The University of Scranton
Planning Office
Institutional Effectiveness Surveys Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to describe the University’s process for conducting surveys of administrative and educational support areas that will assist these units in fulfilling the institutional effectiveness component of the University’s tactical planning process. These guidelines also seek to minimize and bring focus to the number of campus-wide surveys that are conducted each year, and the likelihood of over-sampling our faculty, staff, and student populations. By maintaining a centralized cycle of divisional surveys complimented by decentralized event- or service-related surveys conducted on an ad hoc basis, all administrative and educational support areas will be able to get a higher quality of data and feedback that they need to plan for and improve their operations.

In spring 2007, the University Planning Committee endorsed a proposal for building an institutional effectiveness component into the University’s tactical planning process. This proposal was developed in response to concerns by administrative areas regarding the relationship between tactical planning and assessment planning, as described by the University’s 2004 Comprehensive Assessment Plan, and to gather regular, appropriate data to inform their planning processes. The component, in addition to other progress tracking measures utilized in the planning process, will help administrative areas to identify areas for improvement, and to demonstrate the progress of tactical planning priorities. Each of the University’s tactical plans will develop this component.

The institutional effectiveness component includes (1) a set of indicators (data points) used to measure progress in specific areas/projects and (2) a listing of topics identified for which surveys or some other kind of qualitative data collection process will be needed. This listing will be used as a starting point for the development of the institutional effectiveness (IE) survey.

IE surveys will follow a four-year cycle; that is, each unit will administer a survey about every four years. This survey cycle will be supplemented, as needed, with smaller, specifically targeted, event-driven or point-of-service surveys. All areas are strongly encouraged to use extant data and institutional survey information to further inform their planning process.

Institutional Effectiveness Surveys

IE surveys are designed to measure constituent perceptions/satisfaction with the services provided by an administrative or educational support unit. Each year, the Planning Office works with two divisions (see cycle on page 2) to determine which unit(s) within each division will be the focus of a survey. The survey is developed in a collaborative process between the unit and the Planning Office. The role of the Planning Office is to assist the unit(s) in developing survey questions, administer the survey instrument, analyze the data, and prepare a report that describes the survey results with respect to the area’s tactical plan goals. The role of the unit(s) is to actively participate in the survey design, interpret results, and to utilize the data for improvement of the services that they provide. Ways in which the data will be used for improvement should be included in

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1 The Institutional Research Office maintains a separate annual survey schedule for point-of-service surveys. Any department wishing to conduct such a survey must contact the IR Office to determine if and when a survey can be included in that schedule. Surveys conducted are not automatically repeated in subsequent years.
the area’s next tactical plan update. The attached worksheet identifies key questions the unit should consider while developing the survey. The survey development process follows the general timeline below:

**Process & Timeline**

*Project Planning Meeting*
- Select unit function to be evaluated
- Identify the constituent group

*Survey Development (4-6 weeks)*
- Develop survey questions
- Determine appropriate constituent sample
- Determine appropriate survey administration method
- Determine appropriate use of incentives, if any
- Develop communication plan for survey administration & results
- Approval of survey instrument and method by division head

*Survey Administration (2 weeks)*

*Data Analysis and Report (3 weeks)*
- Analyze data
- Review results with unit
- Prepare report for unit head, division head

*Utilize data for unit improvement*
- Document use of results in next tactical plan revision

**Institutional Effectiveness Survey Cycle (approx. 4 years)**

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<tr>
<th>Spring/Summer</th>
<th>Fall/Winter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 Enrollment Management Plan</td>
<td>2010-11 University Ministries</td>
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<td>2011 Human Resources</td>
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<td>2014 Planning &amp; Information Resources</td>
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2 Tactical plans are updated each spring/summer in conjunction with the Annual Report process.
3 Units are encouraged to utilize other institutional or national surveys for this purpose, rather than creating a home-grown instrument, when possible.
4 Enrollment management functions are part of the Academic Affairs division, and, like Academic Affairs planning, is supported & informed by the institutional survey cycle followed by the Institutional Research Office; for the purpose of institutional effectiveness. Though Enrollment Management has the option of developing IE surveys, the function is encouraged to use institutional surveys on a regular basis to inform planning and improvement. Due to the volume of institutional surveys conducted, no separate IE survey is scheduled for the Academic Affairs tactical plan.
The University of Scranton
Institutional Effectiveness Survey Development Worksheet

Division/Tactical Planning Area:
Unit(s) to be evaluated:
Division/unit project director:

1. What are the core functions of the unit to be evaluated? Review the division/area’s tactical plan priorities & goals.

2. Which particular function(s) or goal(s) would you like to address with this survey?

3. What is the constituent group(s) for this function? (faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, others?)

4. How should the survey be administered? Sample size? Timing of administration?

5. What aspects of the selected function do you want to measure? (These will help form key elements and questions for the survey.)