



**Holy Family**  
UNIVERSITY

September/October 2013  
Issue 10

OIRA Staff:

Chad May, Director  
Elizabeth Mignacca, Assistant  
Director (Beginning October 21)  
Erin Bailey, Research Analyst  
Cheryl Glover, Research Assistant

[www.holyfamily.edu/oir/](http://www.holyfamily.edu/oir/)

### **OIRA Lunch & Learn**

**Fall 2013**

**12:45 – 2:00, HFH 206**

**Second Thursday each month  
this fall semester**

**November 14**

**December 12**

**Faculty Assessment  
Coordinators  
Fall 2013**

**Patricia Dunn,**  
School of Nursing

**Dian He**

**Gina MacKenzie,**  
School of Arts & Sciences

**Joanne Ma,**

School of Business

**Roseanna Wright,**  
School of Education

# Assessment Now

## Year 4 of the Grant- Theme- Utilizing Assessment Data

As we enter into the fourth year of the Title III, Part A SIP grant, we acknowledge that we have come very far and continue to meet grant objectives even as we have faced many challenges over the last year. We have great hope for this second to the last year of our five-year grant. We have made great strides to institutionalize grant activities and will focus these last two years on ensuring that all activities of the grant will be well positioned to continue after the federal funds cease. We have streamlined the use of faculty assessment coordinators and put in place more integration at the School level with the Associate Deans as liaisons. We have developed templates and a process for AES units and partnered with strategic planning to ensure we align all of our unit objectives with our institutional objectives within the strategic plan. The major theme this year will be to help at all levels utilize assessment data for improvement.

We will focus a lot of work this year on presenting on institutional assessment data from student/faculty/staff surveys, reporting on retention/graduation rates and analyses of those, alumni surveys, exit surveys, and a host of other data collection activities. The main thrust of our office's work this year in line with grant goals/objectives will be to use what assessment data we have to make improvements at both the institutional level but more importantly at the program and unit level. The second major theme for this year will be to make assessment a part of normal operations, like second nature. We will strive to build this into the fabric of how we operate so that it does not feel as a burden and all at the University will be actively involved and help achieve this broad and important goal.

## Professional Development Assessment Mini-Grants Available to Faculty/Staff

### Purpose

In October 2010, Holy Family University received a U.S. Department of Education Title III, Part A, Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) grant in order to revamp institutional and academic assessment at the University. A portion of this grant is devoted to strengthening faculty and staff development around issues of assessment. Strengthening the assessment skills of the faculty and staff at large is most likely to be successful if the faculty and staff members themselves are a driving force behind development efforts. The in-house faculty and staff members know the issues facing the university and their particular programs/units best and can thus provide the best training for other faculty and staff members or may be knowledgeable of external resources relevant to their field. To encourage faculty and staff to share their skills or to pursue assessment tools and strategies not currently being used within their area, the university is once again setting aside a portion of the Title III funds to support these endeavors for the 2013-2014 academic year. Requests should not exceed \$3,000.00; however, the exact amount awarded will depend on the number, quality, and scope of the applications received. All mini-grant awards fall within the constraints of the grant funds available for faculty and staff development.

The activities the mini-grants can support are wide-ranging (a summary of previous mini-grant recipients can be found on the "*OIRA-Internal Resources*" Blackboard (Bb) Organization). Essentially anything that can improve the faculty and staff's ability to perform program/unit assessment could potentially qualify for the funds. Note that preference will be

given to applications that are collaborative efforts with results that can be applied across two or more disciplines. Title III funds are designed to support new activities, or dramatic expansions of current activities related to program-level and institutional assessment. Examples could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

A faculty or staff member with a specific skill-set (e.g. using social media, creating a capstone, e-portfolios) that would like to set-up a workshop to share those skills with other faculty members. The funds could be used to provide materials and refreshments for the workshop. (Note that under federal regulation the grant funds cannot supplant an employee's salary).

Funding assistance for a small set of faculty and/or staff to attend an external conference or workshop covering items relevant to assessment in a particular discipline at the program or institutional level (including travel costs given that they are reasonable).

Paying an external expert to run a workshop on a specific topic for which there are no known faculty or staff members able to do so in-house. Purchasing of specialized equipment that could assist in a discipline's assessment efforts.

### **Application Process**

Those interested in receiving mini-grant funds should notify the OIRA by **Friday, November 1, 2013**. Applications should not exceed 10 pages in length.

### **Review of Applications**

Review of applications will begin in early November 2013. Decisions on which applicants will be awarded funding will be made no later than mid-November. All applications will be judged based on how well the project would support program assessment efforts, whether the project provides new or significantly expanded opportunities, how well the project is tied to the mission, and the cost related to the potential impact of the project.

