

A number of advances have been made in the assessment area at Villanova since the completion of its accreditation self-study in 2001. Following the self-study, the university-wide assessment committee was reconstituted and reconvened, with greater faculty participation, under the leadership of a senior member of the university's faculty. The university's educational goals and objectives for all undergraduate students were discussed, refined, approved and widely disseminated. Workshops have been held to facilitate cross-college and cross-departmental sharing of information about various assessment techniques (e.g., capstone courses and experiences, course-embedded assignments, portfolios, rubrics, etc.). Each of the university's individual colleges has identified an assessment coordinator. A matrix was developed and completed to help identify various types of data that were already being collected and made available that could be employed to assess whether the university's overall education goals and objectives were being met. Efforts are underway to develop additional assessment activities to help fill in gaps occurring in the matrix. An inventory was made of all departments in the university's A&S college to find out where departments stood in terms of having clearly articulated mission statements and clearly defined and behaviorally oriented statements of educational goals and objectives as well as what departments were already doing in terms of assessment. As a result of this inventory, workshops were held to help departments write educational goals and objectives and to devise means to assess progress toward their goals and objectives. More survey data are being analyzed and scrutinized at a college and departmental level than ever before. A carefully designed longitudinal survey project was undertaken to examine how students in a particular class year cohort changed (at least, as self-reported) over time. Additional follow ups are being conducted to delve deeper into some of the issues raised through this longitudinal study. And, a separate cohort focus group project is underway to track four groups of 12 students each over their four years at the university to hear firsthand how they experience the institution and how they develop and change over time.