Assurance Argument

Saint Louis University

Review date: 11-03-2025

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Argument

Initially created in 1991, revised in 2008, and unchanged since the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) last review in 2021, the official Mission Statement of the University as approved by the Board of Trustees is:

> …the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. The University seeks excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research, health care and service to the community. It is dedicated to leadership in the continuing quest for understanding of God's creation and for the discovery, dissemination and integration of the values, knowledge and skills required to transform society in the spirit of the Gospels. As a Catholic, Jesuit university, this pursuit is motivated by the inspiration and values of the Judeo-Christian tradition and is guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus.

SLU's Mission guides our four primary purposes of teaching students, engaging in research and scholarship to advance the common good, caring for the health of individuals and communities, and serving society. Additionally, our University is guided by four essential principles. Per Article 1 of the Bylaws:

> The four purposes and essential principles of the University are that: (1) "it will be publicly identified as a Catholic university and as a Jesuit university," (2) "it will be motivated by the moral, spiritual, and religious inspiration and values of the Judeo-Christian tradition," (3) "it will be guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus," and (4) "through the fulfillment of its corporate purposes, by teaching, research, and community service, [SLU] is, and will be, dedicated to the education of men and women, to the Greater Glory of God, and to the temporal and eternal well-being of all men and women."

Finally, in recognition of our Jesuit tradition, a Saint Louis University education "prepares students to become 'men and women for and with others', to make the world a better place by seeking justice and serving the most vulnerable among us."

Because our mission guides our work across the institution and for all constituents, information about our mission and how we live it is available in a variety of places and

spaces. The "About" section of our website includes in-depth information about our Catholic, Jesuit identity. This page shares a video about what it means to be Jesuit-educated, answers several frequently asked questions, and provides a glossary of Jesuit terms. Further, there are links to departments on campus whose mission is to provide students, faculty, and staff with information and opportunities to learn about and engage in activities that enable us to live out the Mission. Additionally, SLU's tag line "Higher Power. Greater Good." is used consistently across our website, in print materials, on social media, and as a visual presence on signs and light post flags around campus. Our Marketing and Communication department encourages and provides guidelines for the use of this tagline.

New students and their family members are introduced to the Mission at our new student orientation program, called SLU 101. From the initial Welcome presentation, attendees are introduced to what it means for SLU to be a Catholic, Jesuit University. Many presentations during SLU 101 by a variety of campus partners discuss what it means to live out the University Mission through the University's academic and co-curricular programs, and through our research initiatives, and through our countless service opportunities. New students become well-aware of Jesuit-inspired terms that regularly inform faculty, staff, and student work at SLU, such as *cura personalis*, meaning "care for the whole person." The main three tenets of the University Mission (Pursuit of Truth, Greater Glory of God, and Service of Humanity) are presented to all students. New students hear from current students via presentations about the impact of the Mission on their lives. In order to implement this programming, the SLU 101 Leaders complete training specific to the Mission, including online modules and in-person training from Campus Ministry and the Cross Cultural Center for Global Citizenship.

Additionally, SLU's programming for new students continues at the start of the fall semester through the Fall Welcome program. Goals for Fall Welcome include "providing experiences for students to live the University mission and gain a greater understanding of our Jesuit Catholic values, through meaningful programs and activities," and "for students to better understand the Jesuit value of *cura personalis* and to identify strategies and campus resources to practice care for themselves and others."

During Fall Welcome, the Oriflamme student leaders facilitate three small peer group conversations, with one focused specifically on Mission and social justice; this complements the Student Government Association's event for new students on SLU's student-developed "Oath of Inclusion," also informed by our Jesuit charism. Training for the 180 Oriflamme student leaders parallels the SLU 101 leader training: Oriflamme Leaders complete an online summer module focused on the University Mission and, then, during the August training, leaders learn about Campus Ministry resources and services participate in a Campus Ministry-led reflective exercise. This training prepares the Oriflamme leaders to educate new students about the University Mission and how Campus Ministry supports students of all faiths and those non-religious/non-spiritual.

The Office of Human Resources, in partnership with the Division of Mission and Ministry, embeds an orientation to SLU's Catholic, Jesuit mission in its new employee onboarding program, which is held monthly. Human Resources also provides multiple opportunities for faculty and staff to engage in initiatives that reflect the Mission. For example, each year HR hosts the annual Cannonball Conference, named after St. Ignatius and his "Cannonball moment" which sparked what is now Jesuit history. Held during fall break, all staff are welcome to attend for a morning of programming to include remarks from University

leadership, Jesuit-inspired programming, and community fellowship. HR also facilitates the SLU Sparks peer-to peer recognition program inspired by the Jesuit phrase "Go forth and set the world on fire." SLU Sparks is an opportunity to formally show appreciation for colleagues who make a positive impact. Recipients are listed in the monthly HR bulletins.

All SLU faculty and staff are regularly invited to participate in SLU's Shared Mission Program, offered by the Division of Mission and Identity. The Program is comprised of six sessions, each built around a Jesuit-inspired theme addressed in both a preparatory video and a subsequent luncheon featuring presentations and group discussions facilitated by Mission and Identity leaders. The six themes are:

- The Mission and History of Saint Louis University
- Saint Ignatius of Loyola
- The Society of Jesus Throughout History
- The Universal Apostolic Preferences
- Jesuit Higher Education
- The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm

Trustees new to SLU's Board of Trustees are provided with an orientation to SLU's Catholic, Jesuit identity during their New Trustee Orientation program; our Vice President for Mission and Identity presents to the new trustees and discusses how they can call upon, and be informed in their Board work by, our mission. Additionally, new trustees are typically assigned to serve on the Board's Mission and Identity Committee before service on any other committee.

SLU is committed to regular evaluations of the extent to which we live our Jesuit educational identity and charism with fidelity. Accordingly, SLU is now a regular participant in the Mission Priority Examen (MPE) program sponsored by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and the North American Jesuit Provincials. The MPE is similar to an institutional accreditation process, conducted on a seven-year cycle. Our second MPE review, in 2024, was centered on a self-study written to address SLU's fulfillment of the well-recognized Characteristics of Jesuit Higher Education. MPE self-studies are conducted in the spirit of the Examen, a foundational Jesuit practice of self-reflection described by Jesuit founder St. Ignatius of Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises*. An MPE peer review team, comprised of faculty and leaders from other Jesuit institutions, reviewed our self-study and then visited our campus in person to conduct their review.

In preparation for the MPE self-study and visit, President Pestello established a Mission Examen Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Vice President for Mission and Identity and the Director of Formation in the Division of Mission and Identity, and comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators from every academic unit. The Steering committee's activities included convening focus groups on the north campus, south campus, in the School of Law, at Madrid, and virtually; over 600 members of the campus community participated. Upon collection and review of related data, the discernment of priorities began, resulting ultimately in the self-study report that focused on mission-related priorities for the next several years. The MPE peer review team visited campus in October 2024, and their report was included in the final self-study report submitted to the AJCU in November.

In July 2025, SLU received notice of its positive affirmation from the Superior General of Jesuits for our MPE. In that notice, Jesuit Superior General Arturo Sosa, S.J.,

wrote: "Classified with Boston College, Georgetown University, and Loyola Chicago as a Carnegie Research 1 university, Saint Louis University has a particular opportunity, I believe, to show how its culture of mission is embodied in a culture of research." In its final report (pg. 39), the MPE peer review team commended SLU on multiple mission-driven initiatives, including the development and implementation of our new Core Curriculum, which it described as "animated by the mission of the university." Of the review team's few recommendations, one addressed the need for SLU to "clearly outline to campus members how attaining and maintaining R1 status does not conflict with the university's commitment to exceptional undergraduate education." This has been a theme advanced by Provost Lewis in multiple ways since SLU earned the R1 designation, including at the various "town hall" meetings for faculty that he has hosted.

Educational Programs

It is critical that our Mission is evident both broadly and deeply within curricula. This is done in a variety of ways, but chiefly through our Core Curriculum and the offerings of our Colleges/Schools.

Implemented in Fall 2022, the University Core at Saint Louis University prepares all students to be intellectually flexible, creative, and reflective critical thinkers in the spirit of the Catholic, Jesuit intellectual tradition. SLU's University-wide undergraduate curriculum (referred to as the "Core Curriculum," or just "the Core") nourishes SLU students' minds, hearts, souls, and well-being, and guides them in discerning how to use their talents for the good of others and find God in all things.

Our Mission is emphasized in the Core in multiple ways -- but particularly in key Core student learning outcomes (SLOs) that guided the development of the curricular components of the Core:

- SLO 1: Students will be able to examine their actions and vocations in dialogue with the Catholic, Jesuit tradition
- SLO 7: Students will be able to evaluate the extent to which social systems influence equity and reflect innate human dignity
- SLO 9: Students will be able to apply and acquire knowledge through engagement beyond the University

The Core Curriculum is implemented via 19 Core Components (pg. 35), several of which focus on the Mission. One of the unique aspects of SLU's Core in particular is the *Cura Personalis* set of courses. Inspired by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, the Cura Personalis sequence (pg. 6) focuses on caring for the whole student, and on developing each student's ability to foster human flourishing in themselves and others through personal discovery and meaning-making. Intentionally sequenced, this three-part series of courses and learning experiences offers students grounding, guidance, and support as they join the University community, engage in vocational discernment, and plan for a purpose-filled life in solidarity with others. The three courses are Cura Personalis 1: Self in Community, Cura Personalis 2: Self in Contemplation, and Cura Personalis 3: Self in the World.

The disciplines of Philosophy and Theology lie at the intellectual heart of the Catholic, Jesuit educational tradition. Each of these disciplines, in its own way, engages "ultimate questions" regarding the meaning of human existence and desire for transcendence—questions of faith

and the divine, of creation and human destiny, of evil, reconciliation, and the good. The University Core introduces students to these disciplines in courses that ask students to reflect critically on their own and others' worldviews by wrestling with ultimate questions in dialogue with the Catholic, Jesuit tradition. The Theological and Philosophical Foundations (pg. 7) aspect of the Core is based on two 3-credit Core Components: Ultimate Questions: Philosophy and Ultimate Questions: Theology.

Two other Core Components relate specifically to the Mission. Dignity, Ethics, and a Just Society (pg. 10) courses ask students to apply concepts of human dignity, well-being, equity, and justice to an analysis of existing social systems. Students evaluate those systems as they currently function, and use this critical analysis to envision systemic social change that promotes human dignity, equity, and justice. Finally, the curricular and co/extra-curricular experiences that satisfy the Reflection-in-Action (pg. 10) requirement encourage students to experience meaningful learning opportunities beyond the university and to reflect upon how that community engagement enhances their understanding of acting with and for others.

Additionally, each of SLU's Colleges and Schools offers programs aligned with our mission. For example:

- Richard A. Chaifetz School of Business (CSB): The CSB offers its Service-Leadership program, which aims to graduate leaders who think ethically and innovatively to solve problems with the technical and critical thinking skills they acquire. The program has over 150 participants annually who are involved in community service and social change. Students can earn a minor in this area by meeting requirements for community service, participation in leadership workshops, and completing approved coursework.
- College of Arts and Sciences (CAS): SLU's largest college, CAS offers Mission-centric majors such as Theological Studies, Philosophy, and Health Care Ethics.
- College for Public Health and Social Justice (CPHSJ): As its name implies, the CPHSJ "tackles the greatest challenges to the health and well-being of our communities" through its academic programs; this is the only accredited Catholic, Jesuit Public Health college/school in the nation.
- Doisy College of Health Sciences: Doisy College offers a multitude of service-driven and community-facing majors and programs, including Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nutrition and Dietetics, and Speech-Language and Hearing Sciences. Per its mission, Doisy faculty aim to graduate students with an emphasis on "life in the service of others."
- School of Education: Beyond the traditional focus of educating future teachers and educational leaders, the School houses the Hermann Center for Innovative Catholic Education, which promotes the academic and spiritual development of Catholic school educators and leaders. The Center has developed two new certificates in the past year: a Catholic School Principalship post-baccalaureate certificate and an Inclusive Catholic Schools Leadership post-master's certificate. The School also houses the Billiken Teacher Corps, launched in 2015, which is a unique service-learning opportunity for faith-driven college graduates to have a transformative impact in under-resourced St. Louis-area Catholic schools. This initiative offers two pathways for current and aspiring Catholic school educators to earn their Master of Arts in Teaching and certification.
- School of Law: The School offers a robust experiential learning program that places students on the front lines of community-facing legal work; it also houses the #1 health

law program in the country.

- School of Medicine: The SOM has an Office of Ignatian Mission in Medicine, the mission of which is to "be a place where everyone is welcomed, respected, and supported, so that we may be a community-responsive leader, working in partnership to reduce health inequities and improve the health and well-being of the St Louis region."
- School of Science and Engineering (SSE): With a vision of "Developing technically proficient, socially conscious leaders," faculty in the SSE enact the mission of "preparing effective leaders in the science, engineering and aviation disciplines of the 21st century by providing industry-relevant academic programs featuring fully integrated technical, liberal and experiential education based in Catholic, Jesuit values."
- Trudy Busch Valentine School of Nursing: To improve accessibility to outstanding nursing education nationally, the Valentine School of Nursing created the first accelerated B.S.N. and comprehensive online M.S.N. programs in the country; to live SLU's Mission, the School "promotes quality health care of individuals, families and communities to alleviate ignorance, poverty, injustice and hunger; to extend compassionate care to the ill and needy; and to maintain and improve the quality of life for all persons."

Complementing college/school-based academic programs, the Division of Mission and Identity sponsors the Micah Program, a distinctive service and social justice-based program whose legacy began in 1997 as SLU's first learning-based, themed-housing opportunity for students. Micah provides special sections of interdisciplinary courses that aim to develop students' understanding of social justice issues and to provide opportunities for guided reflection on their experiences. About 200 students, ranging from first-years to seniors, are involved in SLU's Micah Program each year.

Also supporting the Mission-focused work of our colleges and schools is the Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL). The CTTL provides training, support, and development for all faculty to ensure a Mission-centric education of our students that is both accessible and equitable. For example, the CTTL's mission-grounded Ignatian Pedagogy Institute and Ignatian Pedagogy Academy provide training for faculty to expand and deepen their knowledge of Ignatian Pedagogy as an extension of Ignatian spirituality. This is accomplished via a three-part institute focused on contemplation, imagination, and discernment as it applies to curriculum design and delivery. Additionally, the CTTL offers faculty resources and workshops related to culturally-responsive and inclusive teaching practices that address equity in pedagogy and faculty-student mentorship.

Enrollment Profile

Saint Louis University boasts an enrollment profile that reflects its Mission. Per SLU's official Fall 2025 Census , SLU enrolled a balanced portfolio of undergraduate and graduate students, with a total of 8,101 undergraduate-level students (1,285 of those undergraduates studying at our Madrid Campus). Those institution-wide counts have been steady over the past decade, with SLU's 10-year high of 8,669 undergraduates occurring in Fall 2024 and 10-year low of 7,769 undergraduates in Fall 2020. SLU's strategic goal to increasingly serve more historically under-represented students has resulted in substantive enrollment growth for such students from Fall 2020 through Fall 2024. In 2020, we enrolled 431 total Black or African American undergraduates; after steady annual growth, that number increased to 858

in Fall 2024, before declining to 774 in Fall 2025. Hispanic and Latino undergraduate enrollment likewise swelled during that same period, moving from 687 in Fall 2020 to 998 in Fall 2025.

The number of undergraduate students eligible for federal Pell grants and those who are first-generation college students, has also steadily grown. For example, in Fall 2025 29% of all new, first-time, first-year undergraduate students are Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander, or multiracial. This, too, is the result of strategic efforts to recruit and retain more students that diversify our student portfolio in multiple ways consistent with our Jesuit-inspired commitment to social justice.

Nearly 40% of SLU's total institutional headcount is at the graduate level per the official Fall 2025 Census. The total number of graduate students at SLU has been fairly consistent over the past 10 years – with the exception of Fall 2023 and Fall 2024, when a major influx of new international graduate students pushed our totals up 6,702 in Fall 2023 and 6,665 in Fall 2024). Otherwise, graduate enrollment has fluctuated between a decade low of 4,474 in Fall 2019 to a high of 5,206 in Fall 2025. The influx of international students noted above was the result of a strategic effort to increase international enrollment in professional (non-research based) graduate programs, with the majority of those new students coming from India; those enrollments dropped precipitously in Fall 2025, due primarily to geo-political factors out of SLU's control. The number of Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino graduate-level students has grown over the past decade, but not at the same rate as at the undergraduate level. In Fall 2025 we enrolled 633 such students, compared to a low of 527 in Fall 2017.

In addition to being committed to racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity, Saint Louis University prides itself on the diversity of religious affiliations (including none) of its students. For SLU, this is an expression of our Catholic, Jesuit educational heritage – not a contradiction of it. Of all enrolled students in Fall 2025 who provided any information about their religious affiliation, just under 37 percent reported an affiliation with the Roman Catholic church. An additional 27 percent identified an affiliation with another Christian faith. The remaining 36 percent reported either affiliations with non-Christian faiths, no religious affiliation preference, or no religious affiliation at all. SLU's Campus Ministry Department welcomes them all.

Scope of Operations

In addition to our educational programs, other Divisions across campus infuse the Mission and its meaning in their work, namely the Division of Mission and Identity, Division of Diversity and Innovative Community Engagement (DICE), Division of Student Development, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and the Office of the Provost.

The Division of Mission and Identity is charged with furthering the understanding of the University's mission as a Jesuit and Catholic University for trustees, faculty, staff, and students. Mission and Identity staff also help ensure that SLU's operations, structures, programs, and practices are meaningfully informed by our Mission and core values. This focus on Mission-informed work has been growing steadily at SLU. What began with a single Special Assistant to the President role in 2017 is now a five-person team headed by a University vice-president.

The Division of Mission and Identity collaborates with the colleges, schools, and departments of the university to promote and encourage a deeper understanding of SLU as an extension of the Society of Jesus and a ministry of the Catholic Church. The mission formation of students, faculty, staff, administration and board members is also work of the Division of Mission and Identity. To that end, the Division offers many opportunities for faculty and staff to engage in activities that are mission driven. A cohesive Mission Formation framework, with four levels of engagement for faculty and staff to progress through, helps deepen the connection of those in our SLU community to our Catholic, Jesuit inspirations. Additionally, there are faculty and staff who liaise between the Division and their respective units to ensure that related information is communicated widely.

In Spring 2021, SLU moved the department of Campus Ministry from the Division of Student Development to report directly to the Vice President for Mission and Identity. This change was part of a broader effort to strengthen the integration of SLU's Jesuit, Catholic mission across all aspects of university life. Campus Ministry organizes weekly Mass in a variety of locations across campus, leads several Immersion Trips each spring break, offers many retreats over the year, and provides spiritual development opportunities for students.

SLU's mission-centered focus on serving those historically at the margins of our society has also developed substantively over the past decade. In 2015, following six days of peaceful community and student occupation of Clock Tower area at the center of SLU's St. Louis campus, SLU appointed a Special Assistant to the President for Diversity and Community Engagement; this was the fulfillment of one aspect of what became known as the Clock Tower Accords . Over the following year, this leadership position was elevated to Chief Diversity Officer and then to Vice President for Diversity & Community Engagement in February 2017. The Office of Diversity and Community Engagement was expanded and rebranded as the Division of Diversity and Innovative Community Engagement in October 2021. An important component of the Division's expansion at this time was the organizational relocation of the Center for Service and Community Engagement (CSCE) and the Cross Cultural Center (CCC) from Student Development to DICE, greatly expanding DICE's staff, initiatives, and programs. As part of this expansion, both of these units also rebranded with the CSCE becoming the Center for Social Action (see 1.B. for more), and the CCC becoming the Cross Cultural Center for Global Citizenship (see 1.C. for more). Both of these changes were made to more fully support the mission-aligned work happening in these units.

Rooted in the Ignatian tradition of *Cura Personalis*, the Division of Student Development's mission is to "enhance students' opportunities to develop as whole people — mind, body and spirit — in support of their overall success." Departments and programs in Student Development are organized into three areas, each led by an Assistant Vice President:

- Dean of Students Office: This team in this office works with students on an individual basis, supporting students in distress, providing referrals, and leading the institution's Behavioral Concerns Committee. Additional units in this area include the RISE program (see 3.D. for more); the Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards, which publishes the Student Handbook and facilitates a community standards/conduct process; and the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources, which coordinates services to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Student Engagement: The Student Involvement Center and Housing and Residence Life provide safe and supportive living, learning, and leadership experiences on

campus through student activities and organizations, learning communities, and a variety of speakers and programs.

- Student Well-Being: The Student Health Center offers 24/7 care to address students' medical needs. Campus Recreation and Wellness provides opportunities to stay physically healthy through intramurals, fitness programs, and educational training related to drug/alcohol abuse, personal wellness, and sexual assault. The University Counseling Center's goal is to provide affirming and compassionate care, a visible presence throughout the campus, and a recognized partner in the larger well-being ecosystem — to contribute to student success.

Faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity are also fundamental expressions of our Mission, together comprising one of our institution's four formally-designated corporate purposes ("research"). While our historical commitment to research has always been strong, SLU has been even more intentional about advancing our research impact and profile in recent years. This push was the result of a strategic planning initiative conducted by former President Pestello early in his tenure, and was accelerated by the transformational gift of $50 million to SLU in 2018 by Rex Sinquefield and Dr. Jeanne Sinquefield. Their gift established SLU's Research Institute , which accelerated growth in funded and non-funded research work, and set SLU on the path to being recognized as a Carnegie Research I institution in February 2025. SLU's Five-Year Research Growth Plan provided sustained direction for this tremendous growth.

In FY 2016, SLU incurred $37.4 million in research expenditures. By FY25, SLU incurred $65.1 million in research expenditures, achieving a University record; the chart below presents SLU's external research expenditures by fiscal year since 2016. Federal agencies are the largest research sponsors at SLU, responsible for 75% of FY25 external funding; nearly 60% of that federal funding comes from the National Institutes of Health, with another 13% coming from the National Science Foundation. In FY25, SLU expended $16.7 million in external non-federally sponsored funding, down from $19.4 million in FY24. Of the $16.7 million, a third of the funding came from the Research Institute.