Special consideration will be given to projects that are collaborative in effort, involving faculty from two or more disciplines, and applicable in more than one program area. The review committee will consist of two representatives from the Faculty Development Committee of the Faculty Senate, two additional members of the UOAIC, and the Assistant Director for Institutional Assessment and Director of OIRA.

## **2013 OIRA Lunch & Learn Sessions**

The OIRA is very pleased to offer the Lunch & Learn series again. Last year known as the Brown Bag Lunches, they will be held in Holy Family Hall Room 206 and open to all faculty and staff. A box lunch will be provided but you do need to RSVP.

This year the focus will be less on learning how to use Blackboard Outcomes and more on incorporating program and institutional assessment techniques into course preparation and program improvement. There will be a variety of Lunch & Learn facilitators. Faculty assessment coordinators from last year will be invited to share some of their experiences, lessons learned, and best practices. Suggestions for future session topics will be considered.

The second Lunch & Learn session focused on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). During the 2012-13 academic years, Holy Family's first year and senior students were invited to participate in this national survey and we received our Institutional Report in September. The Lunch & Learn was a perfect opportunity for the OIRA to introduce this survey and some high level results with the campus community. If you were not able to attend the session and are interested in learning more about the what the NSSE is and how our student's responded you can find more information on the OIRA-Internal Resources Blackboard (Bb)

Organization. The presentation provided at the session can be found in the Lunch & Learn page and all of the NSSE resources (and more!) discussed at the session can be found on the External Surveys page.

If you need assistance with Blackboard or Outcomes, we can arrange for training with our office staff, the FACs.

## **Elizabeth Seton Mignacca Joins the OIRA as Assistant Director**

We are very excited to have Elizabeth Seton Mignacca join us on October 21 as the assistant director of Institutional Research and Assessment. Elizabeth will relocate from Syracuse University where she earned her M.S. in Higher Education Administration and her Ph.D. in Sociology and had worked for over 16 years as a Program Administrator in the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC), a multi-disciplinary center focused on conflict resolution and collaborative management housed in the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. Maxwell is a graduate school in public affairs. PARCC was dedicated to the enhancement of knowledge about social conflicts and to collaborative governance and collaborative problem solving.

We hope the entire campus community will have the opportunity to work and get to know her in the coming months.

Her responsibilities will include:

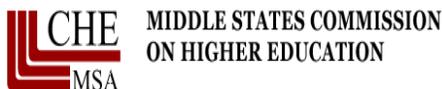
- Assisting in all areas of institutional research and assessment, specifically concentrating on assessment issues activities.
- Assisting the academic schools/divisions/departments in creating, documenting, and improving their annual assessment plans and activities.
- Assisting in developing methods for tracking and managing all assessment activity at the University through the

use of the Assessment Management System, Blackboard Outcomes Assessment System (BbOAS).

The first two weeks of Elizabeth's time at Holy Family will be very busy as she familiarizes herself with the university. Please stop by our office and meet her when you can.

## Fall 2013 Conference Schedule

There are several major conferences this fall with a focus on institutional research and assessment. The OIRA will be able to send, as part of professional development section of the Title III grant, some members of the Holy Family faculty and staff. Faculty and staff are also encouraged to present, conduct a workshop, or do a poster. If accepted, the OIRA may be able to pay for the registration fee and travel expenses.



### Middle States Commission on Higher Education

"Becoming an Assessment Facilitator"  
September 20, Philadelphia

Attended:

**Dian He**, School of Arts and Sciences  
**Janet McNellis**, School of Education  
**Lia van Rijswijk**, School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions  
**Bernice Purcell**, School of Business  
**Roseanna Wright**, School of Education

From comments by Lia van Rijswijk:  
*Jodi Levine Laufgraben, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Assessment and Institutional Research at Temple University was the speaker/moderator for the day. She did an excellent job trying to meet the needs of an audience with widely varying levels of assessment expertise. Following each short lecture, attendees were put to work. Each table*

*was asked to complete a number of exercises and report back. Most notable:*

- 1) All attendees could readily identify roadblocks to assessment at their respective institutions.*
- 2) Almost everyone had "assessment resister", stories and complaints about course evaluations being too focused on instructor "likeability."*
- 3) I was surprised at the number of attendees who seemed comfortable (familiar) with ambiguous learning / outcome goals and objectives.*
- 4) Two important opportunity messages resonated with me. First, assessments should not wait until students are in their senior year because that leaves no time for correction/remediation. Second, many universities/colleges collect assessment information but do not analyze it appropriately or act on it.*



### The Assessment Institute

IUPUI, Indianapolis  
October 27-29

Attending:

**Donald Brom**, Careers Center, Student Life  
**Patricia Dunn**, School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions  
**Gina MacKenzie**, School of Arts and Sciences  
**Elizabeth Mignacca**, OIRA  
**Leanne Owen**, School of Arts and Sciences, Presenting "Asking the Right Questions: Assessment Considerations in the Design of an Institutional Self-Study"  
**Bernice Purcell**, School of Business  
**Linda Thompson**, School of Arts & Sciences

**2013-2014 UOAI Meeting Schedule**  
**2:00 - 3:30, CC - 115**  
**November 19, January 21**  
**March 18, May 20, June 17**



## North East Association for Institutional Research

Newport, RI  
November 9 -12

Chad May, NEAIR Steering Committee Member and Technology Chair.  
Elizabeth Mignacca  
Erin Bailey

## University Outcomes Assessment and Improvement Committee (UOAI)

The UOAI serves four major purposes at the University: 1) setting policies and procedures governing the assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness; 2) collaboratively interpreting results from institutional assessments and the aggregate of individual unit or program annual assessment plans/reports; 3) making recommendations based on the cumulative understanding resulting from these assessment processes; and 4) communicating assessment results and activities to other committees and groups at the University. The UOAI would specifically be linked to the Strategic Planning Stewardship Team (SPST) as results and recommendations stemming from assessment would need to be sent to the SPST. The specific charges of the UOAI are detailed below.

### Setting Policies and Procedures

As a body that sets policies and procedures, the UOAI will periodically review, revise, and approve changes in the scheduling and processes of conducting and reporting on assessment at the University. The committee will set deadlines for when annual assessment plans and reports are due for all academic programs and support units. The committee will also be responsible for approving any

proposed changes to the process by which plans and reports are created and submitted. As an example, there is currently an approved assessment plan template, if changes were to be made to this the UOAIC would review and approve the changes. The committee would also periodically provide specific charges to the OIRA to fulfill specific data needs or to revise templates used in the assessment process. Acting in this capacity would encourage campus-wide participation in the assessment processes and give a voice to those that would be mainly responsible for carrying out and overseeing program or departmental level assessment. Note that this is a different level of assessment from institutional assessment in which this committee would set guidelines and procedures. The act of collecting institutional assessment data would be primarily the charge of the General Education Committee for student learning and OIRA for AES units (collection of indirect data from varying institutional level surveys; NSSE, CIRP, etc.)

*Collaboratively interpreting results from institutional assessments and the aggregate of individual unit or program annual assessment plans/reports*

There are a variety of surveys that the University has participated in and will continue to participate in that generate a large amount of data. Even with an OIRA it is difficult to break down these large amounts of data into specific actionable items and it is necessary for a wider variety of viewpoints to review the data beyond those found in the OIRA. The OIRA will provide the UOAIC with data and reports from these surveys and the UOAIC will interpret the data. The UOAIC will also receive an aggregate picture of how many academic programs and AES units are complying with assessment policies, procedures, and protocol through an annual review of plans and assessment reports. This will also enable the UOAIC to be able to see common findings or threads in individual program or unit assessment

results that might have institutional implications. The UOAIC would be responsible for including those observations within their analysis and discussion of institutional assessment results.

*Making recommendations based on the cumulative understanding resulting from these assessment processes and use it to make institutional recommendations.*

The UOAIC will ultimately take its discussion and interpretation of assessment results and turn them into cogent and specific recommendations for improvement or areas that need further research and assessment data at a more granular level. These recommendations could follow a number of paths depending on the content and substance of said recommendations. Some would go to individual divisions, units, departments, programs; others might go to other existing structures (Gen Ed, Curriculum Committee, Deans/Academic Council, Strategic Planning Stewardship Team, etc.), while others might go directly to Senior Administration. As with any data analysis or research most of the best research asks more questions than they solve. Thus the UOAIC will use some of the data to consider and reconsider the institutional assessment plan and how and what is being measured as a way to continuously improve the assessment process at the University. The UOAIC will determine a way to use prior assessment data to guide and direct what data to look at or collect in the future. In this way, the UOAIC will serve as an oversight and advisory body to OIRA.

*Communicating to University*  
The composition of the UOAIC as outlined below will make the committee uniquely positioned to work with and communicate with other committees (e.g., Gen Ed, UCC, and Strategic Planning) to ensure that all areas are aware of assessment results that are relevant to their needs. The UOAIC will

direct the distribution of information to ensure that the assessment results and recommendations the committee reviews are known by the relevant programs and units so that assessment data is not only collected but also acted on.

