Assessment System Design
University of Saint Mary

What is the Purpose?	The assessment system is designed to empower students, staff, and faculty to make informed decisions about how they teach, learn, and achieve their goals. Our systems approach requires that the many factors which contribute to the quality of education are interconnected so that relationships among factors can be examined and lead to growth for individuals, programs, and the institution.
What are the system's features?	• Both university and program outcomes are components of the system • Coordination among general education requirements, program-specific goals and outcomes, and course design and assessments. • Results are tracked according to desired outcomes at the university, undergraduate, and graduate levels. • Increases the intentionality of teaching and learning • Information about student learning and program effectiveness informs curriculum, instruction, and assessment goals through OGI feedback loops
How does it work?	1. Course design links the key components in the following manner: • University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) link to our Mission • Learning Framework Matrix links the ULOs to general education requirements • Course Syllabi link ULOs to Course Objectives to Required Assignments • ULO Rubrics describe criteria and levels of student achievement with a 0-9 rating scale • Student achievement scores—ULO ratings—are reported in Outcomes Database • ULO database reports show achievement patterns • ULO findings are used in advising, transcripts, curriculum, and instruction 2. Data-based findings are interpreted by faculty and administrators and lead to professional conversations about the needs and outcomes for students, faculty, and curriculum. 3. Recommendations are presented in OGI reports which drive the goals for the next year's initiatives for faculty and programs. 4. Findings can lead to plans for curriculum improvements and faculty development that are advocated by those responsible for making change and improving programs.
What does it tell us and interested others?	By making results known to students, faculty, and interested publics, we offer a transparent view of our accomplishments and our ongoing efforts to meet high standards for quality outcomes. Providing evidence of student learning and communicating these results publicly tell us whether we are: • Accomplishing our intended goals and reaching our mission • Achieving our intended learning outcomes for students • Achieving intentionality and best practice in the teaching and learning process • Aligning teaching, learning, and assessment • Preparing our graduates to contribute to the global community

Institutional Systems

All people associated with the University influence its effectiveness through a continuous feedback loop.

- We can make informed decisions using quantitative, qualitative, and trend data.
- We can track how strategic initiatives are decided and achieved
- We can continually & systematically review and improve programs
- We can communicate results

The continuing journey leads into a learning culture. Through faculty-driven professional development, institution-wide investigation of quality indicators, and Action Projects, we are implementing a comprehensive, systems-approach to ongoing improvement.

University Learning Outcomes

- Communicating
- Questioning
- Analyzing
- Complexity
- Flexibility
- Evaluation
- Connecting
- Accountablity

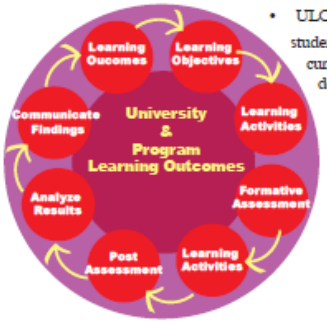
All courses, General Education and Program, are linked to the ULOs

General Education Components:

- Freshman Learning Communities
- Idea Seminars
- Areas of Investigation
- Senior Applied Learning Experience

We are:

- Examining practice
- Linking new initiatives to learning outcomes
- Exploring research-based strategies
- Measuring student progress systematically
- Achieving intentionality in teaching and learning



Program Learning Outcomes

The academic programs are built on learning outcomes that focus what students learn and how professors teach. Connections are built-in because:

- University Learning Outcomes (ULOs) are linked to our Mission
- Learning Framework Matrix links the ULOs to general education requirements
- Course Syllabi link ULOs & PLOs to course Objectives and Required Assignments
- ULO Rubrics link criteria to competency level
- Competency ratings are reported in outcome database
- Database reports show trends in meeting outcomes
- ULO findings are used by students and faculty in advising, curriculum, and instruction decisions

Student learning is enhanced by integrating, monitoring, and evaluating outcome results

History

Benefits:

What can it tell us?

- Performance Patterns
- Identify challenges, problems, constraints
- Accomplished our goals
- Reached our mission
- Implemented sound education programs
- Teaching & learning effectiveness
- Prepared our graduates to contribute to the global community

What can it gives us?

- Access to relevant and reliable information
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness
- Clearer expectations and rationale for priorities
- Informed decisions leading to trust & respect
- Transparent view of our efforts to meet high quality standards

University-wide Assessment System

with three levels

- Institutional Systems
- Unversity Learning Outcomes
- Program Learning Outcomes

An Ongoing Improvement Model

at the

UNIVERSITY *of* SAINT MARY