Figure 1. Growth Rate of Externally Funded Expenditures FY2016-FY2025 (in Millions)
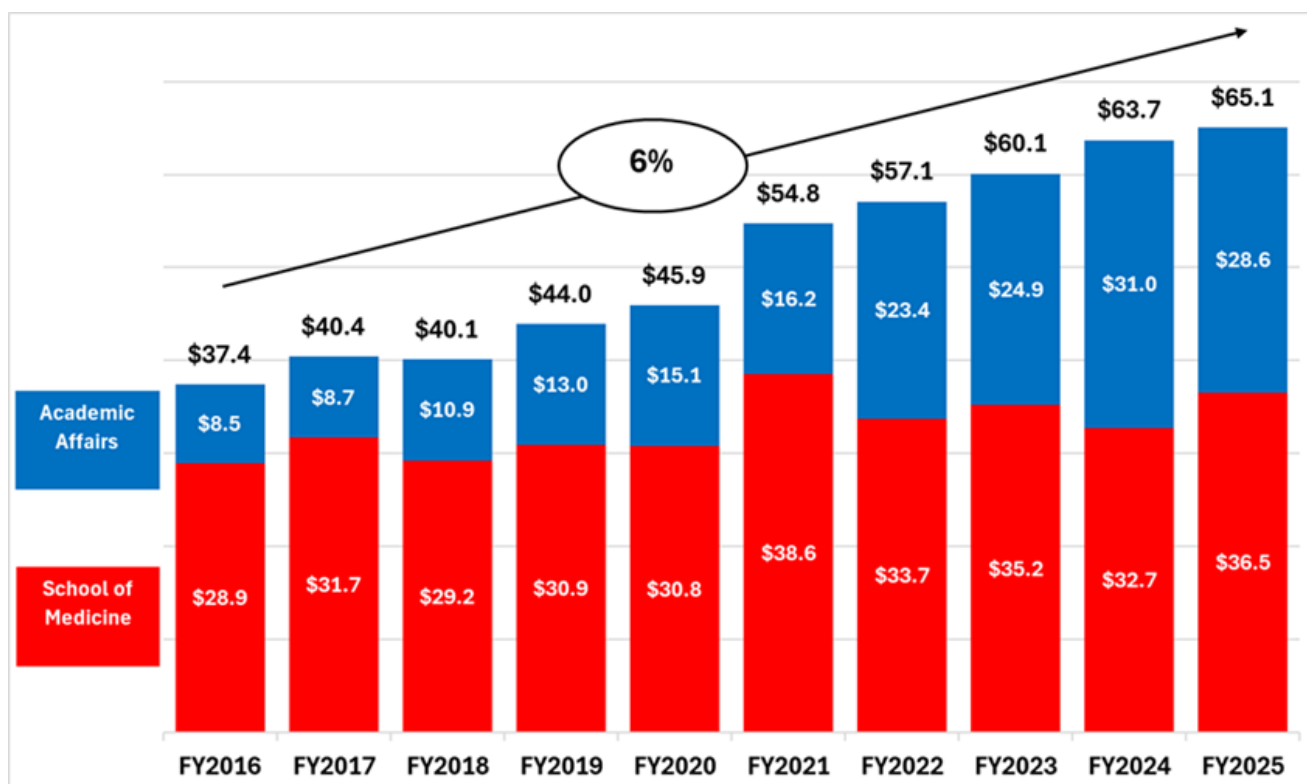
The Research Institute has built a strong culture of innovation and discovery, helping recruit and retain 54 leading researchers. In addition to attracting strong researchers, the gift has multiplied research opportunities by facilitating research equipment purchases. For example, SLU purchased single cell RNA sequencing technology for research in immunotherapy in cancer, obesity and immune deficiency, Alzheimer's, Multiple Sclerosis and autoimmune diseases. From research data utilizing this technology, over $10M in active grants has been earned, a U.S. patent is pending, and several articles have been published in very high impact journals.

Over the last 8 years, the Research Institute provided SLU the opportunity to discover SLU faculty research strengths through the "Big Ideas" initiative. Two winning "big ideas" stand out for their university-wide collaborations and impact. The Sinquefield Center for Applied Economic Research (SCAER) was established in 2018 to advance rigorous research and inform public policy. The Center studies a broad range of topics, including taxation, education, health, regulation, entrepreneurship, and technology policy, and develops large databases related to Missouri and St. Louis to help inform efforts to expand economic opportunities for the region. The Research Institute also funded a new geospatial initiative at SLU, bringing together experts from across disciplines. This effort secured millions in grant support, strengthened regional partnerships, and led to the creation of the Taylor Geospatial Institute – a collaboration of eight academic and research institutions, with SLU serving as the coordinating institution. In 2025, TGI became a standalone nonprofit, underscoring SLU's ability to launch and sustain initiatives that grow into independent, high-impact enterprises.

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- Fall 2025 Census

1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Argument

Saint Louis University, as a Catholic, Jesuit institution, recognizes that its primary role is not solely to educate students, but to do so in a way that engages with society at all levels – locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

SLU has a long history of integrating service into its curricula – both to extend the University's community outreach, but also to strengthen the educational experience via service learning. Formally designated service learning is supported through the Center for Social Action (CSA). A dedicated CSA employee works with faculty to design educationally-appropriate service learning components in their courses, providing an outline of steps needed to be successful, and examples of reflection techniques. There are approximately 150-180 courses offered per year at SLU with formally-designated community engagement components.

SLU's community-based clinics, open to all in the St. Louis region, are prime examples of our how we leverage our educational programs and faculty professional expertise to support our local communities:

- School of Law Clinics: The School operates five fully-staffed legal clinics, focusing on children's permanency, civil advocacy, criminal defense, entrepreneurship and community rights, and human rights. Services are performed by law students *pro bono*, with faculty oversight.
- Casa de Salud: Founded by SLU in response to the closure of two primary St. Louis health clinics that had served uninsured immigrants, Casa de Salud opened in 2010. Each year nearly 6,000 immigrants (both documented and undocumented) who are uninsured or underinsured receive vital health care via this clinic.
- Speech-Language and Hearing Clinic: For over 50 years, this clinic has provided speech, language, and auditory therapy free of charge to children and adults in need.
- Center for Advanced Dental Education: Created in 1994, this clinic offers dental and orthodontic services at 30-50% lower cost than private practices in the St. Louis area.

In addition to the operation of community clinics, multiple academic units house centers and research programs with the primary purpose of addressing community needs, both short-term and long-term/systemic.

Health and Wellness Initiatives

- St. Louis Academic Health Department**:** This is a coalition among SLU's College for Public Health and Social Justice, the St. Louis City Health Department, and the St. Louis County Health Department. Through its four main functional areas – teaching, research, workforce development, and policy – the Academic Health Department

promotes the health of all St. Louisans through the lens of equity and social justice.

- <u>School of Medicine Outreach</u>**:** The SOM's Division of Community Medicine is a working partner of the St. Louis County Department of Health and the St. Louis County and City Juvenile Detention Centers to provide medical care to people in correctional facilities. Additionally, the School operates the <u>Addiction Medicine Fellowship</u>, an innovative program that focuses on the prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and recovery of substance use disorders.
- <u>Transgender Health Collaborative</u>: This network of researchers and clinicians working with the transgender community throughout SLU and partner organizations was established in 2020 to promote the health of the transgender and genderqueer community through clinical services, research, and clinical education.

Education

- <u>PRiME Center</u>: The Policy Research in Missouri Education (PRiME) Center in SLU's School of Education serves as a resource for state lawmakers, educators, administrators, and other education leaders who make critical policy decisions for K-12 education in Missouri. The Center publishes <u>Policy Briefs</u>, in-depth <u>Education Reports</u>, and other documents and data to support education-related decision-making.
- <u>Herrmann Center for Innovative Catholic Education</u>**:** The Herrmann Center delivers academic and professional development for Catholic school educators and leaders, advancing the research on Catholic educational institutions and engaging in active work on the critical issues facing Catholic schools. For example, in May 2025, the Herrmann Center hosted a first-of-its-kind national conference on disabilities and Catholic education, designed for leaders from Catholic schools, dioceses, universities, and advocacy organizations. The meeting produced a <u>set of actionable priorities</u> to advance inclusive practices rooted in Catholic identity and mission.

Social Services

- <u>Transformative Workforce Academy</u>: The Transformative Workforce Academy is part of a Saint Louis University interdepartmental collaboration designed to support and integrate those in Missouri most at risk of, and impacted by, incarceration. Services include virtual job fairs, jobseeker coaching, and fair employer training and consultation. The program began in St. Louis in 2018 and was awarded funding from the Missouri Department of Corrections in 2024 to expand state-wide.
- <u>SLU Prison Education Program</u>: Sponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences, this Jesuit-inspired initiative provides access to high-quality liberal arts education for people who are incarcerated and prison staff by offering an Associates of Arts degree. Planning for a new bachelor's degree program for this prison-based population is underway with full University support.

Research Impact

Much of the research, scholarship and creative activity engaged in by faculty across our academic units contributes to community support and development efforts. For example, research programs funded by our "Big Ideas" initiative include the <u>Institute for Healing Justice and Equity</u>, a multidisciplinary group of faculty working to transform SLU into the epicenter of equitable community building and knowledge curation related to healing from social injustice, trauma and oppression. SLU's <u>Water Institute</u>, also funded initially by a "Big

Ideas" grant, conducts convergent research and outreach in the areas of engineering and science, policy and economics, and social justice and public health. This institute hosted the 2025 SLU Summit for Water: Nature-Based Solutions: Science to Policy to Practice, which brought together leaders and experts from academia, industry, nonprofits and government to share ideas, learn about the latest research, and tackle some of the most critical and persistent challenges facing humanity's most fundamental resource.

Beyond the impacts rooted in our academic and scholarly activity, SLU's commitment to serving the public good emanates from points throughout the University. For example, the Center for Social Action connects students, faculty, staff and alumni to volunteer opportunities (non-service learning) near and far, providing lists of one-time volunteer opportunities, on-campus opportunities, and a Community Partners Database. The CSA offers numerous signature programs throughout the year for SLU students, faculty, and staff to become more meaningfully involved in the community, such as the 1818 Community Engagement Grant Program and Service Fairs.

The CSA is also home to the University's Campus Kitchen. Founded at SLU in 2001, this program has now spread to over 70 colleges and universities. Campus Kitchen addresses food justice issues by reducing food waste and providing meals to those who are hungry. Using donated food that would otherwise be wasted, volunteers — mainly SLU students, staff and faculty — prepare, package and deliver about 400 meals a week to people who are food insecure. These are men, women, children and seniors who live independently near our SLU campus, as well as those who live in nearby emergency shelters and transitional housing. In addition to meals, Campus Kitchen provides excess fresh produce to various nonprofit organizations.

As an anchor of the community, SLU has forged many deep and lasting partnerships with local non-profits, schools, and government agencies. These underscore the fact that our campus serves the community not in a spirit of "doing for" but, instead, a spirit of "walking with," as our Jesuit credo calls us to form students who are "men and women *for* and *with* others." For example:

- Public Charter School Sponsorships: SLU serves as a public charter school sponsor in Missouri, partnering with and overseeing schools that share a commitment to equity, innovation, and academic excellence. As part of our Jesuit mission to promote social justice and community engagement, we provide oversight and support that helps schools thrive — academically, operationally, and culturally. Our sponsorship approach emphasizes continuous improvement, transparent accountability, and collaboration with school leaders, educators, and families.
- Access Academies: Access Academies was founded in 2005 to provide St. Louis youth a pathway out of poverty through high-quality education and college readiness programs. Since its inception, SLU and Access Academies have sustained a strong partnership. The non-profit has maintained its corporate offices at SLU since 2014 and recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. Access Academy high school students annually attend summer learning programs on SLU's campus, and every sixth grader enrolled in an Access Academies partner school takes a field trip to SLU each spring.
- Habitat For Humanity: SLU maintains an active Habitat for Humanity student organization, which boasts over 100 members who volunteer weekly on home builds.
- Madrid Community ESL Program: Fostering deeper connections between the Madrid Campus and surrounding community, this program connects English-speaking

students with individual community members to meet the demand in Madrid for English-speaking proficiency. This is one of <u>many service opportunities</u> offered by the Madrid Campus through the Office of Student Life.

- Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis: SLU partners with this catalyst for change in the Black community on such events as the annual <u>Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Tribute</u>.

While a multitude of departments and academic units provide opportunities for community engagement, it is the student population that serves as the backbone of our service outreach. Many efforts often are organized by students themselves, including the following:

- <u>Student Organizations</u>**:** There are over 20 student organizations dedicated to the service of humanity and the promotion of justice – from <u>Billikens Against Cancer</u> and <u>Dance Marathon</u>, which each raise over $100K every year for the American Cancer Society and Children's Miracle Network respectively, to <u>Engineers Without Borders</u>, which works to meet the basic needs of communities in developing nations.
- <u>1818 Community Engagement Grants</u>: Started in 2018 to honor SLU's bicentennial, this program provides 18 grants of $1,800 each to groups of students who partner with a community organization to make a positive impact in St. Louis. To date, 1818 Community Engagement Grants have impacted over 12,000 St. Louis residents, in partnership with nearly 200 non-profits, school and community organizations.
- <u>Billiken Bounty</u>: Recognizing that some students on campus are food insecure, leaders established this on-campus food pantry where clients in need can obtain food and other essential items – no questions asked. In 2024-25 the pantry had 1,500 visits and distributed nearly 10,000 items.

SLU's commitments to community engagement and support are well-evidenced in the following key data points:

- Each year over 1.6 million hours of service are provided to the community by SLU students, faculty, and staff.
- In 2024, nearly 75% of SLU students reported having engaged in some form of community service during the year—nearly three times the national average for college students.
- Over 20 different active student organizations are dedicated to service and justice.
- Each year, hundreds of students engage in service and immersion experiences over winter, spring, and summer breaks.

This institutional commitment is also well-recognized nationally. For example, in 2023, *The Princeton Review* named <u>SLU the #3 school in the nation</u> for community service engagement. SLU ranks <u>No. 9 on Princeton Review</u>'s list of top private colleges for making an impact, reflecting student responses to questions about service opportunities, student government, sustainability efforts and on-campus student engagement. In 2024, SLU again received the <u>Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement</u>, an honor bestowed upon only 368 colleges and universities nationwide at the time. SLU first received this recognition in 2015; this current classification is valid until 2032.

Sources

- Actionable Priorities from Herrmann Center Conference

- PRiME Center Education Reports Webpage
- PRiME Center Policy Briefs
- SLU Summit for Water Webpage
- 1818 Grants and Service Fairs Webpage
- Access Academies Webpage
- Addiction Medicine Fellowship Webpage
- Big Ideas Webpage
- Billiken Bounty Food Pantry Webpage
- Billikens Against Cancer SLU Groups Webpage
- CADE Become a Patient Webpage
- Campus Kitchen Webpage
- Carnegie Community Engagement Classification 2024 News Article
- Casa de Salud Webpage
- Center for Social Action Webpage
- Community Partners Database Webpage
- Consortium for Human Flourishing Webpage
- Dance Marathon SLU Groups Webpage
- Engineers Without Borders SLU Groups Webpage
- Habitat for Humanity SLU Groups Webpage
- Herrmann Center for Innovative Catholic Education Webpage
- Institute for Healing Justice and Equity Webpage
- Madrid Community ESL News Article
- Madrid Service and Community Outreach Webpage
- Martin Luther King Jr Tribute News Article
- On-Campus Opportunities Webpage
- One-Time Volunteer Opportunities Webpage
- PRiME Center SLU Webpage and Homepage
- Princeton Review Rankings on CSA Webpage
- Prison Education Program Webpage
- Public Charter School Sponsorships Webpage
- Saint Louis University Research Institute Webpage
- Service Learning Webpage
- SLU Law Legal Clinics
- SLU Profile
- SOM Working Partnerships Webpage
- Speech-Language and Hearing Clinic Webpage
- St. Louis Academic Health Department Webpage
- Student Service Organizations in SLU Groups
- The WATER Institute Webpage
- Transformative Workforce Academy Webpage
- Transgender Health Collaborative Webpage

1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

SLU students have innumerable opportunities to engage in our diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world; many examples have already been shared above in 1.A. and 1.B. As noted throughout this Assurance Argument, SLU operates a campus in Madrid, Spain, which is home to students from the United States as well as students from over 50 countries from around the world. Additionally, nearly 800 St. Louis-based SLU students study abroad each year, whether at our Madrid campus or at one of 46 other locations established in partnership with other international universities. A team of staff provides resources for students to help them decide on destinations, prepare them for living abroad, and transition them back home in a holistic and compassionate manner.

Each year, SLU employs nearly 1,500 students through the Community Service Federal Work-Study Program. Students work in a variety of settings, including campus-based offices, community-service clinics, or even off campus with selected partner organizations.

Social justice advocacy is advanced through multiple formal programs offered regularly. Policy Pods is an initiative that groups students together to engage in legislative advocacy around issues such as health care, criminal justice reform, and immigration. Social Justice and Advocacy Trainings provide students the chance to learn social action methods and engage in real work for change. The Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice sends a team of students to Washington D.C. each year to meet with legislators on various issues of justice.

By engaging students in work developing community, spirituality, justice, and solidarity, the Campus Ministry Spring Break Immersion Program challenges students to step out of their comfort zone in order to accompany people on the margins and to critically engage with the social injustices those people face. For example, each year during spring break Campus Ministry leads students on trips to places such as El Paso, Texas for the Border Immersion Program and Mobile, Alabama, where students spend a week with the First Light Community of Mobile, which provides homes and workplaces where people with and without disabilities share life as peers.

Faculty and staff at SLU also now have the opportunity to participate in an immersion trip. For the first time, in 2025 the Office of Mission and Identity coordinated a Civil Rights Immersion Trip that took nine faculty/staff participants to Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia after the spring semester ended. The group visited the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis and the Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, among other sites. As a result of the success of this trip and the impact on participants, plans for additional trips are underway.

Support for issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion is generated in a variety of places and spaces at SLU. Multiple structures exist on campus to further these efforts:

- The mission of the <u>Cross Cultural Center for Global Citizenship</u> is to promote multicultural awareness and education, provide support services to historically underrepresented and marginalized student populations, and help [students] develop into critically reflective and socially just leaders. The CCC conducts a variety of diversity trainings for classes and student groups, such as SafeZone, an ally development program that helps students, faculty, and staff to learn the skills and competencies needed to develop in active allyship with the LGBTQ+ community. It also advises <u>various scholars programs</u> committed to equity in education, such as the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship and the African-American Male Scholars (AAMS) initiative designed to connect black male students to University, social, and community resources that will facilitate their academic and personal success. Additionally, in 2021 the Center launched the Audre Lorde Scholars program, designed to support students who self-identify as Women of Color while facilitating networking, community and social opportunities. Each November the Center hosts Diversity Awareness Month, featuring events that highlight SLU's intercultural initiatives and programs.
- Over 25 <u>multicultural student organizations and campus groups</u> exist to support students of different racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, such as the Muslim Student Association, Indian Student Association, and OASIS, SLU's LatinX support group. These groups hold dozens of events on campus each year designed to raise awareness, engage in dialogue, and create opportunities for solidarity and allyship.
- The <u>Rainbow Alliance</u> student organization supports those identifying with the queer community and educates the campus on related issues and allyship.
- The <u>Imago Dei LGBTQ+ Retreat</u>, offered through Campus Ministry, centers on the LGBTQ+ experience – particularly how LGBTQ+ identities interact with religion and spirituality. The retreat is offered to students who identify as part of the LGBTQIA community.
- Part of the Student Success Center, the <u>Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources</u> serves as an advocate for students with disabilities, providing accommodations and ensuring fair and equitable treatment.
- Two student groups, <u>AbilitySLU and Beyond Ability</u>, are sister organizations of the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources. Their shared purpose is to promote inclusivity and awareness of the lived experience of individuals with disabilities.
- In addition to several chapels, SLU provides several <u>interfaith sacred spaces</u> on campus, for groups of any faith identity to use for prayer and worship. The <u>Interfaith Alliance</u> student group provides ongoing programming and dialogue sessions to further educate the campus on the various faith traditions of our students.

In recognition of these and other efforts to further diversity, equity, and inclusion issues on campus and in the community, <u>Saint Louis University received the prestigious HEED Award</u> (Higher Education Excellence in Diversity) again in 2024. Awarded each year by *Insight Into Diversity*, the HEED Award is the only national recognition honoring colleges and universities that exhibit outstanding efforts and successes in the area of diversity and inclusion throughout their campuses. SLU also received this award in 2016, and at that time was the first Jesuit institution to be selected, as well as the first college or university in Missouri.

Sources

- 2024 HEED Award News Article
- Beyond Ability SLU in SLU Groups
- CCC Scholars Programs Webpage
- Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources Webpage
- Civil Rights Immersion Trip News Article
- Community Service Federal Work-Study Jobs Webpage
- Cross Cultural Center for Global Citizenship Webpage
- Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice Webpage
- Imago Dei LGBTQ+ Retreat Webpage
- Immersion Experiences Webpage
- InterFaith Alliance in SLU Groups
- LGBTQIA Resources Webpage
- MLK, Jr. Scholarship Webpage
- Multicultural Student Organizations in SLU Groups
- Policy Pods and Social Justice Advocacy Trainings Webpage
- Rainbow Alliance in SLU Groups
- Sacred Spaces Webpage
- SLU Madrid Homepage
- Study Abroad Webpage

Criterion 1 Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Argument

As documented in this section, SLU's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides our institutional operations.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Argument

SLU operates a robust Policy Program, which is itself grounded in a University Policy on Policies. The Policy Program is administered by the Office of Compliance and Ethics and applies to all University-level policies. A University Policy Committee, comprised of leaders from all major institutional divisions, (a) reviews proposals for new policies; (b) reviews existing policies for revisions per established revision cycles; and (c) distributes draft policies to their constituencies for 30-day reviews to help inform final deliberations. All approved University-level policies and those "in process" are shared with all employees via the PolicyStat system, which also provides a workflow that tracks edits, approval votes, etc.; PolicyStat also sends automated notices to policy owners when existing policies are due for review per established cycles.

Complementing the University-wide policies cataloged in PolicyStat are additional policies administered at the vice-president level and below. Most University personnel policies, including those focused on staff, are linked from the Division of Human Resources (HR) website. The Madrid Campus Faculty and Staff intranet links to employment policies, labor information, and other relevant policies that align with the legal requirements to operate a private university in Spain.

