



**Department/Program Assessment Grant**

**Grant Description**: Saint Mary’s department/program assessment grants are designed to support faculty within programs of study as they seek to reflect on and improve student learning. These grants provide an opportunity for members of a department or interdisciplinary program to work together to improve assessment, for instance by

* defining or revising outcomes for aspects of the department/program’s curriculum
* implementing a particular aspect of the department/program’s assessment plan
* exploring and deciding on curricular changes or other significant initiatives that could help their students to better achieve the department/program’s outcomes,
* planning on how they will assess that improvement, and/or
* planning on how they will use the feedback from that assessment.

As in the department/program assessment plans, these projects should incorporate the four-year liberal learning outcomes into their discussions of the major and/or minor. Additionally, departments should attend to the six LO1 and LO2 sub-outcomes that are partially fulfilled through the major (Integration –Synthesis, Critical Thinking, Writing Competence, Oral Competence, Problem-Solving and Information Literacy.

Usually, faculty schedule a full-day retreat or two half-day retreats. The grant provides funds for the gathering (space, food, materials) and a stipend for one leader who leads the retreats(s) and oversees the implementation of the decisions that arise from it. These retreats may occur during either the summer or academic year beginning June 1, 2012.

**Eligibility:** All academic departments and/or programs. Preference will be given to departments, programs, and grant leaders who have not received a department/program assessment grant previously.

**Time and Resource Commitment:**

The department/program members commit to

* participating in a retreat for faculty to focus on the assessment of student learning as articulated in the departmental/program assessment plan
* following through during the year by implementing any changes decided on during the retreat
* becoming a resource to other departments/programs in the area of assessment of student learning in majors and minors.

The project leader will be responsible for

* meeting with a facilitator from the College’s Assessment Committee to receive support in designing the one full-day or two half-day sessions
* communicating the preliminary design to the department chair or program director
* leading the retreat(s)
* carrying forward the plans developed at the retreat
* meeting with the Assessment Committee to discuss the results of and follow-up to the department or program’s retreat(s). This meeting should be scheduled with the Assessment Committee in the semester following the retreat.
* providing a written report of the retreat and follow-up to the Senior Vice-President and Dean of Faculty, with a copy to the Assessment Committee, within five months of the retreat.
* conveying the results of the subsequent implementation of the retreat to the department chair or program director for inclusion in a future assessment report.

**Award and Stipend**: The department/program receives $500 for materials (e.g., books, electronic resources) meals, and space rental for the retreat. The Assessment Committee also has additional resources which may be used to support a facilitator from the College’s Assessment Committee to be present at the retreat.

The faculty leader receives a stipend of $1,000 to support his or her work during the retreat(s) and throughout the following year.

**Application deadline**: Written applications must be received by Monday, April 9, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. The written application should be sent to Jessica Ickes, Chair of the Assessment Committee, 160C Le Mans Hall. If funding permits, applications will continue to be accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year.





**Department/Program Assessment Development Grant Application**

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| Name of Faculty Leader: | Title:  |
| Department/Program: | Campus Address: |
| Phone: | Name of Department Chair/Program Director: |
| Department Chair/Program Director Signature:Faculty Leader Signature: | Email of Department Chair/Program Director:Email of Faculty Leader: |

**Application Proposal:** The application must be approved and submitted by the department chair or program director. It should be written either by the faculty leader or by the faculty leader in collaboration with the chair or program director. Please include the contact information above and a response to each of the following:

* 1. identify the members of your department/program who are intending to participate in this retreat. Ideally, the entire department/program will attend, but please explain any exigencies (e.g. sabbatical leaves) that may not allow this.
	2. identify the faculty leader for the project and includes a brief description of the leader’s current knowledge of and experience in the area of assessment of student learning.
	3. describe the current state of assessment of student learning in your program(s) of study, especially the areas that you intend to improve through this retreat and subsequent work in the department. Since the project should help you to implement your assessment plan, please explain which parts of that plan, or which of the College’s four-year liberal learning outcomes, your project will help you address.
	4. explain what you hope your department or program will achieve through this retreat. How will this retreat help your department/program improve student learning? How will you know whether your efforts have been effective?

Grants will be reviewed by the Assessment Committee, which will make recommendations to the Senior Vice-President and Dean of Faculty. If you have any questions, please call Jessica Ickes, Chair of the Assessment Committee at x4786 or email jickes@saintmarys.edu.