.9% (7)	1.0% (1)	2.73	101
A more effective speaker	26.5% (27)	42.2% (43)	14.7% (15)	7.8% (8)	8.8% (9)	2.7	102
A better decision maker	18.8% (19)	41.6% (42)	23.8% (24)	14.9% (15)	1.0% (1)	2.62	101
A better writer	20.6% (21)	37.3% (38)	24.5% (25)	13.7% (14)	3.9% (4)	2.57	102
Better able to articulate your values	19.6% (20)	43.1% (44)	17.6% (18)	9.8% (10)	9.8% (10)	2.53	102
More aware of different cultural perspectives	23.8% (24)	33.7% (34)	21.8% (22)	11.9% (12)	8.9% (9)	2.51	101
Better able to transfer theory to practice	16.8% (17)	37.6% (38)	28.7% (29)	10.9% (11)	5.9% (6)	2.49	101
More adept with computer technology	18.2% (18)	34.3% (34)	22.2% (22)	16.2% (16)	9.1% (9)	2.36	99
More aware of historical roots and contexts	13.7% (14)	37.3% (38)	20.6% (21)	13.7% (14)	14.7% (15)	2.22	102
A more discerning reader	12.9% (13)	35.6% (36)	21.8% (22)	13.9% (14)	15.8% (16)	2.16	101
Better able to reason with numbers	14.7% (15)	30.4% (31)	25.5% (26)	12.7% (13)	16.7% (17)	2.14	102
More interested in science	15.7% (16)	22.5% (23)	31.4% (32)	12.7% (13)	17.6% (18)	2.06	102
More likely to enjoy reading	14.7% (15)	29.4% (30)	21.6% (22)	11.8% (12)	22.5% (23)	2.02	102
More interested in the arts	12.9% (13)	16.8% (17)	28.7% (29)	24.6% (25)	16.8% (17)	1.84	101
More likely to spend time reading	13.9% (14)	21.8% (22)	22.8% (23)	13.9% (14)	27.7% (28)	1.8	101
More interested in literature	9.8% (10)	22.5% (23)	27.5% (28)	17.6% (18)	22.5% (23)	1.79	102
More spiritual	13.7% (14)	13.7% (14)	21.6% (22)	15.7% (16)	35.3% (36)	1.55	102

<b>General Education</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Analysis &amp; Use</b>
<b>Writing Fluency</b>	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Oral Fluency	2007 Fall	2008 Spring	2008 Fall
IDS 101 Assessment Plan	2007 Fall	2007 Fall	2008 Fall
Critical Thinking [Entire Core]	2007 Fall	2008 Spring	2008 Fall
Mathematical Understanding	2007 Fall	2008 Spring	2008 Fall
Scientific Discovery	2007 Fall	2009 Spring	2009 Fall
Appreciation and Understanding of Literature	2007 Fall	2009 Spring	2009 Fall
Technological Literacy	2007 Fall	2009 Spring	2009 Fall
Historical Awareness	2008 Fall	2009 Spring	2009 Fall
Knowledge of other Cultures	2008 Fall	2009 Spring	2009 Fall
Awareness of Values	2008 Fall	2010 Spring	2010 Fall
The Human Aesthetic Response	2008 Fall	2010 Spring	2010 Fall
Understanding of Human Interaction and Social Institutions	2008 Fall	2010 Spring	2010 Fall

<b>Academic Majors</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Analysis &amp; Use</b>
Accounting	2004 Fall	2005 Spring	2005 Spring
Aerospace Management	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Aerospace Management/Criminal Justice	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Art	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Biology	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Business Administration	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Chemistry			
Computer Information Systems	2007 Fall		
Computer Science	2007 Fall		
Criminal Justice	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Education	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
English	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
English/History (a.k.a., Pre-Law)	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
English/Theatre	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Equestrian Studies	2001 Fall	2002 Spring	2002 Spring
Health, Pys. Ed and Driver's Ed.	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
History	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
History as a Social Science			
Journalism	2007 Fall		
Liberal Studies			
Mathematical Decision Science	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Mathematics	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Medical Technology	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Music	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Physical Education	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Physical Education-Athletic Train.	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Political Science	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Psychology	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Religion	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Sociology	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Theatre	2001 Fall	2002 Spring	2002 Spring

<b>Administration</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Analysis &amp; Use</b>
Academic Resource Ctr.	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Admissions	2004 Fall	2005 Spring	2005 Spring
Alumni Relations	2004 Fall	2005 Spring	2005 Spring
Aramark	2006 Fall	2007 Spring	2007 Spring
Athletics	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Bookstore	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Career Services	2004 Fall	2005 Spring	2005 Spring
Counseling	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Finance	2002 Fall	2003 Spring	2003 Spring
Financial Aid	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Food Service	2007 Fall	2008 Spring	2008 Fall
Fund Raising	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Information Technology	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
IR & IE	2004 Fall	2005 Spring	2005 Spring
Library	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Public Relations	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Registrar	2003 Fall	2004 Spring	2004 Spring
Residence Life	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Student Activities	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
[Student Life Division]	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring
Writing Center	2005 Fall	2006 Spring	2006 Spring

<b>Graduate and Professional Studies</b>	<b>Core Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures Identified</b>	<b>Results, Analysis, Use</b>
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Documented:

<b>General Education</b>			
Written Communication	2005 June	2005 June	Oct '05, Aug '06, Jan '07
Oral Communication	2005 June	2005 June	Oct '05, Aug '06, Jan '07
Critical Thinking	2005 June	2005 June	Oct '05, Aug '06, Jan '07
Problem Solving	2005 June	2005 June	Oct '05, Aug '06, Jan '07

<b>Degree Programs</b>			
B.B.A. Degree	2005 June	2005 June	Oct '05, Aug '06, Jan '07
M.B.A. Degree	2005 June	2005 June	Oct '05, Aug '06, Jan '07
M.Ed. Degree, 2005	2006 Fall	2006 Fall	2007 Feb

<b>Administrative Units</b>			
GPS Assessment Plan	2005	2005	2006, 2007
Division & Regional Goals	2002	2002	2003-2007
IDEAL administration	2006	2006	2006 (data 2003- )
Student Services	2006	2006	2006 (data 2004- )
Faculty Services	2006	2006	2006 (data 2004- )
Enrollment	2006	2006	2006 (data 2004- )
Registrar	2007	2007	2007 (data 2006- )
Accounting	2006	2006	2006 (data 2004- )
Facilities	2007	2007	2007 (data 2004- )