The policies website of the Office of the Provost includes the following:

- The Faculty Manual (the official document defining the faculty at SLU and establishing the relationship between the University and the faculty, particularly in terms of shared governance)
- Faculty Policies (governing various faculty rights and responsibilities not directly addressed in the *Faculty Manual*)
- Academic and Course Policies (those governing academic programs and courses)

Many policies can be accessed through multiple websites. For example, the Provost's website also provides links to policies of other major divisions of the University, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Athletics
- Institutional Equity and Diversity

- Human Resources
- Information Technology Services
- Research
- Student Development

Adherence to internal financial controls policies and national best practices helps SLU strive to be the best possible steward of the human and capital resources required to fulfill its mission and achieve its strategic goals. Accordingly, the University regularly receives unqualified independent audits (FY24; FY25) that confirm the integrity of its financial controls and overall financial management. The Spanish branch of SLU's independent auditor audits the Madrid Campus and coordinates its findings with those of the St. Louis branch. The Board of Trustees' Audit and Legal Committee requires and oversees the annual conduct of multiple internal audits, determining which operations to audit based on annual risk assessments. Minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings document that the regular business of the Board includes reports from its constituent committees (see 2.C.).

Integrity is paramount in SLU's employment practices. The Staff Recruitment Policy governs staff hiring. Student worker employment is addressed by HR's Student Worker Policy. The Provost's Office runs mandatory workshops for faculty search committee chairs that address hiring for mission, federal compliance (including diversity), and related Workday procedures. All hiring is conducted in compliance with the University's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy as well as applicable federal laws and regulations. New employee orientation is readily available online. The Office of Faculty Affairs leads a required new faculty orientation.

Staff performance evaluations are conducted annually via Workday. The Faculty Manual requires and provides guidelines for annual review of every faculty member and mid-point review of tenure-track faculty. Promotion and tenure (P&T) application processes, and the standards for advancement, are guided by provisions of the *Manual* as well as by procedures and standards established by the respective academic units. The Office of Faculty Affairs conducts training for college-level P&T committees and the University Committee on Academic Rank and Tenure (UCART) on a rotating basis. Allocation of faculty work responsibilities is governed by the Faculty Workload Policy, as implemented in each college/school.

SLU's Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX oversees regulatory compliance of Title II, Title VII, and Title IX, including the investigation, education, and prevention of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct; provides educational programs and training on diversity and inclusion awareness; and serves as a resource for all members of the University community. This office is primarily responsible for investigating complaints of discrimination and harassment involving faculty, staff, and students. All members of the University community are required to complete an annual mandatory online educational module that informs about the policies and processes associated with preventing and reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment (including sexual harassment) in residential, work, and learning environments. SLU's Office of Compliance and Ethics oversees University-wide compliance activities related to conflicts of interest, export controls, privacy, and compliance with other state and federal regulations.

The annually updated Student Handbook contains policies applicable to students. Policies and processes governing student behavior are codified in the Community Standards section

(2.0) of the Student Handbook. Whether disciplinary situations are academic or not, SLU's actions comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); SLU restricts parental and other third-party access to FERPA-protected records unless students overtly consent to the disclosure. Records of students' consent via DocuSign are maintained and made available to appropriate University employees so they know when they can disclose FERPA-protected records, and to whom.

The University recognizes that students may display behavioral concerns that pose imminent risk or harm to self, others, or the community. The Behavioral Concerns Committee investigates such behaviors, gathers additional information from campus resources, and works to design action plans that assist and support the students while balancing the needs of the University community. The Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards oversees an educational conduct process that provides accountability while prioritizing students' personal growth and development.

The review and adjudication processes for staff and faculty grievances are separate. The Staff Grievance Policy addresses guidelines for filing a grievance, while the Staff Peer Review Policy describes the peer review hearing process implemented to resolve serious workplace disputes. The Faculty Manual outlines the process through which the Faculty Senate's Professional Relations Committee screens and adjudicates (1) appeals of non-renewals, (2) impositions of serious sanctions short of termination, and (3) appeals emerging from University processes related to alleged violations of SLU policies on equal opportunity, harassment, or retaliation.

In full compliance with federal and state regulations, SLU maintains a student complaints web page to provide opportunities for students to lodge complaints about their SLU experience both with the University and with other relevant parties, including the HLC and the departments of education from the states in which students reside. It also provides information about other policies pertaining to students, including the processes for filing grade appeals or complaints about other academic issues. As addressed in 2.E., SLU's new Academic Integrity Policy details the process for the adjudication of academic integrity claims levied against students, details students' rights throughout the process, etc.

The School of Medicine's Office of Professional Oversight , established in 2018, is a joint venture between the SLU School of Medicine and SSM Health Saint Louis University Hospital to ensure a fair and neutral environment for employees to seek assistance and support, file a grievance, or report acts of unprofessional behavior or concerns. The director of this office also serves as the School of Medicine's ombudsperson.

HR's Position Elimination Policy (Staff), governs staff involuntary separation from the University while faculty nonrenewal and termination are addressed by detailed provisions in the *Faculty Manual.* This policy was invoked and followed in Fall 2024 when, as noted in 4.B., approximately 20 employees' positions were eliminated. Other policies direct employee and leadership actions in the case of emergencies (or to help prevent them), including:

- Policy on Emergency Operations and Closure
- Contingency Planning Policy
- Interim Civil Discourse, Speech, and Expression Policy

SLU is compliant with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus

Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) which requires disclosure of crime on and around campus. The University's Emergency Notification Policy governs the processes by which SLU issues safety alerts when authorities determine that an incident may pose an ongoing threat to members of the University community. All members of the SLU community have continuous access to the institution's daily crime log.

Sources

- Audit Legal Compliance Committee 2024-25 Minutes
- Staff Peer Review Policy
- Complete_with_DocuSign_Student_Consent
- Academic and Course Policies Webpage
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Athletics Policies Webpage
- Behavioral Concerns Committee Webpage
- Civil Discourse Speech and Expression Policy
- Compliance and Ethics Webpage
- Contingency Planning Policy
- Emergency Notification Policy
- Emergency Operations and Closure Policy
- Employee Onboarding Webpage
- Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy
- Faculty Policies Webpage
- Faculty Recruitment and Hiring Webpage
- Faculty Workload Policy
- FERPA at Saint Louis University Webpage
- FY24 Audit - SLU FY24 Financial Statements
- FY25 Audit - SLU FY25 Financial Statements
- HR Policies Webpage
- ITS Policies Webpage
- Jeanne Clery Campus Security Act Information Webpage
- New Faculty Orientation Webpage
- Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX Webpage
- Other Policies Webpage
- Policies on Provost Webpage
- Policy Program Webpage
- Policy Review Committee Webpage
- PolicyStat
- Position Elimination Policy
- Research Policies in PolicyStat
- SLU Crime and Fire Log 10.30.25
- Staff Grievance Policy
- Staff Performance Webpage
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Student Complaints Webpage
- Student Worker Policy
- UCART Promotion and Tenure Resources Webpage
- UCART Standard Operating Procedures
- Understanding the Conduct Process Webpage

- University Policy on Policies
- SOM Office of Professional Oversight Webpage

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

Argument

Saint Louis University strives to ensure that the information it communicates is as consistent and accurate as possible, and has taken steps to increase the transparency of academic program requirements, its tuition and fees, and other key data valued by our primary constituencies. SLU recognizes that a clear and complete presentation of institutional information, including its academic offerings and requirements, faculty and staff information, costs to students, governance structures, and accreditation relationships, is a basic expectation of the general public as well as members of the SLU community.

The SLU website, the primary vehicle for the public presentation of institutional information, was greatly enhanced by a major redesign launched in 2024 that, due to the size and complexity of the institution, is still in the process of completion. The result is standardization and consistency of appearance, organization, branding, and content elements. Additionally, all content from all units under the institutional umbrella now undergoes some level of review by faculty/staff authorized by the Division of Marketing and Communication (Marcom), which utilizes the latest software tools to detect and update any non-ADA-compliant web content.

Other social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs) have become increasingly important marketing and communication tools. To help ensure their appropriate and accurate use, Marcom issued social media guidelines for both institutional and personal use. Related policies include the University Advertising Policy and Web Content Management Policy.

SLU's Office of Admission website provides linkage to the website of Student Financial Services, which is where cost information primarily resides. The latter site clearly presents detailed information about tuition, fees, and financial aid information, and array of resources that contribute toward fuller comprehension of the financial aspects of attendance. One such resource is a Net Price Calculator that helps estimate financial aid awards. Scholarship information is also readily accessible, at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as on the websites of selected academic units (e.g., School of Medicine).

The Office of the Provost publishes a website on which it provides public access to accreditation-related information for the University as a whole and for the 70+ programs governed by disciplinary/program accreditation. On our Institutional Accreditation webpage, we provide all key HLC-related information, including archived documents from previous HLC accreditation reviews. On our Disciplinary/Programmatic Accreditation webpage, we indicate all externally-accredited programs and provide links to each accreditor's websites. This supplements the accreditation information noted on web-based Catalog pages of each accredited academic program. Separately, the Provost's Office also maintains an accreditation log of college, school, and program external accreditation relationships and

statuses. All currently-accredited programs are in good standing with their respective accreditors, with none on probation or under any sanction.

Saint Louis University maintains compliance with state regulatory agencies in order to increase student access to distance education courses and programs. SLU has been a participant in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) since March 2015 (we were the first NC-SARA approved institution in the State of Missouri). Our membership allows SLU to offer online courses and programs in all 49 SARA member states, districts, and territories without seeking separate approvals. When applicable, SLU also secures state authorization for any on-ground academic programs or courses offered in other states. For example, with full approval from the State of Massachusetts, SLU offered for several years a portion of its Master of Social Work program on the campus of Elms College in Chicopee, MA (although we recently voluntarily ceased our offering of the program there).

The presentation and maintenance of program-level web pages is tied to the University's use of CourseLeaf software, which helps ensure that all instances of academic program requirements and descriptions consistently come from the same, single source: the University Catalog. In the *Catalog*, the program-specific pages for each academic program are standardized so they each clearly and consistently display tabs for the following key information:

- Overview**:** A general description of the program that also typically includes information about program-specific fieldwork/research/internship opportunities, program-specific career opportunities, accreditation and professional licensure information (if applicable), and links to admissions and scholarships/financial aid information.
- Learning Outcomes**:** Presentation of each program's student learning outcomes from the program's current Assessment Plan (see 3.E.)
- Requirements**:** Presentation of each program's academic requirements – course requirements, non-course requirements, and other program-specific requirements such as minimum GPAs or grades in certain courses.
- Roadmap**:** Presentation of a common, semester-by-semester course schedule plan through graduation; these roadmaps complement more detailed, student-specific resources provided by students' academic advisors.

When applicable, some program Catalog pages also feature tabs that link to information about that program as offered at SLU's Madrid Campus .

It is also easy to search for policies, programs, and degree requirements in the *Catalog*. Compiled by the University Registrar in consultation with the academic units and the Office of the Provost, the *Catalog* presents student consumer information, policies and procedures, links to descriptive information about the academic units and their faculty, and links to program and course information.

SLU also uses CourseLeaf to present to students the Schedule of Courses each term, and as the common interface for students to register for courses. CourseLeaf's "shopping cart and checkout"-style schedule and registration pages make registration comparatively simple and clear for all students.

Another key to transparency in the institution-student relationship is ensuring that all course

syllabi include key details per <u>SLU's syllabus policy</u> . <u>Required and recommended syllabus statements</u> are published for faculty and students, as is <u>guidance</u> for faculty about employing the principles of Universal Design in their syllabi, about "trigger warnings," and more.

Information about faculty is accessible from multiple points. The navigation bar on the University Catalog webpage links to lists of faculty affiliated with each college/school. Academic department and college/school websites feature additional lists of both faculty and staff. In each case, additional information about the faculty is typically linked from there (e.g., <u>College for Public Health and Social Justice</u>, <u>Department of Biology</u>).

The staff of non-academic units with whom students often interact, or who have direct responsibility for student-related matters, also are readily identified (with contact information) on unit websites (for example, the <u>Office of the University Registrar</u> or college-based offices for <u>academic advising</u>).

Finally, information about extra-curricular experiences in which SLU students can participate is also transparently shared with students and the general public. The homepage of the <u>Student Involvement Center</u> is the locus for accessing such information.

Sources

- Accreditation Information in the Catalog
- Accreditation Log - October 2025
- Accreditation Webpage
- Advertising Policy Webpage
- Biology Faculty Webpage
- CAS Advising Staff Webpage
- Catalog Learning Outcomes Page
- Catalog links to Courses A-Z Webpage
- Catalog links to Faculty Webpage
- Catalog links to Programs A-Z Webpage
- Catalog Madrid Page
- Catalog Overview Page
- Catalog Policies and Procedures Webpage
- Catalog Requirements Page
- Catalog Roadmap Page
- Catalog Student Consumer Information Webpage
- Course Syllabus Policy
- CPHSJ Webpage
- Disciplinary Programmatic Accreditation Webpage
- Graduate Education Financing Guide
- Institutional Accreditation Webpage
- Massachusetts BHE Closure Notice
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- Net Price Calculator Webpage
- Office of Admission Webpage
- Registrar Contacts Webpage
- Required and Recommended Syllabus Components Webpage
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- Social Media Guidelines Webpage
- SOM Student Financial Services Webpage
- Student Financial Services Webpage
- Student Involvement Center Webpage
- Syllabus Guidance Webpage
- Undergraduate Education Financing Guide
- Web Content Management Policy Webpage

2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Argument

Saint Louis University is governed by a Board of Trustees which, per the Bylaws of Saint Louis University (as amended May 1, 2020), consists of 25-55 members, with at least four but not more than 12 being members of the Society of Jesus. Currently there are 36 total members, including six Jesuits. Primary responsibility for identifying, vetting, recruiting, and training new trustees resides with the Board's Governance Committee. This committee nominates new trustees, who are elected by a majority vote of the trustees present at the Board's annual meeting (the last meeting of the academic year, usually in May). Terms for trustees begin with the first meeting of the following academic year. The Bylaws specify term length and related details. Trustees eligible for reelection complete a Trustee Self Evaluation Questionnaire, updated for 2024, that assesses their interest in continuing service and guides the Governance Committee's assessment of their commitment and performance.

New trustees are oriented to their roles and provided multiple resources to support their informed engagement, including the following: the University *Bylaws*, the strategic plan, the Board *Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities*, informational reports from each of the University's administrative units, contextual readings about higher education generally, and Association of Governing Boards (AGB) documents that inform them about significant contemporary topics from a board oversight perspective.

Important Board documents, including meeting minutes, membership lists, documents pertaining to all Board members as well as information pertinent to each of its committees, are housed on the password-protected Board Effect portal, accessible to Board members and appropriate University faculty and staff.

The Board's Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities, which details the full scope of Board members' obligations, declares that:

> *…it is important that those selected to serve on the board understand clearly their responsibilities as trustees of a Jesuit, Catholic, private university. By accepting the responsibilities set forth in this statement, trustees affirm their commitment to contribute to a SLU governance environment that offers present and future generations of students, faculty and staff, opportunities for outstanding educational experiences, career fulfillment and personal enrichment. In addition, trustees ensure that SLU remains at the forefront of medical research and patient care by supporting the efforts of the University's physician practice, research, and health care initiatives.*

This statement further outlines 14 obligations that Board members are expected to fulfill in their roles as SLU's ultimate fiduciaries.

The Underlined University Bylaws vests the "government and corporate powers of the University" in its Board of Trustees. Article I specifies that:

> *The primary corporate purposes of the University, expressed in its charter, are the encouragement of learning and the extension of the means of education. In common with other American social institutions, the University is dedicated to the service of its immediate community, the service of the Nation and the service of the world at large. The University fulfills its corporate purposes and carries out these dedications by means appropriate to a university in our society, that is, through teaching and research, and by the discovery, preservation, and communication of knowledge. The University therefore, and its Trustees on its behalf, recognize and accept three primary responsibilities: that of teaching; that of research; and that of community service.*

Additionally, the *Bylaws* cite SLU's tradition as a Catholic, Jesuit university, and include a provision that the trustees acknowledge that furtherance of the institution's corporate purposes and the conduct of its operations are accomplished in this context.

The minutes of each full Board meeting include detailed comments by SLU's President, as well as reports from selected Board standing committees that previously studied specific issues and typically bring to the full Board recommendations for consideration and vote.

The Board monitors the University's financial state very carefully while remaining sensitive to the institution's academic and health care service needs. Regular topics of Board meetings include discussion of national financial trends, SLU's financial health, and any actions that may be required to sustain the fulfillment of the institution's corporate purposes at a high level (see discussion of Board minutes below).

The University Bylaws give the Board the authority to create and establish committees to aid the management of the institution's affairs. In addition to its Executive Committee, SLU's Board currently has 14 standing committees through which much of the Board's work is accomplished:

- Academic Affairs
- Athletics
- Audit and Legal
- Business and Administration
- Compensation
- Development
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Governance
- Honorary Degrees and Special Recognition
- Investment
- Marketing and Branding
- Medical Education and Clinical Affairs
- Mission and Identity
- Student Development

Note: As noted in 4.A., references here and throughout this Assurance Argument to the committees of the Board of Trustees describe those committees as they existed in

August 2025. Since then, the Board has worked with new President Ed Feser on several changes to those committees; however, as of the final writing of this Assurance Argument those changes have not been finalized (e.g., revised committees do not yet have formal charge documents, etc.).

The nature and scope of the responsibilities of these committees reflects SLU's corporate purposes and its relationships with pertinent internal and external constituencies. The Board's Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities requires trustees to serve as a member of at least two committees.

Full Board meetings are held quarterly, with Executive Committee meetings conducted at least as often. Each of the other standing committees meets prior to the full Board meetings to learn about, deliberate, and issue guidance on matters within their respective domains. These meetings are staffed by the relevant members of SLU's leadership team (e.g., Provost for the Academic Affairs Committee), who report on pertinent University and related matters and maintain committee records. Student, faculty, and staff appointed by their respective governance entities serve as representatives to some Board committees and participate in most of their deliberations. Board meeting minutes and those of each of its committees regularly reference or include reports, as relevant, from external constituents and entities such as financial ratings organizations.

Board documents reflect the importance of the avoidance of conflict of interest by its members. The Statement of Criteria for Trusteeship specifies, in its category of personal and professional qualifications, the "absence of disqualifying conflicts of interests." The Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities contains a section devoted to "General Conduct and Conflicts of Interest." The expectation is that Board members serve the institution's best interests and demonstrate sensitivity to any situation that might cause even the appearance of a conflict of interest with their Board roles. Further, Article VII (pg. 8) of the University *Bylaws* contains a "Conflicts of Interest" provision that, by definition, states that "any Trustee who has a direct or indirect financial interest, through business, investment or family member, or a direct or indirect competing interest, through business, investment or family member, has a conflict of interest." It also states that trustees are expected to identify such situations as they arise during meetings or other Board deliberations. A review of the minutes of the full Board and the Governance Committee for the past two years reflected no such situations. However, the minutes of the Governance Committee's September 26, 2024 meeting indicated that a prospective Board member's non-compete clause with a similar, St. Louis-based institution temporarily prohibited SLU from pursuing her candidacy as a Board member.

SLU's Board members are required to annually disclose any existing or potential conflicts of interest. This is mandated by the *Bylaws* through the Board Conflict of Interest Policy distributed to every trustee each year by the Vice President and General Counsel (who also serves as secretary of the University) along with a Trustee Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement Form and Board Conflict of Interest Questionnaire. The policy recognizes that trustee service in other capacities may raise conflict concerns that might actually be inconsequential but requires that members identify any relationships that could be problematic. The acknowledgement form contains information required for University certification for federal grant applications. Completed forms are filed with the Chairman of the Board.

The primacy of Board members' actions serving SLU's best interest is reinforced throughout the Board Conflict of Interest Policy. Article I declares this purpose:

> …to protect the interests of Saint Louis University (the "University") in any transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a member of the University's Board of Trustees, or a University Trustee's Family Member, as defined herein; and to monitor the activities of a member of the University Board of Trustees, or University Trustee's Family Member, that may compete with, or be detrimental to, the interests of the University.

Additionally, the obligations provision of the policy, Article II, states that "All decisions of the Board are to be made solely on the basis of a desire to advance the best interests of the University and the public good. The integrity of the University must be protected at all times." Per Article VIII, the Board of Trustees Audit and Legal Committee conducts periodic reviews "to ensure that the University operates in a manner consistent with its charitable purposes and that it does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its status as an organization exempt from Federal income tax, and that the University's interests are not compromised."

The boundaries of the Board's role and responsibilities regarding its oversight of University operations are clearly articulated in key Board documents. The Board's Statement of Criteria for Trusteeship stresses that members understand "the board's role and responsibilities to exercise oversight of the University's academic, research and clinical enterprises," stating that they must be willing "to learn the critical distinctions between active oversight and intrusive behavior." In the section on "Governance and Performance Accountability," its Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities says the Board's role is to "provide oversight, review and approve strategies, policies and plans of implementation while empowering the University administration to successfully manage the organization and fulfill its corporate purposes." This document further states that, in support of the University President, the Board will "respect the governance boundaries that separate them from the University's day-to-day operations, for which the President is accountable, focusing instead on the board's responsibilities for issues of institutional strategy and high policy."

The structure and operational conduct of the Board and the duties of the University's officers are addressed in Articles II and III of the Bylaws, respectively. The centrality of the President's position in the day-to-day management of the University is conveyed in this provision:

> The President shall be the chief executive and administrative officer of the University…Subject to such limitations as the Board may prescribe, the President shall have the general and active management, supervision, control and direction of the business operations, education activities and other affairs of the University, and shall execute all authorized bonds, deeds, mortgages, notes or other securities of the University in the name of the University, except where required or permitted by law to be otherwise signed and executed, and except where the signing or execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board to some other agent or officer of the University.

