

4.5. Institutional research addresses strategic data needs, is disseminated in a timely manner, and is incorporated in institutional review and decision-making processes. Included among the priorities of the institutional research function is the identification of indicators and the collection of appropriate data to support the assessment of student learning consistent with the institution's purposes and educational objectives. Periodic reviews of institutional research and data collection are conducted to develop more effective indicators of performance and to assure the suitability and usefulness of data. (Refer to evidence 4.5.a - 4.5.b)

{ Guideline: The institution exhibits existence of clear institutional research capacities with appropriate reporting lines and support appropriate to the institution's size and scope. Institutional research or equivalent databases are developed that are sufficient to meet all external reporting needs (e.g. IPEDS), and there are appropriate ways to access or disseminate this information through publications, reports, or widely-accessible databases. }

The Institutional Research office at Sonoma State University maintains a [web site](#) with easy access to commonly asked questions (the Common Data Set). The office reports directly to the Provost. The office handles requests for data on the national (IPEDS, U.S. News and World Report, Peterson's Guide, etc.), State (CSU Chancellor's Office Academic Planning Data Base (APDB), [Performance Accountability](#) etc.), local and campus levels. In addition, they administer many national surveys to help inform the campus community about student learning, needs and concerns: the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Your First College Year (YFCY), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey (CADS), the SSU Alumni Survey, the Campus Climate with respect to diversity, and the College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ). This information is analyzed and written up to create an [Self-Assessment Annual Report](#) that is shared with the President's Extended Cabinet, Senate leadership, and the campus community. The office is represented on many committees on campus: the Academic Planning Committee, the University Strategic Planning Committee, the WASC Accreditation Review Steering Committee, the Academic Affairs Council, and the Vice President's Budget Advisory Committee..

The departmental assessment of student learning is the purview of the Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator. The work of the departments is reflected on their [web site](#) The office of Academic Affairs of the Provost, Academic Departments, and the Educational Policies Committee of the Academic Senate have invested considerable time in establishing assessment of student learning at the program level. During the first stage (2000-2003) all departments and academic programs established the infrastructure for student learning, using a [Interim Program Review](#) process, adapted for this purpose. During a second stage, from 2004 to now, all departments and programs engaged in educational effectiveness processes,

building on their interim program reviews which were assessment oriented. All Departments and Programs now submit annual reports about their educational effectiveness processes. Each Department or Program has developed a [three year plan](#) to improve over their existing process. In 2006 SSU established a new [policy for regular program reviews](#). By the time of the Educational Effectiveness visit in 2009, all departments will have gone through this new process of review.