

**4.7. The institution, with significant faculty involvement, engages in ongoing inquiry into the processes of teaching and learning, as well as into the conditions and practices that promote the kinds and levels of learning intended by the institution. The outcomes of such inquiries are applied to the design of curricula, the design and practice of pedagogy, and to the improvement of evaluation means and methodology.**

**Evidence:**

The ongoing inquiry into teaching and learning at SSU is reflected in the [SSU Faculty Affairs: RTP](#) and [Program Review](#) processes, as mentioned above. In addition, the [Center for Teaching](#) and Professional Development organizes and presents workshops on a variety of pedagogical issues, encompassing both the theory and practice of teaching and learning. The Center (in collaboration with the Library and Information Technology) also presents occasional “webinars,” webcasts on integrating technology into teaching. The ongoing work to redesign the [General Education](#) curriculum at SSU, to integrate GE seamlessly with discipline-specific course material, and to revamp the freshman orientation program (via the design of the now two year old First Year Experience curriculum) are two of the most significant and recent examples of Sonoma State University’s ongoing exploration of the processes of teaching and learning.

Other examples of SSU’s ongoing inquiry into teaching and learning are found in the work of the Institutional Research unit. For instance, in 2004-2005 this office conducted and analyzed data on five-year enrollment trends by department. Together with other report on the number of full time and part time faculty in each department, and the student-faculty ratio for each department, these reports provide part of the basis for assessing the alignment of resources to needs in order to support the university’s mission. “My [First College Year](#)” is an annual survey of freshmen, which provides a snapshot of each cohort’s goals, expectations, and activities. The [Collegiate Learning Assessment](#) report compared SSU students to students at comparable institutions, and contains suggestions for improving the methodology for similar future research projects. The “conditions and practices” that promote learning are explored in other SSU data collection projects, such as the [HERI Faculty Survey](#) and the [HERI/COPLAC Faculty Survey](#). These surveys gathered faculty attitudes about many facets of their working environment, from sources of satisfaction to sources of stress, both personal and professional.

The University Library is designing a new Learning and Teaching Center, which will offer faculty and students opportunities for exploring and applying various learning competencies. The LTC, which will open August 2007, will provide workshops, training, consultation, and webinars on critical topics such as information literacy, trends in learning behaviors, best practices in teaching, and new information media.