Minutes of the full Board and those of its multiple committees document appropriate Board oversight of actions led or conducted by senior University leaders. For example:

- <u>August 12, 2025</u>: The full Board approved the FY26 University budget after related presentations from the President and Chief Financial Officer.
- <u>May 2, 2025</u>: The full Board, upon the recommendation of the <u>Academic and Medical Affairs Committee</u>, approved the closure of multiple academic programs.
- <u>February 28, 2025</u>: The full Board, upon the recommendation of the <u>Athletics Committee</u>, authorized SLU's Director of Athletics to opt in to the House vs. NCAA Settlement on behalf of the University.
- <u>December 6, 2024</u>: The full Board, upon the recommendation of the <u>Business and Administration Committee</u>, voted to approve tuition increases for the 2025-2026 academic year.
- <u>September 27, 2024</u>: The full Board, upon the recommendation of the President, appointed multiple University senior leaders as University officers. At that same meeting, upon the recommendation of the Board's <u>Governance Committee</u>, the full Board approved the election of two new trustees.
- <u>June 5, 2024</u>: The full Board, upon the recommendation of both the <u>Business and Administration</u> and <u>Investment Committees</u>, approved the establishment of the endowment spend rates for FY25, FY26, and FY27.
- <u>January 23, 2024</u> : The full Board, upon the recommendation of the <u>Academic and Medical Affairs Committee</u>, approved one new program and approved the closure of one program.

Sources

- Board Effect Portal
- Board Statement of Criteria for Trusteeship
- Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement Form
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Conflict of Interest Questionnaire
- Self Evaluation Questionnaire
- Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities
- Statement of Criteria for Trusteeship
- University Bylaws
- University Bylaws (page number 8)
- University Bylaws (page number 5)
- University Bylaws (page number 2)
- Board of Trustees Webpage
- Board of Trustees Standing Committees
- Full Board Minutes 1.23.24
- Full Board Minutes 2.28.25
- Full Board Minutes 5.2.25
- Full Board Minutes 6.5.24
- Full Board Minutes 8.12.25
- Full Board Minutes 9.27.24
- Full Board Minutes 12.6.24
- Academic and Medical Affairs Committee Minutes 1.16.24
- Academic and Medical Affairs Committee Minutes 5.01.25
- Athletics Committee Minutes 2.27.25
- Business and Administration Committee Minutes 5.30.24
- Business and Administration Committee Minutes 12.05.24

- Governance Committee Minutes 09.26.24
- Investment Committee Minutes 5.28.24

2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Argument

Academic freedom is a critical concern in contemporary higher education, and increasingly so at an independent, Catholic, Jesuit university. To the many students, faculty, and staff drawn to SLU because of its Catholic identity and the humanistic values of Jesuit education, SLU makes clear the relationship of academic freedom to that identity and the institution's mission and values. For example, page 25 of the Faculty Manual makes clear the centrality of academic freedom to the University enterprise:

> *Essential to the purpose of a university is the free and unhampered pursuit and communication of knowledge and truth. All members of the University, especially students and faculty members, have not only the right but also the duty to participate in this task of freely seeking after and sharing truth. Every student and every faculty member, therefore, has the freedoms of thought, of discussion, and of action that are required by the common pursuit of truth.*
>
> *…In a Catholic university the different ways that have been developed for searching for knowledge are recognized in their diversity.*
>
> *…All persons joining the faculty of the University are expected to understand and respect the fact that they are coming into an institution in which Christian scripture and Judeo-Christian tradition are recognized as sources of knowledge as valid as natural human experience or reason, and where theology is recognized as a discipline. This expectation, of course, does not prevent them from stating and explaining their own personal views.*

Academic freedom is further addressed in the Faculty Manual provisions on shared governance (pg. 26), which establish that University faculty determine their course content, method of instruction, and degree requirements in their respective programs. Strong adherence to the principles of academic freedom also informs the procedures (pg. 43) through which faculty may file grievances for alleged violations of academic freedom in cases of contract nonrenewal.

The Faculty Manual also acknowledges the role of students' academic freedom in their interactions with faculty (pg. 21):

> *In the classroom and in student advising, faculty members should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. They must allow students to take reasoned exception to the data or views they present and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, although they must hold students responsible for learning the content of the courses in which the students are enrolled, and they must evaluate student performance on academic grounds.*

The Student Handbook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (section 2.0) also supports freedom of inquiry for students in delineating these student rights:

- The Right to Learn, which includes the right of access to diverse ideas, the right of access to facts, the right to express diverse ideas and opinions, and the right to discuss those ideas with others; and
- The Right to Free Speech, and Expression with Civility, consistent with the University's Catholic, Jesuit heritage, which includes a commitment to providing an environment wherein even the thorniest of matters can be explored openly and argued productively. Students, however, not only have a responsibility to assure that speech and expression do not infringe on the safety of others or impede institutional functions, but also have the opportunity to freely express their disagreement, provided that such expression neither impairs other, including differing, viewpoints or expression, nor interferes with normal functions of the University.

In 2020 the University approved a revised Civil Discourse, Speech, and Expression Policy. Guiding this policy was the philosophical Statement on Speech, Expression, and Civility that details SLU's commitment to freedom of expression consistent with its Catholic, Jesuit heritage and its research university status. While that philosophical stance has not changed, world events in 2023 and subsequent responses throughout American higher education prompted SLU to review and amend our policy in Fall 2024 for greater clarity.

The initial "Governing Tenet" of the current policy makes clear SLU's commitment to free expression for students and the speakers they seek to bring to campus:

> Saint Louis University welcomes diversity of thought and lively debate on the variety of issues that energize an academic community's search for truth. The University recognizes that facilitating free expression is not always tidy and may even be controversial. However, it also recognizes that providing opportunities for such expression is fundamental to its role as an academic institution, and, in particular, as a Catholic, Jesuit University dedicated to the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. The University is therefore strongly committed to providing an environment wherein even the thorniest of matters can be explored openly and argued productively. The University neither dictates nor censors content. It does, however, have a responsibility to members of its community to assure that speech and expressive activities do not infringe on their safety or impede institutional functions.
>
> SLU recognizes that providing opportunities (formal and informal, planned or spontaneous) for diverse and uncensored speech/expression is fundamental to SLU's role as a university – and, in particular, as a Catholic, Jesuit University dedicated to the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. Accordingly, SLU's primary interest in sponsoring and supporting speech and expression is, fundamentally, educational.

Since the most recent changes to the policy were made, the policy has been implemented regularly without controversy. In only one case was an invited speaker's presentation required to move off-campus, and that was a requirement of SLU's Associate Vice President for Public Safety that the event be held in a space (a) large enough for the expected attendance and (b) featuring two well-separated doors for participant and speaker safety.

Sources

- Civil Discourse, Speech, and Expression Policy
- Speech Policy Philosophy Statement

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Argument

Research Integrity and Compliance

Significant responsibility for the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by members of the SLU community rests within units of the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), with additional support provided by other institutional entities as appropriate. In March 2017, as SLU began its push to significantly increase its research profile and impact (and pursue earning Carnegie R1 status), the OVPR was reorganized as one office with working groups designed around the ways faculty approach research and scholarship. The Research Integrity and Compliance Program coordinates and enhances the work of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Conflict of Interest in Research Committee (COIRC), and Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). The EHS unit, in turn, includes operational aspects of the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and the Radiation Safety Committee (RSC). The OVPR is responsible for making SLU's safety and integrity processes both easier to navigate and more transparent, with an overall focus on creating a culture of safe and ethical research that is instinctively compliant with regulatory standards and models best practices.

The OVPR has direct oversight over a number of compliance and integrity-related functions, including:

- Human Studies – The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is the administrative body responsible for the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects recruited for and engaged in research activities conducted under the University's auspices. The current operation is composed of two boards that each meet monthly, and a third board that meets on an *ad hoc* basis on urgent matters necessitating review outside the regularly scheduled meetings. The membership of each board is constituted such that each can review research proposed by any academic discipline; this helps ensure that each board functions in a manner consistent with the others (e.g., in the assessment and classification of risks). The convened boards also review all incidents of non-compliance that the IRB office initially classifies as possibly serious or continuing non-compliant. The convened board is the only body that can suspend or terminate IRB approval or disapprove a study outright, and/or reverse either of those decisions. Human studies research proposed by members of SLU's Madrid Campus community go through the same processes as proposals submitted by St. Louis-based personnel.

- Animal Studies – SLU's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) provides "oversight for compliance with all relevant laws and regulations so as to assist researchers, faculty, and students in the conduct of high-quality research and teaching,

thereby assuring the public of the humane care and use of vertebrate animals used for these endeavors." SLU is a USDA-registered research facility and its Animal Care and Use Program is fully accredited by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC). The IACUC maintains a Google site accessible to the SLU community that provides resources for new researchers, animal protocol assistance, animal use policies, and procedures and guidelines; the site also includes information on how to report (anonymously, if preferred) animal care and research concerns.

- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR): In adherence with its Policy for Responsible Conduct of Research Training for Students, Post-Doctoral Fellows, and Trainees Supported by External Funds, SLU provides a formal training program "to ensure that faculty, students, and staff engaged in all fields of research have a working knowledge of the ethical and responsible conduct of research." SLU's training complies with the requirements of federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). SLU personnel involved in non-NIH or NSF research are also expected to participate in this training which takes these forms:
  - Online modules available through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI).
  - RCR-sponsored workshops are held through the fall and spring terms. Each addresses at least one key RCR topic and counts toward NIH- and NSF face-to-face training requirements. Recent topics include authorship and peer review, conflicts of interest in research, copyright, information security in research, and patenting and ownership.

- Research Misconduct: SLU's Policy and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct provides an equitable and timely method for resolving such allegations. It includes processes that protect complainant confidentiality and recognition of the research integrity officer (SLU's Vice President for Research) as having the authority to determine sanctions.

- Biosafety: The Institutional Biosafety Committee oversees research involving Risk Group 1, 2, and 3 biological materials including select agents. The Radiation Safety Committee oversees research using ionizing radiation at both the University and the SSM Health SLU Hospital.

In support of SLU's journey to Carnegie R1 status, SLU engaged Price Waterhouse Cooper LLP (PwC) in a research structure and operations assessment and an implementation project to improve our research enterprise's structures, policies, and processes. PwC also guided SLU's work to address the 12 research and development findings from the University's FY22 Uniform Guidance (UG) external audit, which placed the university in a "high risk" status.

This project began in the spring of 2023 with an assessment of the then-current state of research operations and resulted in 16 "future state" recommendations. Those recommendations spanned the pre-award processes for externally sponsored awards and industry sponsored clinical trials, post-award processes for externally sponsored federal and non-federal awards, and the university's research governance and structure to encompass policies, procedures, and training.

As part of this two-year, PwC-supported process, the President's Research Council (PRC) was formed under the direction of former SLU President, Dr. Fred Pestello. The PRC included representatives from the OVPR; Office of General Counsel; School of Medicine; Provost's Office; Business & Finance; Office of Compliance and Ethics, and the Faculty Senate. The PRC was charged with overseeing the implementation of the corrective action plans related to the FY22 UG audit, as well as the efforts of the six working groups charged to address PwC's recommendations.

The results of these efforts led to the following:

- University-wide centralized model of pre- and post-award research support with the establishment of the School of Medicine's Grant Operations (GO) Center (the Academic Affairs GO Center was established back in December 2017)
- Revised policies and standard operating procedures for sponsored proposals and awards
- Development of research administration training programs for principal investigators (PIs) and GO Center pre- and post-award teams
- Redefined structure and operations of the School of Medicine's Clinical Trials Office
- Systematized process for purchasing research equipment
- Development of a PI dashboard within Workday to view grant financial information
- Improved financial reports and grant certification processes
- Reduced cost transfers on grants
- Quarterly reports on standardized Key Performance and Key Risk Indicators, industry-sponsored clinical trials, research compliance units, and sponsored programs accounting teams
- A demonstrably different, more robust, and effective compliance culture across the research enterprise

Through the hard work and dedication of these working groups, SLU only had two research and development findings in the FY23 UG audit – and zero findings in the FY24 audit. The FY25 UG audit is in-process and should conclude later this calendar year. If the university does not have any findings again this year, it should return to "low risk" status.

Furthermore, in summer 2025 the OVPR completed an internal audit of the University's progress toward the remediation of the past 11 years of prior research-related audit "observations." Twelve out of 56 observations were selected by PwC's internal audit team for follow-up testing to ensure whether controls were still in place and functioning as expected in order to mitigate risk. This internal audit resulted in no significant exceptions or findings, demonstrating the hard work, dedication, and collaborative efforts across the OVPR teams.

All of these refinements to and investments in our research and compliance infrastructure further support a research profile that is increasingly impressive and impactful. Our Five-Year Growth Plan for Research has guided this development. Our multiple Research Councils ensure broad engagement of faculty and academic leaders from throughout the University in this work. And our dedicated research facilities and buildings serve as incubators of inquiry in support of the high-impact scholarship of our research-active faculty.

Academic Integrity

In 2015, SLU implemented its first University-level academic integrity policy – a significant

but still small first step for SLU toward addressing academic integrity far more equitably, across the institution. Unfortunately, this policy co-existed for several years with similar policies still implemented at the academic department and college/school levels that varied in form, title, breadth, and depth. In 2021, acting on concerns about a significant increase in academic integrity incidents, inconsistent sanctions among the academic units, and inconsistent archiving and reporting (internal and external) of sanctions, the Office of the Provost convened an Academic Integrity Working Group of faculty, staff, and students to thoroughly explore these issues and mitigation strategies. Although it took several years, by Fall 2024 SLU implemented what is now a single, University-wide Academic Integrity Policy (although still excluded are courses delivered by the School of Law, the School of Medicine, the Center for Advanced Dentistry Education, and the Madrid campus).

In addition to establishing a single set of related definitions, adjudication processes, and sanctions for all students (except those noted in the exclusions above), the new policy came with Provost's Office funding for a .5 FTE Director of Academic Integrity position responsible for implementation of the new system across all "in scope" colleges and schools. A highly representative Academic Integrity Board – which includes faculty, staff, and students – supports the work of the Director. Results from the first year of implementation (2024-2025) were quite positive overall. We are achieving our primary goals of equity and consistency in the policy's implementation, even as instances of integrity violations are increasing.

A dedicated webpage addressing academic integrity for students complements the policies and related guidance in/linked through the Student Handbook. The *Student Handbook* contains an academic integrity/ethical behavior provision that incorporates the SLU Academic Integrity Policy. Students also learn about proper citation practices and related information literacy skills from resources of our University Libraries.

The critical evaluation of information resources and their ethical use are addressed in numerous other ways, as well. For example:

- Course instructors address responsible research practices in their instruction about research methodologies of their disciplines.
- Course faculty across the disciplines routinely require students to use standard style manuals and documentation practices in their writing at all course levels.
- SLU's Office of Vice President for Research issued a Policy on Authorship for Scientific and Scholarly Publications "to establish acceptable practices in responsible authorship and publication of knowledge gained through research and scholarly activities."
- Partnering with course instructors, SLU library faculty conduct information literacy presentations for students at all levels and increasingly collaborate on the development of research assignments that require informed and appropriate use and evaluation of information resources.
- In a decades-long collaborative relationship with the department of English, Pius Library faculty offer an information literacy instruction program that empowers students in a key Core course, *English 1900: Advanced Strategies of Rhetoric and Research*.
- In addition to working with other courses in the undergraduate Core, Pius, Medical Center, and Madrid Campus librarians are embedded in each of the themed *Core Ignite seminars* students take in their first two semesters of SLU's new Core. An Ignite Seminar Library Research Tutorial designed specifically for this Core course addresses these two competencies.
- Graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and other faculty involved in research funded

by the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation may choose to attend a copyright session focusing on research and publishing applications presented by SLU library faculty as part of the Office of Research Responsible Conduct of Research's workshop series.

Student use of generative AI is explicitly addressed in our University Academic Integrity Policy seven different times, including in the definitions of plagiarism (pg. 2) and cheating (pg. 3). In turn, faculty are required by University policy to provide in every course syllabus "written information to make explicit whether or not GAI use is acceptable in the course and, if so, in what ways and in which circumstances." As SLU's   Course Syllabus Policy makes clear, "There is no single, University-level syllabus statement about GAI use"; further, "If/how students are permitted to use GAI (in a course, in a specific assignment, etc.) is determined by each individual instructor, unless otherwise directed by their academic leadership (e.g., chair, director, dean)."

Official, institutional-level guidance on generative AI use is forthcoming (likely in mid-November 2025). An institution-level committee charged in Spring 2025 will complete its initial work on developing guidance for faculty, staff, and student use of generative AI in their respective roles; the guidance will be complemented by a new "AI at SLU" website featuring related resources. Following the issuance of guidance, the committee will consider the need for AI-specific policies. Of note, the Reinert Center has been facilitating faculty development on this topic since Spring 2023.

SLU's Division of Information Technology Services (ITS) is another major institutional unit with responsibilities that address the integrity of research and scholarly activity at SLU. The Saint Louis University Information Technology Appropriate Use Policy "provides guidelines for the appropriate use of Saint Louis University's IT resources, as well as for the University's access to information about and oversight of these resources." Complementing this important ITS policy is the SLU Libraries Appropriate Use Policy for Electronic Resources (University) which specifically addresses usage in support of research and teaching of "electronic resources licensed or made available by similar agreements" by the libraries. The ITS Information Security Officer serves as the University's Registered Agent for compliance with the federal Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Sources

- AAALAC Accreditation Directory Webpage
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Integrity Webpage
- Appropriate Use Policy for Electronic Resources (University) Webpage
- Collaborative institutional Training Initiative Webpage
- Conflict of Interest in Research Webpage
- Copyright Session LibGuide Webpage
- Course Syllabus Policy
- Digital Millenium Copyright Act Page in Catalog
- Environmental Health and Safety Webpage
- Five-Year Research Growth Plan Webpage
- FY22 Uniform Guidance Audit
- Ignite Seminar Library Research Tutorial Webpage
- Information Technology Appropriate Use Policy

- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Internal Google Site
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee Webpage
- Institutional Biosafety Committee Webpage
- Institutional Review Board Webpage
- Library Instruction Webpage
- Office of the Vice President for Research Webpage
- Radiation Safety Committee Webpage
- Research Councils and Committees Webpage
- Research Facilities Webpage
- Research Integrity and Compliance Program Webpage
- Responsible Conduct of Research Webpage
- Student Resources for Academic Integrity Webpage
- Style Guides and Manuals Webpage
- Responsible Conduct of Research Training Policy
- Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct Policy
- Reinert Center and AI Faculty Development
- Authorship for Scientific and Scholarly Publications Policy
- ENGL 1900 Library Research Tutorial Webpage

Criterion 2 - Summary

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Argument

As documented in this section, SLU acts with integrity; our institutional conduct is ethical and responsible.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Argument

At the institutional level, undergraduate and graduate curricula and policies are reviewed and approved by the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC) and the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC), respectively. The UAAC is responsible for vetting and approving new undergraduate programs; this committee is comprised of faculty representatives from the University's ten colleges and schools with undergraduate programs; there is also representation from the Faculty Senate, the undergraduate deans' offices, the Madrid Campus, the libraries, and the Office of the Provost. Departments proposing new or revised programs must complete the appropriate processes in our curriculum management system (CourseLeaf), following the established timelines for approval. For example, faculty submitting a proposal for a new program must provide information such as a summary, rationale, and need for the program, course and non-course requirements, a market analysis (conducted by our Office of Enrollment Management), enrollment estimations, resources needed, as well as an assessment plan that includes program learning outcomes and a curriculum map indicating in which courses each of the outcomes will be intentionally developed.

SLU's undergraduate "Core" (general education) curriculum is the only academic "program" not overseen by UAAC; rather, it is governed by the University Undergraduate Core Committee (UUCC), which vets and approves courses to meet our various Core academic requirements. The UUCC, like UAAC, is populated by faculty from throughout the SLU colleges/schools that offer undergraduate programs/majors; the UUCC is chaired by the Director of the Core, a faculty member on a full-time administrative assignment to manage the Core (with the support of a full-time Assistant Director and full-time Administrative Assistant).

New graduate programs are vetted by the GAAC members, and the processes for new and current program reviews are akin to those for undergraduate programs. Members of these committees receive targeted training early in their committee assignments.

SLU differentiates learning goals for undergraduate and graduate programs as articulated by the Academic Program Definitions Policies for Undergraduate Programs and Graduate Programs. Additionally, all program learning outcomes are publicly displayed on the "Learning Outcomes" tab of each academic program's entry in the University Catalog. Faculty submitting new programs to UAAC and GAAC are encouraged to work with the University's Assessment Director to develop and revise, as needed, their learning outcomes and related assessment methods to ensure that the learning outcomes are suitable and require levels of student performance appropriate to the degree awarded. At UAAC and GAAC meetings, issues with learning outcomes are addressed and changes required as needed prior to new program approval. SLU also has a policy governing dual-listed courses to help ensure the integrity of distinct course learning outcomes across the undergraduate and graduate levels; that policy is under revision as we analyze current dual-listing practices.

Once programs have been approved, their program learning outcomes are reviewed during annual and cyclical assessment reviews to ensure their continued propriety and effectiveness. Through the annual assessment reporting cycle (see 3.E.), program-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessed in any given year are reviewed for quality and to ensure the SLOs are appropriate for the degrees being earned. As programs revisit and revise assessment plans, this is another opportunity for the Assessment Director to work with faculty to ensure program SLOs are a good match for the credential. Additionally, the University Assessment Committee annually reviews and provides peer feedback on the assessment reports of 60-70 programs per year, as addressed in 3.E.; this review and analysis includes attention to the propriety of the program learning outcomes. Finally, SLU's comprehensive Academic Program Review process, detailed in 3.F., is another mechanism by which SLU's academic programs are reviewed for quality, including their required levels of student performance and program learning outcomes.

SLU offers programs both in the classroom and online; at our main campus in St. Louis and our campus in Madrid, Spain; at cohort sites in Missouri and other states; and in high schools in multiple states via our 1818 Advanced College Credit (dual credit) program. Regardless of the mode of delivery or location, all programs and courses are subject to the same approval processes noted above and the same academic and pedagogical standards – except for online courses and programs, which are also subject to additional standards (including required faculty training, as explained in 3.C.). All courses and programs on the Madrid Campus go through the same UAAC and GAAC approval processes, and there is joint and constant monitoring of course and program delivery across both campuses.

