Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Institutional Effectiveness Newsletter! We are excited to share with you some of the ways we support the campus community...from providing enrollment and retention statistics to providing support for Academic and Administrative Assessment.

The mission of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at SUNY Potsdam is to ensure student success and promote strategic planning and continuous data-driven improvement of academic and non-academic programs and services by facilitating data collection, analysis and reporting of the assessment of student learning, institutional assessment, and institutional research.

This newsletter was created to support our mission and also because of feedback from you. Last summer, we asked you to complete a survey to help us better understand how we are serving the campus community. Thank you to all who responded to our survey. While many of the responses were positive, we found some areas for improvement. One of these areas was how to distribute more information to the campus community. We hope this newsletter will provide you with a good overview of our office and with some links to information that will be useful to your department. We are in the process of updating our website so please check back for new data.

We plan to send out a newsletter at least twice a year where we share important data from enrollment to survey results. Please let us know if there is anything else you would like to see highlighted or if we can be of any assistance.

Judy Singh

Need Data? IE is here to help!

One of our goals for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness is to provide accurate and timely research and analysis of institutional data to the campus community for the purpose of guiding institutional decisions and supporting student success. From enrollment data and demographics to academic major statistics to assessment resources, there is an abundance of data located on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website, http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/ie/. Some of the reports available include: Quick Facts, which provide a quick look at enrollment, demographics, retention and graduation data; Academic Major Stats, which provide breakouts for majors by various demographic group, as well as, persistence rate by major; Academic Department Profiles, which provide five-year trends of academic credits generated, student and faculty FTE generated, number of majors/minors, and Student/Faculty ratios; and results of administered institutional surveys including NSSE, Student Opinion Survey (SOS), and CIRP (Incoming Freshman Survey).

While there is a great deal of data available on our site, we understand that sometimes you need information that is more specific to your area or your research. If you do not find the data you need, please do not hesitate to contact us to see if we can provide the data for you. You can submit a request by completing the RT Tracker at insteff@track.potsdam.edu. We will do our best to complete your request as quickly as possible.

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Meet the IE Staff

- Judy Singh — Ext 2188
  Director of Institutional Research and Assessment
  singhjr@potsdam.edu

- Glenda Morales-Hanley — Ext 2176
  Coordinator of Assessment and Institutional Research
  moralegm@potsdam.edu

- Sissy Brown — Ext. 4872
  Office Assistant II
  brownsa@potsdam.edu
Enrollment and Retention—Fall 2015 saw an increase in the number of first-time students. This was the second year Potsdam saw an increase after a drop from Fall 11 to Fall 13. We saw the highest enrollment of students of color with an increase from 9% to 29% for undergraduates and an increase from 12% to 40% for the entering class (Fall 09-Fall 15). There have been some concerns about Fall to Spring retention. As you can see from the chart below, our Fall 15 to Spring 16 retention is actually higher than last year’s fall to spring retention. If you would like additional data, please send your request to insteff@track.potsdam.edu.
In Spring 2015, SUNY Potsdam students were asked to participate in the Student Opinion Survey (SOS). This SUNY-mandated survey asks students to rate multiple facets of their experience and the college campus including, but not limited to: Academic Services and Environment, College Facilities and Grounds, Programming, and Sense of Community. SUNY Potsdam rated highly in multiple areas including Dining Services, Fine and Performing Art Studios, Interaction with Faculty (mentoring relationship, availability outside class, and advising in major), and Athletic and Recreational Facilities to name a few. This spring, our office plans on doing focus groups with students to find out more about some of the areas where SUNY Potsdam was not rated as highly. Stay tuned for those results at the end of the spring semester or early fall.

There is a vast amount of data from the SOS that various committees across campus have reviewed and are using for improvement purposes. You can view detailed information and a full summary of the Student Opinion Survey on our website at http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/ie/surveys/sos.cfm. If you have any questions about the SOS results, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**UPCOMING SURVEYS:**

**Summer 2016:** The CIRP Freshman Survey administered to all incoming freshman during orientation. The CIRP Freshman Survey “collects intensive information that allows for a snapshot of what your incoming students are like before they experience college.” Sections that are examined include, but are not limited to: Established Behaviors in High School, Academic Preparedness, Admissions Decisions, Expectations of College, Student Demographic Characteristics, and Concerns about Financing College.

**Spring 2017:** The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) will be administered to all First-Year and Seniors at Potsdam. The NSSE “collects information about first-year and senior students’ participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college.”

**Assessment Matters**

Assessment is a crucial component in assisting the campus in the achievement of its most important goals and outcomes. Several years ago, SUNY Potsdam developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals. Initially, only academic departments were to required to submit their Student Learning Outcomes assessment plans and reports. Starting in January 2016, Administrative Units across campus are going to be required to submit Assessment Plans (and eventually reports) to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The purpose of these plans and reports is two-fold: While many Departments use their plans and reports to identify areas of improvement, assessment is a chance to share and celebrate successes. The goal is to create a culture of evidence aimed at continually improving the learning environment and services at SUNY Potsdam. You can find more information and current plans/reports on our website at: http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/ie/assessment/index.cfm.
Campus Academic Assessment Committee

The Campus Academic Assessment Committee will resume their committee meetings this May 2016. After analyzing the feedback from our Institutional Effectiveness Survey administered in Fall 2015, we have decided to change the format of the meetings and incorporate more discussion and sharing of assessment practices. Beginning Fall 2016, we will be asking departments to share assessments used within the department, as well as, discuss any actions made based on the results from the assessment reports. We welcome any other suggestions for topics to include in CAAC meetings. We appreciate the time that Department Assessment Coordinators (often the department chair) spend on assessment and want to ensure that our office is as helpful as possible, including making our CAAC meetings worthwhile.

Please keep an eye out for an upcoming email with Spring 2016 meeting date and time.

Accreditation Update

MSCHE Periodic Review Report

In a little more than one year, SUNY Potsdam will be submitting their Periodic Review Report (PRR) to the Middle States Commission of Higher Education. The PRR is a required part of the accreditation cycle; the report, if successful, will reaffirm our accreditation for the next five years. In preparation for the 2017 submission, the College has assembled two committees to work on the report — MSCHE Compliance Committee and MSCHE PRR Committee.

Middle States expects to see the full assessment process – goals with measurable outcomes, data gathered and analyzed, with revisions based on assessment data – clearly documented for all academic department as well as institutional offices and divisions. Therefore, for the PRR to be successful, it is crucial that assessment reports are submitted as scheduled to the IE office so that we are able to complete the report with meaningful and accurate responses.

Please contact the IE office if you have questions or need support with any step of the assessment cycle.

Jill Pearson, Associate Provost, MSCHE Liaison

Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. (267-284-5000)