**“Where We Have Been & Where We Are Going”  
from the September Lunch & Learn  
(Presentation by Chad May available on Blackboard, OIRA-Internal Resources.)**

**Office of Institutional Research and Assessment**  
Holy Family UNIVERSITY

**Accomplishments/Successes  
Title III Related**

- Met all Title III Grant Year 2/3 Objectives, completed the annual performance report and received notice of continued funding
- Many opportunities to support faculty/staff professional development in assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness.
- Inaugural year of the University Outcomes Assessment and Improvement Committee- UOAIC has approved an assessment policy and timeline.

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**Bb Outcomes Assessment Components currently used**

Curriculum Mapping, Rubric Development & Scoring, Artifact Collection & Evidence Assessment, Assessment Planning, Survey Creation & Deployment

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**Increased and Enhanced the Development of Standard OIRA Reports**

Holy Family University 2009-2010 FACT BOOK, Holy Family University 2016-2017 FACT BOOK, Holy Family University 2013-2015 FACT BOOK

## OIRA Resources Available on Blackboard

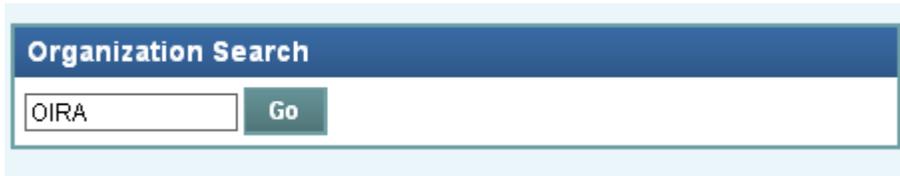
We wanted to take this opportunity to remind the campus community of the resources the OIRA has made available, all of which are housed in one convenient location: The “*OIRA-Internal Resources*” Blackboard (Bb) Organization. Currently, on our Internal Resources page you will find individual pages devoted to: all of the university’s Fact Books, Internal Surveys & Reports, links to our external website, Assessment Resources, the OIRA Library, Title III Mini Grants, AES Unit Assessment Support, External Surveys, and our Lunch & Learn Series.

There are actually three pages for the university Fact Books: University Fact Books, School Facts & Figures, and Graduation Facts & Figures. This may seem confusing, but each type of fact book has something different to offer the university community.

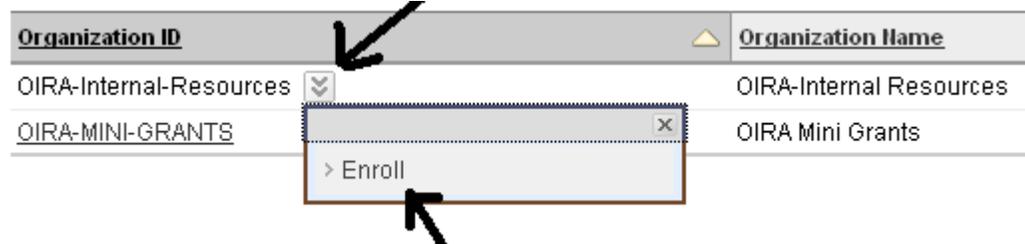
- The **University Fact Book** is an overall snapshot providing important data points from the past 5 fall terms. The data breakdowns included in the University Fact Book are trends of: newly admitted students, enrollment figures, courses offered, degrees conferred, faculty and staff data, and financial data (tuition comparisons and financial aid).
- A **School Facts & Figures** is prepared for each school annually and contains important data trends from the past three academic years specific to each school. The School Facts & Figures contain the following data trends: newly admitted students, enrollment figures, courses offered, retention & graduation data, course grades, and average GPA by program.
- The **Graduation Facts & Figures** is a new publication developed by the OIRA and focuses solely on data about Holy Family Graduates from the past three academic years. This fact book provides data trends on an overall level and at the program level for the following pieces of information: degrees conferred, average GPA, average time to earn a degree, and information on multiple degree earners.

If you have not self-enrolled into this Organization, we strongly encourage you to do so. It only takes a minute and is very easy to do. Please follow these instructions:

- After logging into Bb, go to the “Organization Search” area on the right side of the page and type “OIRA” (without quotations) then click “Go”.



- That search will bring up all organizations in Bb with “OIRA” in the title. Click on the double down button next to the Organization ID “OIRA-Internal-Resources” and click on “Enroll”.



- This will take you to a new page titled “Self Enrollment” and provides information about the Organization you are enrolling

into. Click the “Submit” button on the right side of this page  and you will receive an instant notification of your successful enrollment: **Action Successful:Success: Enrollment in OIRA-Internal Resources (OIRA-Internal-Resources)**

- Verify you enrollment success by going back to the “My Institution” tab and looking at the right side of the page under “My Organizations”. You should see a link for “OIRA-Internal Resource.