SLU's lone associate's degree (A.A.) is offered through the Prison Education Program at the Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center in Bonne Terre, Missouri—a maximum security state institution housing approximately 2,500 men. The program is offered to both incarcerated residents and prison staff members, and courses offered are the same as those offered on campus to other degree-seeking students. SLU full-time faculty travel to the prison regularly to teach the courses; distance education is not currently allowed by the prison.

SLU also offers courses taken by approximately 6,000 high-achieving high school students at their respective high schools in Missouri and beyond through our 1818 Advanced College Credit program. High school teachers who teach in the 1818 Program are trained by our full-time faculty on issues of course content and pedagogy and meet the appropriate faculty

qualifications for their disciplines; additionally, full-time SLU faculty designated as 1818 Program faculty liaisons review syllabi of 1818 courses, visit their classrooms in person to review the quality of the course and instructions, and work with their high school faculty counterparts to ensure consistency with on-campus sections of the same courses. The <u>1818 Program Handbook</u> outlines the <u>Program</u>; <u>additional 1818 policies and procedures</u> are detailed publicly on the 1818 Program website. <u>Discipline-specific resources for dual-credit faculty</u> include sample syllabi, grading and assessment expectations, classroom visit expectations, and course-specific supports.

Online academic programs at SLU are offered not by a single "online college" or academic unit but, rather, throughout SLU's colleges/schools. This ensures that the academic standards, learning outcomes, assessment processes, and faculty qualifications are consistent between online and on-ground programs. (See 3.F. for further information about distance education course and program quality.)

Sources

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- 1818 Policies and Procedures Webpage
- 1818 Program Handbook
- 1818 Program Overview Webpage
- Cross-Listing and Dual-Listing Courses Policy
- GAAC Membership 2025-26
- GAAC Training 10.3.25
- New Program Proposal Form in CourseLeaf
- Prison Education Program Webpage
- UAAC Membership 2025-26
- Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee Webpage
- University Assessment Committee Webpage
- Graduate Academic Program Definitions Policy
- Undergraduate Academic Program Definitions Policy
- Graduate Academic Affairs Committee Webpage
- University Undergraduate Core Committee (UUCC) Webpage

3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

SLU's faculty approved our new University Undergraduate Core (i.e., general education program) in March 2020. (Until this new University Core curriculum was approved, SLU lacked a common undergraduate general education curriculum across all colleges and schools.) This University-wide approval was the culminating event of a two-and-a-half year collaborative and iterative process (as detailed in our 2021 Assurance Argument) that involved faculty, students, alumni, staff, and administration – all working together to envision what a shared undergraduate experience at SLU could and should encompass. Building SLU's first ever Core asked the entire University community to answer this question: What curriculum can we build that "imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts" yet also remains "grounded in a philosophy or framework" true to the Catholic, Jesuit Mission and traditions of our institution? Answers to that question initially resulted in the nine Core Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that now guide the Core.

The SLOs are threaded throughout the University Core curriculum. They are both broadly liberal arts-based (SLO 2: ability to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines to tackle complex problems; SLO 3: critical thinking; SLO 4: written, visual, and oral communication) and also institution-specific (SLO 1: examine one's beliefs and vocation in dialogue with the Catholic, Jesuit tradition; SLOs 5, 6, and 7: engage with issues of intersectionality, justice, equity, global interdependence; SLO 9: take knowledge acquired at SLU out into the community and work in solidarity with others for the common good).

The nine Core SLOs are mapped (pg. 35) through 19 core curriculum requirements ("Core Components"), including both credit-bearing courses and required non-credit experiences, with various Core Components fostering student achievement at multiple levels of complexity/maturity: introductory (I), developing (D), and achieving (A). Each Core Component is designed intentionally to build, in granular and incremental ways, student achievement of the holistic Core SLOs. Instructors must indicate how a course will foster student achievement of both Core component-level and holistic University Core SLOs when they submit a course for Core approval; faculty-led curriculum subcommittees review syllabi and other learning outcomes-based information to ensure that courses approved are so designed. Per our University Core assessment plan (see 3.E.), we select an intentional sample of artifacts of student work from multiple component areas/Core courses to demonstrate the extent to which our approach to holistic SLO achievement is indeed fostering the intended nature and level of student achievement. Students learn about the Core Curriculum through SLU 101 (our registration/summer orientation program), advising, and their course syllabi.

The faculty's scholarly interests and expertise are leveraged and supported in the

classroom. Within the new Core Curriculum, Ignite Seminars (pg. 6) (typically taken in students' first term at SLU) invite faculty to teach a topic that "ignited their own passion" for research, teaching, activism, etc., and to teach about that via the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm. This then invites students to consider what ignites their own passion for inquiry, as well as introduces students to the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm. Also in the Core, Collaborative Inquiry seminars (pg. 9) focus students' attention on a multidimensional question without a straightforward or narrowly-conceived answer. This requires and fosters students' abilities to collaborate with each other, to draw on previously developed knowledge and skills across multiple courses (major and Core), and to understand the nature of the multidimensional question; this, in turn, highlights a central concept within Catholic education, which is the need to see a question synthetically, from many intellectual, spiritual and philosophical vantage points, in order to see God complexly at work in all things. Both the Ignite and Collaborative Inquiry seminars in SLU's Core invite faculty to connect their teaching to their areas of research expertise in creative ways that are also linked to SLU's Mission and identity as a Catholic, Jesuit institution.

All academic programs at SLU are guided by the identified student learning outcomes and curricula to foster student achievement of the outcomes; these outcomes reflect students' ability to collect, analyze, and communicate information; practice modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and develop skills adaptable to changing environments to varying degrees depending on the discipline. Evidence of student learning, specific to their disciplines, is available via the Program-Level Assessment of Student Learning reports (see 3.E.). Relatedly, evidence of students collecting, analyzing and communicating information and practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work through the Core curriculum is available via the Core Assessment of Student Learning reports (again, see 3.E.).

Both undergraduate and graduate students have opportunities to pursue research projects as part of their program curricula. For example, SLU Biology majors can join faculty research labs and/or participate in research projects at local organizations such as the St. Louis Zoo and the Missouri Botanical Garden. In the School of Science and Engineering, the Foundational Interdisciplinary Research Experience (FIRE) promotes collaboration among SSE faculty and empowers SSE undergraduate students with hands-on research and mentorship opportunities. SSE also hosts an Undergraduate Showcase each year to highlight the work of students who participate in research and design capstone experiences. The Senior Legacy Symposium is an annual event where undergraduates share the results of their research efforts; each student project and presentation is sponsored and overseen by a faculty member.

Our most recent NSSE results indicate that SLU's efforts to support undergraduate research are successful but could be strengthened: the 2023 NSSE data (pg. 5) showed that 35% of seniors had participated in research with faculty. To help facilitate matches between faculty who are seeking student assistants and students who are interested in participating in research experiences, Career Services has established the Scholarly Undergraduate Research Grants and Experiences (SURGE) program. This program is meant to provide a path to connect students with faculty who are conducting research, creative endeavors, and other scholarly projects at SLU. Students apply for SURGE positions through the Handshake platform (available via our Office of Career Services), and faculty choose which student(s) they seek to hire.

Career Services recently created a Experiential Learning Dashboard to track certain kinds of

experiential learning opportunities that SLU students are participating in at SLU. This Tableau dashboard includes undergraduate and graduate-level data from 2023, 2024 and 2025. Combining data from SLU academic records and departmental tracking in Handshake, the dashboard represents over 20,000 experiences counted at the term level during the reporting period. An internship or job is the leading experiential learning type (1,104 experiences, 62% of all such experiences). The top employer industries/practices associated with SLU student experiences tracked through Handshake are: higher education, health care, nonprofit organizations, and accounting. While this dashboard does not encompass all forms of experiential learning at SLU, it is a helpful tool for students.

Sources

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- NSSE23 High-Impact Practices (SLU) (page number 5)
- 2025-26 UUCC Curricular Subcommittee Assignments
- Biology Student Research Webpage
- Core Assessment Plan - Spring 2021
- Core Iterative Process 2018-2021
- Core Worksheet Guidelines
- Experiential Learning Dashboard Tableau
- Experiential Learning Dashboard Webpage
- Senior Legacy Symposium Webpage
- SSE FIRE Program Webpage
- SSE Undergraduate Showcase Webpage
- Student Research Webpage
- Undergraduate Core Webpage
- University Core Student Learning Outcomes
- University Undergraduate Core Framing Document
- University Undergraduate Core Framing Document (page number 6)
- University Undergraduate Core Framing Document (page number 9)
- University Undergraduate Core Framing Document (page number 35)

3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Argument

Faculty qualifications for all SLU programs, including those offered either on-campus (St. Louis or Madrid) or off-site and those offered on-ground or online, are governed by the University Faculty Credentials Policy that establishes standards that meet all related HLC regulations. Some SLU colleges/schools have chosen to adopt more stringent policies, or have adopted articulated criteria for any "pertinent professional experience" to be considered in determining faculty qualifications, and have therefore created their own unit-level policies in accordance with this University-level policy. Given SLU's recent history of concern with faculty qualifications in our 1818 Dual Credit Program (see below), faculty qualifications is a regular topic among the Provost, deans, and department chairs to ensure compliance. Dashboards developed by our Office of Institutional Research document compliance with internal and external policies via comprehensive data on the credentials of all assigned faculty, including breakdowns on a course-by course basis of each faculty's qualifications:

- St. Louis Campus - Fall 2025
- Madrid Campus - Fall 2025
- 1818 Dual Credit Program - Fall 2025

SLU's *University Faculty Qualifications Policy* also governs faculty assigned to teach SLU college-level courses at selected partner high schools via our 1818 Advanced College Credit Program ("1818 Program"), which operates predominately in Missouri and eastern Illinois, but also has several partner high schools in several other states. Despite recent changes to the HLC's requirements for dual-credit faculty, as well as far less stringent institutional policies at most of our regional competitor institutions, SLU is committed to holding dual-credit faculty qualifications criteria consistent with those of all our other faculty.

Faculty qualifications in the 1818 Program were a self-reported concern during SLU's last HLC Comprehensive Review in Fall 2021. But those issues were fully addressed quickly and decisively (as confirmed in our most recent HLC review), and an entirely new staff now runs the program, which is now under the direct oversight of the Office of the Provost. SLU's program is again known for our rigorous faculty credentials requirements as well as rigorous, regular oversight of dual-credit faculty and courses via the Faculty Liaison role. Ironically, this has led to several participating high schools opting to pursue dual-credit partnerships with other universities that, per the high school leaders, have lower expectations and therefore make partnership "easier." Given that SLU's 1818 Program is a community service and not relied upon substantively for its revenues, we have no intention of altering our current approach.

As outlined in the Faculty Manual, faculty "have primary responsibility for setting the

academic requirements for the degrees offered by the University; determining the contents of University courses and the methods of instruction to be used; setting standards for admission of students to the University; recommending the specific individuals who will be granted earned degrees." This important task of overseeing the curriculum can be carried out through the size and continuity of SLU's current faculty.

Per SLU's Fall 2024 Faculty Census (the Fall 2025 Faculty Census will be conducted in mid-November 2025), SLU had a total of 2,286 faculty employees (732 part-time, and 1,554 full-time). Of the 1554 full-time faculty, 640 (41%) were either tenured or on the tenure track; 918 (51%) were non-tenure track faculty. Tables detailing various faculty characteristics and statuses are linked below:

- Total Faculty and College Breakdown, by FT/PT Status
- Total Faculty and College Breakdown, by Tenure Status
- Total Faculty by Faculty Type
- Total Faculty by Race/Ethnicity and Tenure Status
- Total Faculty by Gender and Tenure Status

Our faculty numbers support a student-to-faculty ratio of 9.1 (per the *U.S. News* calculation), which compares favorably to our peers and competitors. Our class size distributions, complemented by data such as our retention and graduation rates (see 3.G) and student learning outcomes assessment results (see 3.E), substantiate that SLU has sufficient numbers of faculty to deliver our courses and educational programs in a manner that supports sound pedagogy, student-faculty engagement, and student-student engagement.

As SLU implements its recently-adopted Academic Program Sustainability and Viability policy, and as the institution strategically responds to the demographic "enrollment cliff" and other issues in the national and international landscapes impacting enrollment, we will also adjust faculty sizes when enrollment changes warrant doing so. For example, in Spring 2025, the Provost, deans, and department chairs worked together to offer the first set of long-term (three-year and five-year) non-tenure track contracts to approximately 30 faculty from well-enrolled programs and who met criteria outlined in our new Long-Term Non-Tenure Track Contracts Policy. In the same term, SLU also provided notice to approximately 40 non-tenure track faculty from under-enrolled programs that their one-year contracts would not be renewed; per protections codified in the Faculty Manual, that meant that the 2025-2026 academic year would be the final year for those faculty.

All full-time faculty members are evaluated annually based on standards established by their academic units. All faculty on the tenure track are evaluated at the midpoint between their hire and when they would normally apply for tenure and promotion, as outlined in the *Faculty Manual*. In addition, the Faculty Manual (pg. 22) articulates how faculty are evaluated for all levels of promotion, both on the tenure track and on the non-tenure track.

In all academic units, student feedback on teaching is solicited via a University-wide survey administered near the end of each course. In 2017 SLU implemented a centralized course feedback survey platform (Explorance Blue), as previous survey instruments were inconsistent across schools/colleges and departments. The University Assessment Director coordinates the course feedback survey administration in accordance with the University Policy on End-of-Term Course Feedback Surveys which was adopted in 2017 (with only minor revisions since then). The policy addresses course feedback surveys' scope and

purpose, administration period, data access, and exceptions.

A standard set of course feedback survey questions has been administered at the end of each term (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer) since Fall 2017. The questions were developed by the University Assessment Office in consultation with the Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning and vetted by the Council of Academic Deans and Directors (CADD). Additionally, beginning in Spring 2021, schools/colleges, departments, and programs have been able to add up to five custom questions.

There are a variety of reports created each term to share the course feedback survey data. Instructors receive individual course feedback survey reports as well as an aggregated instructor report; department chairs receive reports that group course feedback survey data by subject code; and college-level administration have access to all data for their school/college.

Academic leaders writing the policy that governs this process were attentive to the national discussions and concerns about bias in student responses on such surveys. Accordingly, they were intentional about stipulating the limited uses of this kind of data in faculty reviews. For example, per this policy, course feedback survey reports are to be just *one* component of a faculty member's promotion and tenure application packet. Further, the policy stipulates that "in no context is SCE (student course evaluation) data to be employed as the sole measure of a faculty member's teaching performance or as the sole measure of the value/quality of a course."

Of note, SLU publishes a <u>Student Guide for End-of-Term Course Feedback Surveys</u> that draws on the extensive national literature on this topic to help students provide meaningful, appropriate feedback. We also added in Spring 2024 a "preamble" to the survey:

Student feedback about their courses and instructors plays an important role in the improvement of teaching and learning. Research shows, however, that student feedback is often influenced by unconscious and unintentional biases about their instructors. For example, women and instructors of color systemically receive less positive student feedback than white men – even when there are no actual differences in the instruction or in what students have learned. To help reduce the possibility of any bias in your feedback, please focus your responses on the questions asked, and be intentional about not responding in a way that reflects any interpretation or judgement of an instructor's perceived identity(ies), age, appearance, personality, or national origin.

National research on adding similar preambles indicates that doing so can help reduce the number of comments students submit that are not appropriately related to teaching and learning.

Despite the policy's expectations on appropriately emphasizing (or de-emphasizing) student feedback in high-stakes faculty evaluation processes (e.g., for promotion and/or tenure review), our greatest challenge continues to be helping departments develop and implement holistic, evidence-informed systems of teaching evaluation. A major step toward meeting that challenge was the adoption of an institution-level <u>Teaching Effectiveness Framework</u>, approved in May 2025 as part of a <u>comprehensive teaching effectiveness initiative</u> that grew from the Academic Strategic Plan and recommendations from the Faculty Senate. We are now in <u>Phase 2 (2025-2026)</u> of that initiative, which calls for SLU to "Develop

recommendations for a holistic system of teaching evaluation at SLU, including how the University should implement that system." The School of Science and Engineering has already taken great strides on this front, as illustrated in its <u>Teaching Excellence Incentive Program</u> and its <u>REACH Program: Reflection, Evaluation, and Assessment of Courses for High-Impact Teaching</u> .

 The <u>Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning</u> offers extensive programming for supporting Saint Louis University faculty in improving their pedagogical approaches and designing their courses, regardless of format. The Center staff includes a director, two instructional developers, three program support directors, and a program manager.

One of the Reinert Center's primary offerings is the <u>University Teaching Skills Program</u>, which promotes the development of faculty and graduate students in their journey toward transformative teaching. The requirements of the certificates in this program foster professional growth that enhances teaching practices, support development of teaching philosophies, and document teaching competencies. There are four certificate options:

- The <u>Foundations in University Teaching Skills Certificate</u>
- The <u>Principles in University Teaching Skills Certificate</u>
- The <u>Online University Teaching Skills Certificate</u>
- The <u>Practices in University Teaching Skills Certificate</u>

Another of the Reinert Center's significant contributions to successful teaching at SLU is their <u>Ignatian Pedagogy Programs</u>. During the annual, daylong Ignatian Pedagogy Institute, participants expand and deepen their knowledge of Ignatian Pedagogy as an extension of Ignatian spirituality as related to the particular topic of the year. Through multiple interactive sessions, participants engage in strategies that may be adapted to a variety of disciplines and pedagogical purposes. Over a three-year cycle, Institute participants focus on the topics of Contemplation, Imagination, and Discernment practices. The Ignatian Pedagogy Academy is more intensive experience over three years comprised of annual participation in the Institute as well as additional time spent with other faculty at least once per semester to discuss common readings, participate in a common workshop or facilitated discussion, or similar activities. At the end of the three-year cycle, Academy members who have engaged regularly in the community of practice meetings and who have completed all three offerings of the Ignatian Pedagogy Institute are designated Fellows of the Ignatian Pedagogy Academy and become key resources to faculty colleagues.

The <u>Distance Education Office</u> ensure that faculty teaching distance courses are appropriately prepared and supported to be effective. Any instructor assigned to teach a distance course (in any format) at SLU must demonstrate that they "are appropriately prepared to teach in the distance education environment" per the University Policy for Distance Education. This means that faculty teaching online must complete <u>formal preparation</u> in distance education pedagogy (typically through the Reinert Center) and successfully complete the University's <u>Distance Course Review Process</u>. Distance education standards and review processes are more comprehensively addressed in 3.F.

In addition to their teaching roles, tenured and tenure-track faculty at Saint Louis University are expected to be active in their scholarly areas of expertise. Expectations for faculty scholarship are detailed in each unit's promotion and tenure guidelines. SLU has been increasingly focused on its quality as a Carnegie R1-designated research institution, as

faculty and leadership alike stress the importance of productivity and impact for faculty expected to be research-active. Per the direction of the Provost, deans, and department chairs, many faculty are not and need not be research-active for SLU to maintain and advance its research profile. Our research commitments (and related faculty workload units) are intentionally assigned to faculty based on faculty interests and expertise as well as SLU's overall research goals and needs.

SLU's Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) supports funded research by assisting with grant-writing, proposal submission, post-award compliance, and a host of other services that advance SLU's research efforts; the OVPR also supports non-funded research and scholarship. SLU's Sabbatical and Developmental Leave Policy and Faculty Research Leave Program also significantly support faculty scholarship.

The Office of Faculty Affairs in the Office of the Provost coordinates the annual New Faculty Orientation for all new faculty each August. This event includes presentations from University leaders, a session on SLU's history and Mission, and overviews of major divisions/offices in the University, such as DICE, Student Development, SLU Research Center, and the Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning. Attendees choose from a menu of interactive workshops to attend, as well. A Resource Fair is offered, which focuses on units and organizations that directly support faculty in their employment and transition to SLU. Later in the fall semester, new faculty have an opportunity to attend a second Resource Fair, which features student-facing support units which can assist faculty in their work with students.

Additionally, the Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development in the School of Medicine hosts an Orientation Breakfast twice a year for SOM faculty, which serves as a supplement to the University-level orientation programming. This office also publishes a New Faculty Information Guide for new SOM faculty.

Academic Advising offices are in multiple locations on campus, with each office supporting students in specific colleges or schools. Each unit is managed by a director of Academic Advising who reports to Assistant Provost for Academic Success in the Office of the Provost. This structure allows for consistent practices and support across the various units while acknowledging the unique characteristics of each program's curriculum and academic support needs. A master's degree is preferred but not required for the entry-level advisor position, and a master's degree is required for promotion. All current academic advisors hold a master's degree. There is an Advising Professional Development Committee responsible for providing training and development opportunities to better address the professional needs of Academic Advisors at Saint Louis University.

In the Division of Student Development, master's degrees are the requirement for most professional staff positions. All student tutors and Supplemental Instruction (SI) leaders are rigorously screened by Student Success Center staff and, in some cases, departmental faculty, before being hired. In addition, staff in the Division of Student Development are expected and encouraged to engage in ongoing professional development efforts coordinated by the Directors of each unit.

SLU has approximately 1,733 total staff at multiple levels across the organization. For all of SLU's employees, a comprehensive set of human resources policies support the definition of work expectations as well as the educational and professional backgrounds required for

success in a given position. Employees engage – both voluntarily and at the request of supervisors – in <u>Workday Learning</u> and instructor-led training programs as needed. Further, SLU's <u>Workforce Center</u>, a non-credit industry and organizational training unit of the University, provides certification bootcamps in multiple information technology competencies, certificates in leadership and management skills, and digital badging recognition. Exemplary work is recognized via multiple award programs, including the University-wide <u>SLU Sparks</u> and <u>Presidential Service Awards</u>.

SLU's <u>Staff Performance Management Policy</u> requires that all staff participate in the annual <u>University Performance Evaluation Program</u>. Completed through Workday, the University Performance Evaluation Program guides supervisors and their staff through a comprehensive review of performance in the context of SLU institutional values, job-specific annual goals, and individual development plans addressing professional development interests, plans, and requirements. The annual review protocol begins with a staff self-evaluation followed by performance review discussions with supervisors, and concludes with "plus one" approval (supervisor of the supervisor) to ensure a comprehensive understanding of evaluation statuses and expectations. Annual faculty evaluations differ significantly, and are overseen by department chairs and deans. Faculty and staff at our Madrid campus are, in most cases, governed by distinct policies stemming from Spanish labor laws that differ significantly from those in the United States.

Sources

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- Ignatian Pedagogy Programs Webpage
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- Total Faculty and College by Tenure Status
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- Fall 2025 1818 Instructor Credentials

3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

SLU students at all levels engage in orientation programs to prepare them for University life, teach them about campus support resources, and introduce them to the faculty in their respective academic units. Distance learners in certain programs come to campus for their orientation, but most participate in orientation online. Degree-seeking undergraduate students begin to make their transition to University life at SLU 101, a summer orientation program all undergraduate students are expected to attend. In SLU 101, students learn about support services, academic expectations, and attend school/college-specific academic advising overviews. Additionally, SLU 101 is designed to be an orientation for the students' families so they can understand the support systems available for our students. The program helps educate these key stakeholders on significant transitional issues. Undergraduate transfer students attend a version of SLU 101 more tailored to their needs. Finally, the Student Involvement Center facilitates the Fall Welcome program, which takes place once students have moved to campus for the Fall term and lasts for approximately two weeks; the purpose of this program is to further support first-year and transfer students in their transition to SLU.

Graduate students participate in a distinct new student orientation program. International students at the undergraduate and graduate levels are required to participate in additional orientation programs that supplement these other orientations.

The University designs and maintains student support programs and services geared to help students succeed at all levels. All currently enrolled students have access to the Student Success Center, a one-stop-shop for academic support programs, Student Success Coaching, and the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources. Centralizing key support services in the Student Success Center allows students to utilize, and familiarize themselves with, a variety of resources, and facilitates referrals among services.

For undergraduate students, this includes course-based tutoring, which is offered for more than 75 courses. The University identifies courses for which tutoring is offered based upon number of students enrolled, historical level of difficulty (as measured by "D" grade/"F" grade/course withdrawal [DFW] rates), utilization in prior terms, and prior requests for services. SLU also has a Supplemental Instruction (SI) program utilized within large, lecture courses in biology, chemistry, physics, anatomy, human physiology, and psychology. Course faculty work with staff in Academic Support to identify students to serve as SI leaders and promote services within their classrooms. University Writing Services (UWS) provides support for both written and oral communication projects for undergraduate and graduate students. Students may opt for a synchronous or asynchronous appointment. If students are

uncertain of where to start for support for any course, they may reach out to a student success coach, who offers holistic support for academic, social, and emotional development. The School of Nursing also offers a similar coaching support through the role of the Retention Specialist.

For students who have a diagnosed disability, the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR) provides support and associated resources – including academic and housing accommodations. As part of the SLU 101 orientation process, students are informed of and provided time to meet with the CADR staff. To apply for accommodations, students must have documentation of a diagnosed disability, completion of an application, and have an appointment with a CADR staff member to talk about the impact of the disability on their learning environment at SLU. CADR works to ensure students are provided the necessary assistive technology. Additionally, the Center oversees two testing centers to support accommodations, including quiet testing space, computer use, readers, and extended time. For students who believe they have a disability, they may also work with CADR to help connect with testing sites (including SLU's Psychological Services Center). Relatedly, from 2023-2025 a working group focused on accessibility support for graduate students; this led to several enhancements for graduate students requesting accommodations for campus work and assistantship duties, and also led to the creation of a Guide on Academic Accommodations.

To ensure ease of access, most student support services utilize the EAB Navigate system for scheduling appointments. EAB is also used by advisors and other support staff to record notes about appointments with students, next steps for support, etc.

In addition to the Student Success Center, there are also other academic support resources available to students. International students may utilize the English Language Center, which offers specialized writing support for all SLU students whose native language is not English. The Department of Mathematics and Statistics provides drop-in tutoring to support all mathematics and statistics courses; help sessions are staffed by advanced mathematics students. The Communication Skills Lab, sponsored by the Department of Communication, provides support and feedback for speeches and visual communication, from brainstorming through delivery. The Department of Computer Science hosts tutoring sessions for specific classes and programming languages.

SLU uses placement testing to ensure students are enrolled in the most appropriate math, English, and chemistry courses. All incoming students (new and transfer) must meet English and math placement criteria through completion of online placement tests (or appropriate college credit equivalencies such as dual-credit or Advance Placement/AP credit). Pre-health students, pre-medicine students, or students in any major requiring general chemistry must take the chemistry placement test. Domestic students who have studied another language are encouraged to complete the foreign language placement test; it is required for certain programs.

The Department of Mathematics and Statistics uses a variety of methods to place students in the most appropriate first mathematics or statistics course at SLU. Students can receive credit based on AP or International Baccalaureate (IB) test scores while at the same time establishing a natural placement in the next appropriate mathematics or statistics course. For students without AP or IB credit, the department generates a Math-Index using their standardized test scores (ACT/SAT) and high school GPA; different courses are

recommended for students based on their Math-Index score and the amount of math required in their program of study. The Math-Index is a SLU-specific tool created by the Math faculty based on five years of student success data. For students who do not have a Math-Index score, the department administers online skills tests that enable students to demonstrate background knowledge at three different levels. Students do not receive credit based on the skills tests but can place out of a given course with a score of 70% or higher on the corresponding skills test.

International students have access to these same online assessments. Those whose native language(s) is not English are also asked to demonstrate English language proficiency by submitting scores from one of several standardized tests, including the TOEFL, the SAT, the English portion of the ACT, and Duolingo. Additionally, most international students enrolling at SLU will be required to take the Saint Louis University Writing Examination (SLUWE), a placement exam for non-native English speakers measuring language proficiency in writing, reading, and grammar. Different versions of the SLUWE are administered for graduate and undergraduate students.

INTO SLU, SLU's partner in recruiting and educating new international students, provides two programs for students who do not initially meet SLU's English language requirements. The first, Academic English, is designed for students who do not meet the English language entry requirements for an Undergraduate or Graduate Pathway program. Upon successful completion of Academic English, students may progress to the second program, a Pathway. INTO Saint Louis University Undergraduate and Graduate Pathway programs are ideal for international students who need additional English language and academic preparation before continuing to a degree program at a United States university. Throughout this experience, students are supported by the English Language Center, an academic resource center dedicated to supporting ESL students.

The Office of Student Services at the School of Law provides support to all SLU law students from orientation through registration, examinations, and graduation. The Office of Student Affairs at the School of Medicine provides guidance, support, and administrative assistance to all medical students.

To help students prepare for online learning, the Distance Education Office provides tips for succeeding in online courses, technology requirements and resources, and information on how to enroll in online courses at SLU. The associated webpage also has a comprehensive list of the University resources available for all students to ensure distance students are aware that these resources are available to them, too.

SLU has long been attentive to student mental health and wellness, in keeping with its recognition of *cura personalis* – the Jesuit tradition of care for the whole person – as the governing approach. Subsequent to the SGA's Mental Health Task Force 2021 report , the Provost announced the establishment of a Student Well-being Task Force, composed of students, faculty, and staff, charged with "assessing SLU's health and well-being ecosystem for students and developing recommendations to advance a culture of well-being for all students." An important decision that the Task Force made early on was to focus on *holistic health and well-being* (including physical, intellectual, emotional, environmental, spiritual, social, etc.), not just mental health. During the 2021-22 academic year, and operating under an established set of foundational assumptions and beliefs as well as guiding principles, the Task Force accomplished the following:

- Examined SLU assessment data
- Reviewed common readings and relevant literature
- Conducted approximately 20 listening sessions with University stakeholders
- Engaged in multiple iterative drafting activities (in person and online) to ensure all members of the Task Force had opportunities to shape the work
- Drafted a set of Strategic Priorities and associated Recommended Actions
- Collected feedback on the draft recommendations from all University stakeholders
- Refined/revised draft recommendations

In their final report, the Task Force identified four strategic priorities (and accompanying goals for each):

1. Our commitment to student flourishing is embedded throughout the institution and is reflected in our priorities, actions, and communications.
2. We take evidence-based approaches to supporting student well-being, including understanding disparate outcomes for particular groups of students.
3. We intentionally create spaces and opportunities for connection and belonging for all students, with particular attention to the distinctive needs of students from marginalized backgrounds and experiences.
4. Our community models an ethos of *cura personalis* that explicitly prioritizes and integrates mind, body, and spirit.

To advance the Well-Being Task Force's report and Strategic Priorities, SLU created a new leadership position in Student Development, the Assistant Vice President for Student Well-Being. Additionally, we established a partnership with the Jed Foundation to become a JED campus in October 2022. Through the four-year partnership, JED helps SLU elevate its support of student mental health, providing assessment tools, feedback reports, strategic planning assistance, and ongoing support from the organization's higher education team, which includes clinicians experienced in working with college students. A JED Task Force, led by the director of the University Counseling Center and the Assistant Vice President of DICE, and which also includes students, staff, and faculty, is responsible for implementing the SLU-JED Strategic Plan developed in Spring 2023. In summer 2024, the JED Task Force published a progress report, sharing highlights of what had been accomplished at the halfway point of the partnership. Examples included:

- Earning the 2023 Campus Prevention Network Seal of Prevention; this award recognizes higher education institutions that exemplify leadership in digital prevention programming, prioritizing student safety, well-being, and inclusion.
- Continuing to offer Mental Health First Aid training to faculty, staff, and students to help students develop valuable skills to better care for themselves and their peers. A total of 637 students and 624 faculty/staff had completed this training (at that time).
- Opening new WellSPACES on campus, bringing our total to five sites where students can relax, rejuvenate, meditate, learn, and enjoy community with one another.
- Established the weekly *Alone Together* Social Club, which takes place each Monday and includes a visit from SLU's facility dog, Woody.
- Hosted SLU's Alcohol and Other Drug Education Week, a full week of workshops, guest speakers, resource fairs, and engaging pop-up events.
- Optimized SLU website navigation to meet JED Campus' recommended 1-to-2-click policy for accessing student health and counseling resources.

Eleven different working groups continue to implement the JED strategic plan, with the final actions scheduled to wrap up in Spring 2026.

Participation in living-learning communities, a high-impact practice, is another mechanism by which SLU undergraduate students are supported. Students in specific underlined learning communities live together in the same residence hall and take classes that are centered around a particular major, aspect of social identity and experience, or academic interest. The benefits of participating in a learning community at SLU include meeting students with similar academic and personal goals, connecting to campus life and University resources, accessing peer mentoring and tutoring, exploring leadership development opportunities, and exploring career options. The data from the 2023 administration of NSSE (pg. 5) showed that during their first-year, 32% of students participated in a learning community; this is slightly lower than the 38% of first-year students who indicated they had done so in 2020. However, this is an area in which SLU students participate much more than students in our comparison groups. In the 2023 results (pg. 5), SLU's first-year student participation in learning communities was 18 percentage points higher than the similar and private university comparison group, 16 percentage points higher than the smaller Jesuit institution comparison group, and 21 percentage points higher than the private research institution comparison group.

SLU's Office of Career Services provides support to students from their first year on campus through graduation – and as alumni. The office employs the Handshake online platform to serve as the comprehensive resource for students and employers. This tool hosts SLU's main job and internship database, online resume reviews, and scheduling for on-campus interviews. Students can also use Handshake to search for on-campus employment and complete training modules online.

Faculty and staff can request classroom presentations from Career Services staff and partner employers who can come speak to students about opportunities. Career Services also provides support via its online mock interview tool, career preparedness workshops, and career exploration resources. On-campus Career Fairs are typically held on the St. Louis campus at the Busch Student Center once per term. The 2020 NSSE data showed that by spring of their senior year, 64% of SLU students had participated in some form of internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement. That number decreased to 59% in the 2023 results, though 18% of seniors still planned to do so before graduating.

As a result of the Kennedy & Company recommendations (see 4.A.), in 2024 SLU combined two legacy student support programs – the Students' Opportunities for Achievement and Resources (SOAR) program and the Billikens' First Chapter (BFC) program – to create one united program called RISE (Reflect. Ignite. Succeed. Engage.). The SOAR program was established in 2020 after learning that SLU's TRIO Student Support Services grant was not renewed due to the comparatively positive persistence rates among the students served. After the loss of this grant-funded program, which had operated since 1984, SLU committed to self-funding similar programming and expanding the number of students included. SOAR/SSS worked with SLU undergraduate students who were a first-generation college student, a Pell grant recipient, or had a registered disability with the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR).

The Billikens' First Chapter (BFC) program was established in 2021 to help ease the

transition into SLU for admissible students who struggled somewhat in high school and who would be more likely to retain and graduate at rates lower than their SLU peers. BFC was originally charged to support first-year students who met selection criteria that overlapped with several of the criteria of the SOAR program, and it offered similar supports; this created confusion among students about the nature and purpose of, and eligibility for, the two separate but similar programs.

Accordingly, the single RISE program was created via merger of the other two programs. RISE now supports undergraduate SLU students who meet at least two of the following criteria:

- First-generation college student
- Pell grant recipient
- Has a registered disability with the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR)
- Identifies as a member of a minoritized racial/ethnic group based on SLU's data (Black/African American, Latina/Latino, Asian, and Two or more races)

RISE aims to embody the Saint Louis University mantra of *cura personalis* (caring for the whole person). The program's mission and goals focus on maintaining retention rates, fostering academic success, and cultivating a sense of belonging within the university community. There are currently approximately 300 students in the new RISE program; given its recent start, work to assess the program's effectiveness is just now underway.

Academic advising at SLU is housed centrally under the Assistant Provost for Academic Advising to foster greater cohesiveness and consistency in the advising process, regardless of a student's major. To ensure depth of advisor knowledge and connections to faculty, on the St. Louis campus each school and college with undergraduate programs has an academic advising office, and all students are assigned to an academic advisor housed in the school or college offering their current primary major. Students may also work closely with advisors in second majors, as well as special advisors in programs such as the Honors Program, INTO SLU, and Pre-Health and Pre-Law Studies. Each international student on the St. Louis campus is also assigned an international academic advisor to collaborate with all other advisers in support of each student's personal wellness, immigration compliance, and academic success.

Given the Madrid Campus' different size and structure, that campus features a different advising model. For first- and second-year students, dedicated advisors support individualized educational planning and encourage strategies for academic and transitional success. For students who have completed at least 59 credit hours (essentially junior-level standing), the faculty serve as students' advisors; they help with educational planning and also offer disciplinary/professional perspectives to help students plan for first careers or graduate/professional school. For all Madrid Campus students, career counselors help students identify career options and obtain internships and work experience in their selected fields. As on the St. Louis campus, all Madrid students are responsible for active participation in the advising process.

The Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) is SLU's primary University-wide resource dedicated to supporting excellence in teaching on both the St. Louis and Madrid Campuses. Founded in 1992, the Reinert Center offers an extensive array

of programs and services supporting individual faculty (full- and part-time), but also the entire faculty of academic programs/departments and colleges/schools.

For example, Reinert Center Services for full-time faculty include:

- Teaching Consultations
- Classroom Observations
- Small-Group Instructional Feedback Sessions
- Instructional Design for On-Ground and Distance Education Courses
- Customized Workshops

For academic departments or programs, Reinert Center supports include:

- Assessing and documenting teaching effectiveness
- Understanding and integrating Ignatian Pedagogy
- Mapping and aligning curricular goals and teaching
- Designing effective assignments
- Understanding the science of learning and evidence-based instruction

The primary aim of the Reinert Center's Culturally Responsive Teaching Institute and supporting programming is to build pedagogical capacity for teaching an increasingly diverse student body at SLU. While the Institute was designed with a focus on the particular needs of international and multilingual students, the framework is rooted in the research on learning-focused course design and instruction. Thus, the theories and methods underpinning the Institute create more inclusive learning experiences for a broad range of diverse learners.

Reinert Center staff also serve as key participants on University-level curriculum committees; they have led and supported multiple institution-level teaching initiatives, including those that resulted in the recently-adopted Teaching Effectiveness Framework; they provide key counsel on and leadership for the implementation of our End-of-Term Student Feedback course surveys; and serve on search committees for institutional leaders.

University-level standards for excellence in online education, and resources supporting online teaching, are offered centrally. The Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning also serves as the Chief Online Learning Officer and oversees distance education at SLU, supported by a Distance Education Manager and a Distance Education Committee (DEC). The Distance Education Office focuses on the quality of distance education in all of SLU's programs. Distance Education Standards (pg. 3), as well as related definitions, are codified in the University Policy for Distance Education, created by the DEC and approved via the University's academic policy approval process. The Distance Education Standards are designed to ensure academic quality is maintained throughout the University's distance education programs and courses, and to address regulatory compliance. The standards are based on the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions' (C-RAC) Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education and were developed specifically with SLU's context and Mission in mind. Individual courses go through a rigorous process of review, including peer review, following the Distance Course Design Standards Policy and the corresponding rubric. Support for faculty teaching online is offered through the Reinert Center, where a dedicated Digital Learning Specialist works with faculty on online course design and instruction, and a dedicated Program Director oversees ongoing professional development

opportunities for online instructors.

As SLU has expanded its distance education offerings and matured in our oversight of their quality, the DEC continues to create and offer resources for the SLU community to ensure courses and programs meet expectations. Two examples are currently in the final stages of approval in 2025. The first is the Distance Education at SLU: A Guide for Academic Leaders, the purpose of which is to provide a high-level overview of distance education compliance and quality assurance processes, as well as links to resources, policies, and procedures that all SLU deans, chairs, and program directors need to be aware of as they develop and sustain distance courses and programs.

The second forthcoming distance education resource is the Checklist for Distance Education Programs: Requirements for Academic Units. This document articulates Saint Louis University's expectations for distance programs, as described in the University Policy for Distance Education. The focus is on items an academic unit needs to be aware of as they commit to offering distance programs. Many of the expectations overlap with those of in-person programs, though some additional expectations are necessary. The requirements are informed by federal regulatory and accreditation requirements, as well as SLU's commitment to ensuring all distance offerings are aligned with the Essential Features of a Jesuit Distance Education.

Throughout campus, high-level educational technology is built into increasingly more classrooms each year. The Division of Information Technology Services (ITS) supports effective teaching and student learning by refreshing existing classroom software and hardware, and by ensuring that all IT performs as designed – for faculty and for students. Decisions about educational technologies are informed by two University-level committees made up of faculty representatives from the colleges/schools: the Learning Technologies Advisory Committee and the LMS Steering Committee. ITS support is offered by phone or online, and at hours that facilitate the work of internationally-based students and faculty. For example, technical support for Canvas, the University's learning management system, is available 24/7.

SLU's ITS provides numerous services and products, such as the Microsoft Office University 365 platform to all faculty, staff, and students. ITS maintains the GlobalProtect VPN mechanism by which most faculty and staff access SLU network resources and shared drives while working remotely. The University has purchased a set number of ATLAS.ti, SAS, and SPSS licenses that ITS is able to resell to departments or individual faculty, staff, and students; there are also discounts available for personal purchases of software and hardware. ITS also supports Canvas, SLU's learning management system and primary vehicle by which SLU instructors deliver online course content.

SLU's Libraries offer exceptionally rich holdings, supplemented by a wealth of online resources and significant reciprocal borrowing agreements. Pius Library, the Medical Center Library, and the Law Library collectively contain or provide online access to many of the major source collections, research tools, and scholarly journals essential for teaching and undergraduate and graduate study on SLU's St. Louis campus; SLU's ascent to Carnegie R1 status has prompted a benchmarking review that will result in recommendations for changes/investments needed to best support the University's most prolific and impactful faculty researchers and scholars.

Digital collections of rare and historical items from the Libraries' collections are making more accessible the Libraries' distinctive collections while helping to preserve the original items. SLU's libraries are currently members of MOBIUS, a non-profit consortium of Missouri libraries whose purpose is to share materials quickly and efficiently between in-state locations; the MOBIUS Union Catalog has expanded to include more than 29 million items, serving users in Missouri and into Oklahoma, Iowa, Kansas and Texas. The SLU Libraries also provide efficient Interlibrary Loan service through which journal articles and other publications not owned by SLU can be obtained quickly. Additionally, SLU's St. Louis Libraries support the Madrid Campus Library through (1) representation in the SLU Libraries Catalog; (2) proxy server access to most of the electronic resources available at the St. Louis campus; (3) electronic document delivery via interlibrary loan; and (4) usage of the St. Louis libraries' online course reserve system.

The Pius Library houses the Academic Technology Commons (ATC), opened in 2017. A collaborative project of the University Libraries, Information Technology Services, and Student Government Association, the ATC engages the SLU community with cutting edge technology.

Subject specialist library faculty assist students and faculty with both general research inquiries and those that are grounded in the disciplines. In partnership with the discipline-based academic faculty, subject librarians teach essential information literacy skills through in-class presentations, online tutorials, one-on-one research consultations, collaboration on student assignments, and the development of instructional research guides. The Libraries support an increasingly popular 24/7 librarian online chat service, which allows students to receive library assistance from any location.

Other teaching, learning, and research facilities support the needs of SLU's faculty and students and their diverse academic programs. For example, SLU's newest building, the Sinquefield Science and Engineering Center, opened in Summer 2020. This $50M, 90,000-square-foot, 3-story facility features innovative teaching environments and flexible lab spaces. The building includes: teaching lab spaces to support bioinformatics, biology, biomedical engineering, chemistry, neuroscience, and computer science courses that support all science, engineering, nursing, and health science majors at SLU; 10,000 square feet of research space; an active learning classroom that can seat up to 210; formal and informal collaboration and gathering spaces; and a research computing and data visualization support center. Overall, SLU's St. Louis campus is set on 260 acres featuring 128 buildings.

As an R1 research university with a focus on undergraduate and graduate-level health sciences education and research, our network of clinical sites, locally and nationally, is extensive. The number of clinical sites SLU can offer students is, however, limited both by specialized program accreditor requirements and by site availability; the growth of nursing and allied health programs locally, regionally, and nationally is making contracting for sufficient numbers of clinical sites ever more challenging.

Finally, SLU has owns and operates several museums that serve as key resources for faculty and students in courses and related research. For example, the Samuel Cupples House and Gallery, built in 1890, hosts a gallery for SLU's collection of fine and decorative art pre-dating 1919. Its McNamee Gallery hosts exhibitions of art by SLU students and faculty from the fine and performing arts department, as well as visiting artists. The Saint

Louis University Museum of Art (SLUMA), opened in 2002, is a nationally recognized museum that exhibits and collects works by modern masters, as well as displays an extensive collection of Jesuit artworks and artifacts.

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3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

Institutional direction for and oversight of assessment of student learning for academic programs at SLU is the responsibility of the Assessment Director, who reports to the Associate Provost overseeing assessment and accreditation (and who is also our HLC ALO). The Assessment Director engages directly with deans, chairs, and academic program leaders to provide institution-level guidance and expectations for program assessment. The Assessment Director also leads the University Assessment Committee (UAC), which was established in 2017 and greatly expands the scope and impact of University-level guidance for assessment.

Program-Level Assessment of Student Learning

At SLU, every degree program has clearly stated, publicly-available learning outcomes. Through the process described in 3.A., new undergraduate and graduate degree programs go through an approval process with the appropriate curriculum governance committee (i.e., Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC) or Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC)). That approval process also includes review and approval of the program's intended student learning outcomes and initial assessment plan. Once program-level learning outcomes are approved or revised, they are published in their respective program's entry in the web-based University Catalog; this is an expression of SLU's commitment to transparency to students and families regarding what they can expect to learn as a result of a SLU education.

All program assessment plans are expected to adhere to the Assessment Plan Template, created by the Assessment Director in consultation with the University Assessment Committee. The assessment plan includes the following components:

1. Student learning outcomes
2. Curriculum map
3. Artifacts of student learning to be evaluated for assessment
4. The evaluation process
5. How and when the program faculty intend to review and use the data to make decisions regarding the program

All program-level assessment plans are available in an Assessment of Student Learning Plans and Reports table available on SLU's Google platform, organized by school/college and then program. One responsibility of the Assessment Director is to support program faculty as they create and revise assessment plans. This support includes the development of the Assessment Plan Checklist, which is intended to encourage faculty to ensure the plan, and the assessment process itself, is of high quality before being submitted to the Assessment Director for review.

Once an assessment plan has been developed/revised, SLU expects program faculty to implement the plan as written, utilizing sound assessment practices, consulting the Assessment Director as needed, and incorporating resulting data into subsequent program decision-making. To document this work, all academic programs are expected to submit annual program-level assessment reports. For efficiency and consistency, the Office of Assessment provides an Assessment Report Template, designed with input from the University Assessment Committee. The original report template was revised in June 2020 with a more intentional focus on the use of data to inform necessary changes – either to curriculum, to pedagogy, or to the assessment process itself. For the 2024-25 report template the UAC added two pages of guidelines to the front of the template to provide helpful information regarding the completion of the report. The current report template includes seven sections:

1. Student learning outcomes
2. Artifacts of student learning
3. The evaluation process
4. Data/results
5. Findings: interpretations and conclusions
6. Use of current assessment findings
7. Use of previous assessment findings

NOTE: Faculty in academic programs at SLU Madrid work in coordination with the faculty on the St. Louis campus on assessment of student learning. While there are naturally varying levels of cooperation across disciplines and programs, program assessment plans address the program as offered at all locations. Likewise, annual program assessment reports are to include analysis of student learning on both campuses and across all modalities.

The annual report due dates are determined according to the planning and implementation cycles identified by each school and college; however, the Office of Assessment strongly encourages the submission of reports only after the program faculty have spent time reviewing the results and discussing how they intend to take action based on the data. In fact, this expectation is so strong that if a program submits their report before meaningfully completing Section 6, the Assessment Director returns the report and asks for it to be re-submitted after faculty have reviewed and discussed the report findings and determined how they will use the information moving forward. The documentation of this information then makes it easier to complete section 7 of the report (use of previous findings) in future years, and there is a clearer link from previous reports to the current one.

In addition to developing the standard Assessment Report Template, in 2024-2025 the Assessment Director created two other reporting templates to better fit the needs of some programs. Over the past few years, several programs have undertaken efforts to substantively revise and improve their learning outcomes, make changes to their courses and overall curriculum, and develop or improve assessment tools and/or plans. In these cases, programs were not yet implementing a regular cycle of data collection, and when it came time to report on their assessment of student learning efforts, the report template didn't provide an opportunity for them to document and highlight the accomplishments they were able to make up to that point. The new Alternative Assessment Report Template provides a better mechanism for programs to share the work they did, why this work was completed, and what their next steps are regarding assessment of student learning.

Additionally, the School of Medicine began submitting assessment reports to the Office of the Provost a few years later than most other academic programs, and after the standard report template was in effect. While SOM faculty began to meet the expectations for reporting, they relayed that the language on the template and the content requested was often confusing and simply not a good fit for their programs, especially the research-based programs. To help facilitate a more meaningful documentation of assessment, a separate SOM template was created in Spring 2025 and used for the first time in the most recent (2024-25) round of reporting. Initial feedback has been positive from the SOM faculty, indicating the new template is a much better fit.

After assessment reports have been submitted to the Office of Assessment, the Assessment Director facilitates review of the reports by members of the University Assessment Committee (UAC). Members of this committee serve three-year terms to ensure continuity, and the need for in-depth training only occurs at the start of each three-year cycle. The primary tool used for feedback is the Assessment Report Feedback Form, which has sections parallel to the Assessment Report Template. This feedback form makes transparent the expectations that the UAC and the Office of the Provost have for high-quality program-level assessment of student learning. The Assessment Director creates pairs of faculty who work together to review reports over the course of the academic year. Review partners submit their completed feedback forms to the Assessment Director, who then reviews them for consistency across programs and general quality before sharing them back with the program directors and department chairs. From there, some programs initiate additional meetings or conversations to further discuss any expectations that were not met and how they can strengthen their assessment work. Given capacity constraints of the UAC and Assessment Director, approximately one third of the reports submitted annually are reviewed each year, resulting in each program receiving detailed feedback at least once every two or three years.

Another mechanism for support for program-level assessment is the assessment website. In 2021, and with input from the UAC, the Assessment Director expanded what was then a single webpage to a more comprehensive website with content and resources for SLU forms and templates, each step in the assessment cycle, and the University Assessment Committee. Website resources help educate program faculty and make it easier to access the information and documents for which they are looking. One additional improvement to the website is the inclusion of examples of high-quality assessment work from peer SLU programs. We hope that highlighting peer successes here at SLU inspires and guides colleagues throughout the university.

The peer review team for SLU's Year 10 Comprehensive Evaluation did not request any interim monitoring for program-level assessment in 2021, the first time in 10 years that the HLC Core Components related to assessment in the academic programs were "met without concern." We have continued our efforts in this area, with 100% of programs today having fully-developed assessment plans. The Office of the Provost has set the expectation that programs will review and update their assessment plans every 3-5 years or when key program circumstances change. In recent years, several programs took the initiative to update their plans as a result of revising learning outcomes, curriculum, and/or assessment practices. As necessary, the Assessment Director reaches out to programs about reviewing and updating plans when the current plans is more than five years old; since 2021, 76% of programs have updated their assessment plans.

We are pleased to share that 96% of programs expected to submit an annual report for 2024-25 have done so, with a few still in progress. (We do not expect annual reports from programs that have just begun, or have zero or very few students, or are in the process of closing.) For every program, the most recent assessment plan and the past three years' assessment reports are available on the Assessment Plans and Reports Google table.

Recommendations for improving student learning based on assessment data, and action plans for use of current assessment findings, are captured via Sections 5 and 6 on annual assessment reports. Examples of identified actions based on the data in the most recent reports are available here.

Further, we also ask programs (via their annual assessment reports) to document changes made based on previous assessment findings (section 7), and any resulting impact of the change identified thus far. Beginning with the revised report template in 2020, programs are asked to (1) identify at least one change implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data, (2) how the change was assessed, (3) what the results or findings were, and (4) how they will use this information moving forward. Examples of "closing the loop" in the most recent set of annual reports are available here. Program faculty and leaders always have the resources of the Reinert Center and Office of Assessment in support of these efforts.

One recent addition to the Academic Program Review (APR) process (see 3.F.) is the Assessment Director's completion of a holistic program-level assessment rubric for the programs under review. This rubric provides a summative evaluation of the quality and maturity of a program's assessment efforts and focuses on three criteria: 1) Engagement in the assessment process, 2) Quality of assessment work, and 3) Use of assessment findings to inform decisions and actions. The rubric is one component of the full body of materials that the Program Review Council (PRC) uses to write recommendations and inform the Provost's Memo. We have integrated the assessment planning and reporting processes into the APR processes such that if a program has an updated assessment plan and submits meaningful assessment reports each year, the expectations from the PRC in regard to assessment are considered to have been met. In nearly all cases, programs have sufficient assessment practices and processes; however, in a few cases, a lack of quality assessment was substantive enough that the issue was included in the Provost's Memo for required actions.

SLU has made great strides in the use of assessment results to improve student learning since HLC began requiring interim reports from SLU in 2012. While there is certainly room for improvement, we are pleased with the maturation of assessment at SLU and, importantly, the increased faculty understanding and real ownership of assessment work as part of their teaching and curriculum management responsibilities.

Assessment of Student Learning in the University Undergraduate Core Curriculum

At the conclusion of SLU's 10-Year Comprehensive Evaluation in 2021-2022, HLC's Institutional Actions Council requested an embedded report in this Assurance Argument that provides "evidence of an effective assessment plan for the University's core curriculum, with outcomes learned from the process." This was an expected outcome of that review, as at that time SLU had just approved our new University-wide general education program in 2020, but had not yet fully implemented that curriculum. As such, we were not yet in a

position to assess student learning in the program – though the Core assessment plan had already been developed as an HLC Assessment Academy project and had been reviewed positively in our 2021-2022 Comprehensive Evaluation. We have now fully implemented the Core and substantively implemented our Core assessment plan as designed, as documented here.

SLU's general education program for undergraduate students is the University Undergraduate Core Curriculum ("the Core"). The process to develop and implement SLU's first ever University-wide Core began in 2018 – in part to meet HLC's expectation that SLU move from several different school/college-specific gen ed curricula to one unified curriculum, but also to meet changing institutional expectations. The first step in the process was the development of the Core Student Learning Outcomes, which also met an HLC expectation (i.e., "evidence that the Institution's Core Curriculum and the Core Curriculum SLOs have been established") in response to our 2018 Interim Report on Assessment. SLU actually met this expectation in Spring 2018, when the Core Student Learning Outcomes were adopted by all SLU college and schools in a curricular first for the University. That adoption was the result of a year-long, University-wide process led by the University-wide Undergraduate Core Committee (UUCC). The set of nine outcomes indicates what a SLU graduate should know or be able to do as a result of completing the Core curriculum. The Core consists of 19 Core Components (essentially curriculum requirements) that are intentionally offered in support of student achievement of the nine Core SLOs, as illustrated by the Core Curriculum Map. Each Core Component also has a set of Core Component Learning Outcomes (CCLOs).

Approval of the University Core Curriculum – built on those nine Core SLOs – was a SLU institutional first (admittedly amazing given our 200+-year history). The UUCC delivered its final Core Proposal to the SLU faculty on January 31, 2020; the faculty voted to approve this Core on March 20, 2020; SLU's Council of Deans and Directors and the Interim Provost, followed suit on March 31st, 2020.

As we noted in the 2021 Assurance Argument, throughout the development of the Core proposal, assessment was at the forefront of the conversation. When the Core Curriculum Map was established, the UUCC identified the level of achievement toward each of the overarching nine Core Student Learning Outcomes that each Core Component is expected to address; this plays a critical role in the assessment plan. The proposed Core implementation timeline included initial tasks for assessment, and the initial Core budget proposal also included a line of $15,000 dedicated to assessment including $500 stipends to faculty who assist with end-of-year assessment of student artifacts to gauge student achievement of Core Student Learning Outcomes.

In Fall 2017 SLU assembled a team to participate in the HLC's Academy for Assessment of Student Learning for the Quality Initiative requirement of the Open Pathway. The initial project focused on fostering an institutional culture of learning by evidencing a demonstrable commitment to Ignatian pedagogy; however, in Fall 2019 the team shifted their project focus to assessment of the Core, and the Director of the Core was added to the team. Beginning with the HLC Academy Roundtable in October 2019, the team focused on drafting an assessment plan for the new Core Curriculum in conjunction with the development of the Core proposal document being drafted by the UUCC. Over time, and as plans for the Core developed, the team continually updated the assessment plan. The final Core assessment plan included student learning outcomes, the curriculum map, the artifacts of student

learning, the evaluation process, the intended use of data, and a schedule outlining which Core SLOs would be assessed in each year of our assessment cycle. In September 2021, the HLC sent confirmation that SLU had successfully met Genuine Effort in its Quality Initiative.

After the University-wide approval of the Core in March 2020, the UUCC turned its attention to identifying the Core leadership team during summer 2020 and then charging subcommittees (each led by an Associate Director of the Core) responsible for the approval of courses in each Core Component. (This work was detailed extensively in the Fall 2021 Assurance Argument.) The course approval process is facilitated through the use of worksheets that anyone proposing a course for the Core needs to complete. Sections of each worksheet ask the proposer to address how the course will facilitate student achievement of the Core Component Learning Outcomes as well as address the desired level of student achievement for the overall Core Component as specified on the curriculum map. Proposers also must submit copies of the course syllabus for review, and the syllabus boilerplate information for each Core Component must also be included.

The UUCC pilot tested two Core Components (Ignite Seminar and Cura Personalis: Self in Community) in Fall 2021; full implementation of the Core for new incoming students began in Fall 2022. As noted in the Core assessment plan, beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, we began taking a juried approach to assessment of each of the nine Core SLOs. The assessment process is essentially a five year cycle:

- Year 1: Rubric development, solicitation of artifacts of student work, and assessment review workshop
- Year 2: Subcommittee review of workshop data and other feedback, identification of recommendations, and completion of assessment report
- Year 3: Subcommittee works with stakeholders to discuss and implement assessment report recommendations, also completes an implementation report
- Year 4: Continued work to implement the report recommendations.
- Year 5: Continue to deliver the curriculum with additional changes as needed
- Year 6: Start at Year 1 of cycle

With nine Core SLOs, we started our assessment schedule focused on one SLO, and then moved to two SLOs per year:

- 2022-23: SLO 1
- 2023-24: SLO 4 and SLO 6
- 2024-25: SLO 2 and SLO 9
- 2025-26: SLO 3 and SLO 5
- 2026-27: SLO 7 and SLO 8

Given this cycle and schedule, the table below illustrates the work completed each year for each SLO since our 2021 Assurance Argument:

Year	Student Learning Outcome (SLO) of Focus and Year of Assessment Cycle			
2022-23	SLO 1 Year 1			
2023-24	SLO 1 Year 2	SLO 4 Year 1 SLO 6 Year 1		
2024-25	SLO 1 Year 3	SLO 4 Year 2 SLO 6 Year 2	SLO 2 Year 1 SLO 9 Year 1	
2025-26	SLO 1 Year 4	SLO 4 Year 3 SLO 6 Year 3	SLO 2 Year 2 SLO 9 Year 2	SLO 3 Year 1 SLO 5 Year 1

Because assessment of student learning reports are completed by the subcommittees at the end of Year 2 of the cycle, we now have 3 full assessment reports with recommendations for the following SLOs: SLO 1, SLO 4, and SLO 6. Additionally, we have an implementation report for SLO 1; the purpose of this report is to document the actions taken by the subcommittee to progress from report recommendations to actions taken to improve student learning and the Core as a whole.

Each assessment report is completed using the same report template; this template is a Core-specific version of the program-level assessment report template. Each report details specifics to the process for that particular SLO, but in general our process for each year of the cycle is the same and is co-facilitated by the Assessment Director and the Core Associate Director(s) responsible for overseeing the Core Component(s) with the "A" ("Achievement" level) in the curriculum map.

Year 1 Activity

During Year 1, there are three primary activities. The first is the development or revision of the rubric to be used to assess student work for that SLO during the assessment workshop. The Core Leadership Team drafted initial versions of each rubric using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics, pulling criteria from multiple rubrics as needed to align with each SLU Core SLO. During Year 1, each subcommittee takes ownership of the rubric revision process and makes changes as needed to ensure that the rubric criteria reflect the desired and expected learning of that SLO. Often the initial rows are revised to better align with the expanded definitions (i.e., "What this means for SLU...") of each SLO available in the Core document and/or the Core Component Learning Outcomes (CCLOs). In the spring semester the Assessment Director facilitates a rubric testing session in which faculty engage in review and discussion of the rubric as well as apply the rubric to sample artifacts. After this session the subcommittee makes any final changes needed in order for the rubric to be ready for the assessment workshop and approved by the UUCC.

The second activity in Year 1 is the artifact solicitation and collection process. Per the assessment plan, artifacts are collected from the Core Components with the "A" in the curriculum map, indicating that students should have "Achieved" the SLO in that/those Core Component course(s). Each fall and spring the Assessment Director uses CourseLeaf to identify the courses being offered that semester that are coded for the Core Components with the A in the curriculum map, and sends the list to the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). OIR then creates a dashboard with the course rosters for each of the courses in the list. In addition to course information (e.g., subject code, number, title, campus location) and student names, student demographic variables (e.g., school/college, year in school, gender,

race/ethnicity) are also included so that we have that information in the final dataset. The Assessment Director then uses that population file to pull a random sample of students from whom faculty are to gather artifacts; via e-mail, faculty are provided instructions for submitting the student work and the associated assignment prompt. Naturally, not all students in the sample have viable artifacts for review, so we oversample to ensure high enough numbers of artifacts. Once instructors have submitted the artifacts, the Assessment Director tracks and organizes them to establish the final sample for evaluation at the assessment workshop. Staff in the Office of the Core help de-identify individual artifacts when possible and/or further prepare documents for the assessment workshop.

> Note: In 2024-25 we implemented modified artifact identification and solicitation processes for SLO 2 and SLO 9, based on the nature of the artifacts to be collected. For example, the artifacts chosen for assessment of SLO 2 ended up being group projects given the nature of the courses in which the artifacts were produced. So in addition to collecting the group projects, we also required students to submit reflection papers addressing their individual contributions. Core leaders now better understand why group-based work does not lend itself well to this kind of assessment initiative, and in the future will require individual student artifacts for assessment purposes.

The third component to Year 1 assessment activity is the Assessment Workshop. In the spring semester the Associate Directors responsible for overseeing the Core Component(s) with the "A" in the curriculum map are responsible for identifying and recruiting approximately 10 faculty to serve as workshop participants; all receive a stipend for their participation. The Assessment Director facilitates the in-person portion of the workshop over two days. Workshop participants engage in a calibration session to promote interrater reliability as they review artifacts against the appropriate assessment rubric. Once the group is consistent in their ratings and have identified additional areas of clarification around rubric language and application, each faculty member spends the rest of the workshop completing the evaluation process for their specific set of artifacts. Faculty use Google folders to access the artifacts and enter their rubric ratings into a Qualtrics form that mimics the rubric. Additionally, the Assessment Director facilitates debriefing sessions at the end of each day to gather the participants' thoughts on the artifacts, prompts, the rubric, the assessment process, the curriculum, and anything else that comes to mind. This information is then shared with the subcommittee so that they further understand participants' perspectives about the assessment of that particular SLO.

> Note: Information about each workshop is presented in appendices in the Core SLO assessment reports for SLO 1 (pg. 49), SLO 4 (pg. 51), and SLO 6 (pg. 27). Reports are not yet complete for SLO 2 or SLO 9 (based on where we are in the full assessment timeline), so you can find the workshop information for those two SLOs here (SLO 2) and here (SLO 9).

Year 2 Activity

Year 2 of each Core assessment cycle is focused on:

- reviewing all of the information gathered to that point about student achievement of the given SLO
- developing findings (i.e., interpretations and conclusions)

- identifying recommendations to improve student achievement of that SLO (recommendations for changes to curricula, or pedagogy, or the assessment process itself)

This Year 2 work takes place in the subcommittee(s) of the Core Component(s) with the "A" in the curriculum map. When undertaking this process for the first SLO we assessed, the Assessment Director and the Associate Director for Theological and Philosophical Foundations established a systematic review and report development process that we have continued to replicate with each subsequent Year 2. A timeline of this work identifies monthly tasks and the roles and responsibilities of the Assessment Director, Associate Director(s), and the subcommittee. At the conclusion of Year 2, the subcommittee provides the report for approval of recommendations at the UUCC meeting.

Year 3 Activity

In Year 3, the subcommittees move from making recommendations to enacting changes. This entails reviewing the previous subcommittee's recommendations in the report, holding additional discussions regarding those recommendations, making decisions about how to proceed with implementation, and then following through with action. To date there is just one SLO for which this stage has been completed, and the related Theological and Philosophical Foundations subcommittee's implementation report is available here. This subcommittee is now in Year 4 of its assessment cycle and continues to make decisions and take action as needed to follow through on the recommendations. For example, in November there is a brownbag to talk about Core assessment and the Ultimate Questions Core Components.

We have two subcommittees currently in Year 3 of their cycles: the Equity and Global identities subcommittee is implementing their SLO 6 report recommendations, and the Eloquentia Perfecta and Cura Personalis/Reflection-in-Action subcommittees are implementing their SLO 4 recommendations. Both will submit implementation reports at the end of the academic year. Subcommittees will continue this work in Years 4 and 5 as needed.

Core Assessment: Lessons Learned (To Date…)

Specific recommendations for each of the SLOs differ by subcommittee. However, there are some general recommendations for improvement that are consistent across their reports:

- Increase communication with instructors of courses to promote fidelity to the Core curriculum
- Provide or increase faculty development opportunities with the Reinert Center and others
- Develop and implement assignment/artifact/prompt design workshops
- Consider revisions to the artifacts of student learning included in the workshop
- Undertake Core SLO rubric revisions
- Identify and implement potential changes to Core curriculum map
- Identify and implement potential changes to Core Component Learning Outcomes

It should be noted that we learned many things from the SLO 1 assessment process, the first one we conducted. When appropriate, we moved to immediately implement some changes to all aspects of the Core. For example, as a result of our assessment experiences

with SLO 1, we made the following changes:

- When soliciting artifacts, the Assessment Director received replies indicating that some instructors were either unaware that their course was coded for a particular Core SLO and/or they did not know what the artifact should be. As such, we have increased communication with faculty teaching courses in the Core to promote fidelity. For example, now each Associate Director emails all instructors teaching in their Core Components at the start of each semester.
- Relatedly, the Core Leadership Team began holding instructor brown bags and development sessions for Core Components to further increase instructors' knowledge of and engagement with the Core curriculum.
- The Assessment Director now facilitates a rubric testing session in the spring before the assessment workshop so that the workshop is not the first time the rubric is being applied to artifact of student learning.
- We now include the assignment prompt with the artifact of student learning so that assessment workshop evaluators understand what students were asked to do and can determine the extent to which that aligns with the Core SLO expectations.

One important issue the UUCC began to resolve after implementation of the Core is fidelity to the program via the curriculum and pedagogy. As noted above, we learned very quickly that not all instructors of Core courses were aware that their courses were in the Core – or if they did know, they didn't necessarily know all that they needed to about what that meant (e.g., understand the Essential Criteria of their Core Component). This issue stems partially from our course approval process. One instructor may submit a course for Core inclusion, and because approval is course-based (not instructor-based), anyone else teaching that same course is teaching a Core course, whether or not they have any awareness of this. Over time we have ramped up communication about this with instructors, department chairs and program directors, and the institution as a whole. For example, the Core office sends out monthly campus-wide email communications about the Core, and provides a wealth of information on the Instructor Resources Site, including Core assessment reports. Each Associate Director reaches out to the specific instructors of courses in their Core Components at the start of each semester. Departments are required to share the approved course proposal worksheets with any new instructors teaching a Core course so that they understand what was approved and the related requirements. And in our recent revision to the University Course Syllabus Policy, we added the Core as an explicit example of a program with additional syllabus requirements to bring greater visibility to these expectations. Over time, we have increased the faculty's understanding of what it means to teach a Core course. This will only serve to strengthen the foundation of student learning in the Core.

Another big picture issue that the UUCC is beginning to grapple with is the Core curriculum map. From the start, there were potential issues with how the Core was mapped out in terms of appropriate places in the curriculum to expect to see achievement of each SLO. For example:

- SLO 1 is expected to be achieved via two Core Components, and both are courses students often complete in their first year at SLU (or even while also in high school in the case of our 1818 Dual Credit Program courses). It is likely not realistic to expect first-year students to achieve a graduation-level SLO.
- Three SLOs (2, 3, and 8) are expected to be developed and achieved in just one

course: Collaborative Inquiry. This is also problematic.

- SLO 4 (written, oral, and visual communication) is expected to be achieved in Cura Personalis 3: Self in the World (in addition to Eloquentia Perfecta: Writing Intensive). Having gone through the assessment process, we are now realizing that this 1-credit course likely does not provide enough of a framework for students to develop and achieve these skills.
- Relatedly, the Core's curriculum map does not indicate that oral or visual communication skills should be achieved in those two Core Components (Eloquentia Perfects: Oral/Visual or Eloquentia Perfecta: Written/Visual). As such, we are assessing written, oral, and visual communication via the Writing intensive Core Component and the Cura Personalis 3 Core Component.
- There are two Core Components responsible for introducing, developing, and achieving the intended student learning outcome solely in one course (SLO 6 in Global interdependence and SLO 7 in Dignity, Ethics, and a Just Society). Again, we are learning that we need to more realistically scaffold expected SLO achievement across our courses.

Because we have chosen to use the Core Components with the "A" in the curriculum map as the courses from which we solicit artifacts of student learning, any issues with the map lead to issues with our ability to assess student learning effectively. So far, all three Core SLO assessment reports have recommended changes to the curriculum map for the UUCC to consider. Changes to the curriculum map are expected to be made soon.

In summary: We have made significant strides in the assessment of the Core Curriculum since our last HLC review. We have implemented the assessment plan as designed, we have shared reports detailing assessment findings and resulting recommendations for change, and we have begun to implement those changes. We have learned a great deal about what works well in the Core and what needs further attention as it relates to our curriculum, communication, and assessment methods. We will continue to strengthen these aspects of the program to improve and enhance student learning.

Sources

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3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

As noted in the HLC's March 2022 Comprehensive Evaluation action letter, SLU is required in this Assurance Argument to "provide evidence of improvement to the academic review process, with attention paid to how outcomes are used" as part of this Year 4 review. We are pleased to report that we have made great strides in resuming and improving the Academic Program Review (APR) process since our last review.

The Office of the Provost, and specifically the Associate Provost for Graduate Education (with support from the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education), coordinates Academic Program Review (APR). All academic programs are scheduled for APR once every seven years; as appropriate and feasible, program reviews are scheduled to either precede, coincide with, or immediately follow program accreditation reviews to minimize additional work for faculty. All programs – even those with specialized external accreditation –are required to participate in the APR process; however, changes to the requirements for externally accredited programs have recently been approved (see below).

The APR process is guided by the APR manual, updated in August 2022 as part of the renewal of expectations and re-establishment of a consistent, systematic process at SLU. Primary changes included (a) accelerating the process timeline from two years to one; (b) having programs begin the process in fall or spring (instead of just fall); (c) revisions to the self-study components (e.g., an expanded set of assessment and curriculum-related prompts); and (d) the addition of an expectation for a formal three-year follow-up report. Additionally, the Program Review Council (PRC), which provides University-level faculty analysis of APR materials for each program review, was expanded from three to nine members and structured in three review pods made up of three faculty each to increase capacity and ensure equitable work distribution.

The current APR SLU process is intended to take place over the course of a calendar year, beginning in either the fall or spring semester. The APR protocol (pg. 4) consists of the following components:

1. APR Orientation Workshop
2. Program Self-Study
3. External Program Review and Site Visit
4. Program Director/Chair/Faculty Review of Self-Study and External Review Summary Report
5. Dean Review of Self-Study and External Review Summary Report
6. Program Review Council Summary Report
7. Provost Review
8. Action Plan Implementation

The number of programs that begin the APR process each year can vary widely based on

the number of related programs (including multiple minors and certificates) offered by a single discipline or academic department; we attempt to have all disciplinarily-related programs undergo APR at the same time. Beginning in the Fall of 2025, all degree programs offered at the Madrid Campus are included in the reviews with their associated degree programs offered on the St. Louis campus; previously, some of them had been addressed separately.

As noted above, the APR timeline has been accelerated and more structured since 2021. During the first semester of an APR review, the governing academic department receives key program data from the Office of Institution Research, participates in the developmental workshop, completes its self-study, and identifies external reviewers. Within the first half of the second semester or the APR review, the external review takes place, and the reviewers submit their report. Near the middle of that second semester, the department submits a response to the external reviewer report and the governing Dean submits a review based on both the internal and external reports. In the last month of the second semester, the Program Review Council reviews all materials and creates a report. Finally, the Provost reviews the Program Review Council's final report and provides a memo with recommendations for action and a timeline for completion. If programs experience challenges scheduling the external visit in a timely manner, or if responses are not completed in time for the PRC to get them before faculty are off contract for the summer, this sometimes delays the completion by a semester.

Compared to the five years prior to our 2021-2022 HLC review, SLU has significantly increased the number of programs that have completed this process in the past 3 years, as documented in the table below:

Note: Our definition of "Programs Engaged in APR" includes academic majors (at the graduate and undergraduate level) but also their associated academic minors and certificates at both levels; we hope that helps clarify how, for example, 48 programs could have meaningfully completed their APR reviews in 2022-2023.

Academic Year	Number of Programs Engaged in APR
2021-2022	5
2022-2023	48
2023-2024	16
2024-2025	24
2025-2026	40

Additionally, beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, we developed a 7-year plan for academic program review that ensures we will have all programs back on a 7-year cycle over the next 7 years. Our program reviews in 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 are following this

plan. For example, the following programs have completed the APR process within the past three years: Department of <u>Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures</u>; <u>Magnetic Resonance Imaging, B.S.</u> program; and the <u>Anatomy graduate programs</u> in the School of Medicine's Center for Anatomical Science and Education.

Three years after the conclusion of any APR review, reviewed programs are to submit to the Provost's Office a report outlining the status of action items recommended or required in the Provost's memo from the original APR process. The Associate Provosts for Graduate and Undergraduate Education review the status of each recommendation/requirement and offer their analysis and response about progress made to date. Included in this response is a consideration of whether or not additional support and/or resources are necessary from the Office of the Provost or institution to complete recommended/required action items within a reasonable timeline, or whether the context or need has changed since the completion of the APR recommendations. For example, in Fall 2025, three-year follow-up reports have been solicited for the 20 programs that completed program review in Fall 2022; those follow-up reports will be reviewed in Spring 2026.

Beyond the formal review of work in the three-year follow-up, other programs that have undergone APR review since 2021 have shared with the Provost's Office their work being done on recommended/required action items from the academic program review process. For example:

- In response to reviewer feedback on curriculum, the Engineering M.S. and Ph.D. programs are being revamped to create sub-discipline specific M.S. and Ph.D. programs. Among other things, this will provide students more clear direction on the coursework needed (and, therefore, make more clear to program leaders which courses need to be offered, and on what annual cycle).
- Due to low enrollment and low course retention, it was recommended that the Russian minor (housed within the Department of Linguistics, Literatures, and Cultures) go through the Viability and Sustainability Review (VSR) process. As such, the Russian minor was referred to the VSR committee and is undergoing review this semester.
- In response to a recommendation that they offer more courses fulfilling requirements of the University Undergraduate Core, programs in the Department of Earth, Environmental, and Geospatial Science (formerly known as the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) have increased their number of University Core courses offered by 75% since Fall 2022. These courses meet the Core's Natural and Applied Sciences, Writing Intensive, and Identities in Context requirements.
- To facilitate clinical partnerships and/or alliances with healthcare institutions, the Doisy College of Health Sciences hired a Director of Clinical Affiliations in Spring 2025. This position works closely with clinical coordinators and the Clinical Affiliations Committee to support existing clinical partnerships while building, maintaining, and expanding clinical partnerships in support of clinical curricula across all professional programs in the college, such as the Physician Assistant Program.
- The Center for Anatomical Science and Education developed the Master of Science in Medical Sciences program to replace the Medical Anatomy and Physiology Post-Baccalaureate Certificate (MAPP). Their APR review of the MAPP program led to these significant program changes to increase enrollment, increase placement of students from the program into medical school, and to generally increase the attractiveness of the program to potential students.

In Spring 2025, the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC) and Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC), Council of Academic Deans and Directors (CADD) and the Provost approved underlined additional changes to the APR manual that went into effect for Fall 2025 . These changes were implemented after a review to identify opportunities for continuous improvement in the APR process, and were informed by feedback from some of the academic units participating in the process as well as members of the Provost Office. Minor changes included clarification of specific details in the process, the addition of the holistic assessment rubric completed by the Assessment Director and shared with the Program Review Council, and modifications to the Self-Study Components, including a focus on distance programs. We also added more explicit direction for including Madrid programs in the self-study when a program exists on both our St. Louis and Madrid campuses.

The more significant 2025 change to the APR Manual concerns programs with external (i.e., disciplinary) accreditation. While we intended for and encouraged programs to consider how their process and materials for periodic external accreditation reviews could be incorporated into their materials for the SLU process, the workload required to complete both processes was unnecessarily burdensome and duplicative for programs. Accordingly, the University Assessment Director compared the SLU APR self-study components with the accreditation standards or criteria from a variety of external accrediting organizations that provide program- or college/school-level accreditation. We found that many had requirements similar to those in the SLU APR process, particularly for the areas of curriculum, assessment, resources, student profiles, and number and quality of faculty. Based on this comparison and stakeholder feedback, the Associate Provosts decided to alter expectations for accredited programs. As noted in the updated manual:

> *For academic programs with disciplinary/specialized accreditation, the University will apply any reports, data, and disciplinary standards from the accreditation process toward the requirements of this process, as appropriate. When accreditation reviews overlap completely with APR requirements, the disciplinary/specialized accreditation report will fulfill the APR expectations for the University, following the accreditation review cycle. Only if gaps exist will a supplemental APR report addressing these gaps be required in concert with the accreditation report to fulfill the APR expectations for the University.*

> *The Program Review Council, in partnership with Provost's office staff overseeing accreditation University wide, will conduct a comparison of program accreditation criteria to the SLU Academic Program Review (APR) requirements for consistency, and make a recommendation to the committee co-chairs regarding what any supplemental report, if necessary, must contain.*

We will be implementing this change for the first time this fall, as two programs (Nuclear Medicine Therapy, B.S. and Pediatric Dentistry, M.S.) starting the process have external accreditation. We will continue to monitor this change to ensure that SLU's expectation for a high-quality academic program review process for all programs is met.

In addition to regular reviews of existing programs via the APR process, newly proposed academic programs undergo extensive review through UAAC and GAAC (see 3.A.). Proposed undergraduate and graduate programs and certificates must complete an extensive proposal in the CourseLeaf Curriculum Inventory Management System for

Programs (CIM-Programs). These proposals require evidence of comprehensive academic planning for approval as well as an assessment plan. Regarding curriculum, faculty must identify course and non-course requirements, including a roadmap of how students will typically complete the program. Review by fellow faculty serving on these committees helps ensure that the curriculum for any new program is appropriate. For example, at the September 2025 GAAC meeting, the Committee's feedback regarding several program proposals included concerns regarding (a) clarity and equitable application of continuation standards; (b) inconsistencies or unclear information in curriculum plans; and (c) an inadequate assessment proposal. These types of issues must be addressed before a program is approved by UAAC or GAAC.

Additionally, if faculty want to make changes to an existing academic program, the proposed changes must be submitted via the same CourseLeaf approval system for review (either by either the governing Associate Provost for non-substantive changes, or by the full UAAC/GAAC committee for substantive changes). Substantive changes include (but are not limited to) the following: (a) a change in more than 30% of program's courses or credit hours; (b) a new program concentration that requires additional courses and/or resources (faculty, assistantships, labs, etc.); (c) new requirements for degree completion, and/or (d) changing program modality.

As described in 3.D., the Distance Education Office implements a Distance Education policy and standards that were approved as part of the University's academic policy approval process. The standards meet HLC and United States Department of Education requirements and are designed to ensure academic quality is maintained throughout SLU's distance education program and courses. In particular, our Standard 2 states that "The University's plans for developing, sustaining and, if appropriate, expanding distance education programs and courses are integrated into its regular planning and evaluation processes." Standard 2.c. stipulates that "plans for expanding distance education [must] demonstrate the University's capacity to assure an appropriate level of quality." Standard 4 requires the examination of curricula for the University's distance learning offerings to ensure they are coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats. For example, SLU's Distance Education Standard 4.a. is "Curricula delivered through distance learning are benchmarked against on-ground course and programs if offered in both modalities."

Finally, as part of the annual assessment of student learning process, faculty are continually considering how their programs are fostering student achievement of learning and making changes as needed to improve the curriculum based on this type of program review. Please see 3.E. for more information.

Sources

- APR Documents - Linguistics, Literatures, and Cultures
- APR Documents - Magnetic Resonance Imaging, B.S.
- APR Documents - Anatomy Graduate Programs
- Graduate Academic Affairs Committee Webpage
- Academic Program Review Manual 2022
- Academic Program Review Manual 2022 (page number 4)
- Academic Program Review Manual 2025
- Academic Program Review Manual Sept 2019

- Academic Program Review Manual with Spring 2025 Revisions Highlighted
- Academic Program Review Schedule 2023-2025
- Academic Program Review Schedule 2025-2027
- Academic Program Review Timeline
- APR Program Review Council Membership 2025-26
- Distance Education Office Webpage
- GAAC Agenda 9-12-25
- GAAC Assessment Plan Feedback
- GAAC Continuation Standards Feedback
- GAAC Curriculum Plan Feedback
- New Program Proposal Form in CourseLeaf
- University Policy for Distance Education
- Academic Program Review Webpage
- Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee Webpage

3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

Student success at Saint Louis University's begins with recruiting, admitting, and enrolling students whose academic profiles and personal and professional goals align well with SLU's Mission and our faculty-established admission requirements and curricula. Accordingly, SLU's Division of Enrollment Management (EM) is charged to work collaboratively with the University community to do so. EM has five departments: Admission, Enrollment Analytics and Territory Development, International Services, Pre-College and Access Programs, and Student Financial Services.

During the COVID pandemic, SLU academic leaders, in consultation with EM leadership, decided to eliminate for admission consideration of domestic undergraduate students the requirement of ACT or SAT scores; SLU has, intentionally, remained test-optional since then. SLU's Admission website provides a comprehensive list of FAQs regarding the test-option policy to ensure that prospective students have the needed information to make the best decisions for themselves.

Formerly the Division of Enrollment *and Retention* Management [emphasis added], the EM Division was renamed several years ago as SLU sought to better recognize that responsibility for coordinating student success initiatives for *matriculated* student retention rests primarily with the Provost's Office; more specifically, that responsibility rests with the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education supported by units throughout the Division of Academic Affairs, the Office of Student Financial Services in EM, as well as multiple units in the Division of Student Development.

The breadth and depth of SLU's student success initiatives is well-documented in SLU's University Undergraduate Student Retention Strategy: Overview. This document, first created in Spring 2025 and now continually updated, presents a comprehensive picture of the working strategies employed across Divisions at SLU to support undergraduate student success throughout the University. It also lists the membership of a newly-formed "Retention Leadership Team," created in Fall 2025 in recognition that slowly declining retention rates (see below) warranted increased collaboration among leaders in key academic and student support units. Members include:

- Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education
- Assistant Provost for Academic Success
- Assistant Vice President for Student Engagement
- Dean of Students
- Assistant Vice President for Student Financial Services
- University Registrar

- Associate Provost for Finance
- Director, Office of Institutional Research
- DICE representative
- Chief of Staff, Provost's Office
- Madrid

The Retention Leadership Team is scheduled to meet throughout each academic year to review interim retention data, monitor the fidelity of retention efforts with overall Retention Strategy, and implement needed modifications for short- and long-term success. Additional campus partners such as Campus Ministry, Career Services, and the Reinert Center are involved on an ad-hoc basis.

The "Strategy Statement" governing the University's undergraduate student retention strategy is as follows:

> *Through the design and implementation of a highly-integrated, collaboratively-administered portfolio of holistic student support policies, programs, services, and resources, SLU seeks to support student success and the retention, through timely graduation, of all undergraduate students for whom SLU remains the best collegiate home – academically, professionally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and financially.*

As noted on page 1 of the Retention Strategy Overview, that approach honors the reality that, "By virtue of Saint Louis University's (SLU) admission decisions (premised on faculty-established academic criteria), every undergraduate student is determined to have the potential to succeed at SLU in the specific academic program chosen upon their application."

Pages 7-9 of that Strategy document highlight the ways in which various forms of internal and external data are gathered, reported on, and intentionally analyzed to inform decision-making about various student support programs and services, as well as various academic and non-academic policies that impact student success.

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) publishes a series of data-rich Tableau dashboards for student enrollment, retention and graduation rates, and degrees granted that allow data to be viewed using select filters including student college, race/ethnicity, Pell status, and first-generation status. The Freshman Retention and Graduation Rates dashboard shows Fall-to-Fall retention rates as of the second, third, and fourth Fall terms as well as four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates. This dashboard includes student cohorts from Fall 2009 forward, adjusted to remove student exclusions allowed per IPEDS guidelines. The preliminary retention dashboard shows how first-to-second year retention looks leading up to the Fall census. The dashboards increase the availability and timeliness of data, and are used frequently by Academic Affairs leadership, Enrollment Management staff, institutional working groups and task forces, faculty engaged in Academic Program Review and Viability and Sustainability Review, and others. Via these dashboards and other report formats, OIR also produces census reports, which include Fall-to-Fall and Fall-to-Spring retention rates and are calculated per IPEDS requirements (view the Fall 2025 report).

Regarding the "data on data" on pages 7-9 of the Strategy document, note the multitudinous

ways that each of the Office of Institutional Research's (OIR) retention- and graduation-related dashboards can be filtered to identify precise data about subpopulations individually or aggregated. For example, on page 8 we note: *Generally, each OIR dashboard noted above enables users to filter the data by any of the following:*

- *Day of the retention/registration cycle*
- *Week of the retention/registration cycle*
- *College/School*
- *Major*
- *Program*
- *Gender*
- *Race/Ethnicity*
- *Pell Status*
- *First Generation Status*
- *RISE Program Participation Status*
- *Registration Hold Status*

And those dashboards are complemented by additional, highly-detailed/filterable dashboards maintained by the Office of the Registrar, including the following:

Registration-Related Dashboards:

- Non-Registered Students – Summary
- Non-Registered Students – Student Listing
- Non-Registered Students – Student Listing (first-time, full-time students)
- Non-Registered Students by College, by Time Status, by Student Accounts Hold
- Student Listing by Registration Hold Type
- Registered Students by College, by Time Status

Registration Holds Dashboards:

- Students with Registration Holds – Listing
- Student Counts by Registration Hold Type

Student Academic Progress Dashboards:

- Missing Grades by Faculty
- Academic Standing – Student Detail
- Academic Standing By College, By Program/Major
- DFW Rates
- Mid-Term Grades

Pages 10-14 of the Strategy document include summaries of programs and services that SLU offers to support student success in multiple ways: intellectually/academically, emotionally/behaviorally, and spiritually. Key areas addressed include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Pre-Matriculation and First-Year Student Programs: SLU Summer Advantage Program, Billiken Beginnings Workshops, Vocation Exploration, and Learning Communities
- Academic Advising and Special Program Support: General advising and special

program advising: RISE Program, Honors Program, INTO SLU, Pre-Health, Pre-Law, Athletics
- Programs/Resources Specifically for "Retention Higher Risk" students: RISE Program and supports for first-generation and first-year commuter students
- Academic Support Programs/Resources for All Students: Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Writing Services, Student Success Coaching, and Center for Disability and Accessibility Resources.
- Mission and Identity Support Initiatives
- Student Development Initiatives: Residence Life and Learning Communities, University Counseling Center, Behavioral Concerns Committee, Case Management, Student Involvement Center
- Financial Support

The University Undergraduate Student Retention Strategy: Overview has been updated recently to include several tables that, when complete, will help us more fully document how we use key data to inform key student success support work. These tables address the various data sources we use, specific metrics and standards of performance that trigger concerns, as well as plans for who at SLU (faculty, staff, etc.) communicates with impacted students and others at SLU to best coordinate support. Also included are cells for listing what particular supports or interventions are to be employed (and by whom), as well as expected (or required) student actions and ways for SLU representatives to "close the loop" and ensure follow-through from all parties. As you will see, some of these tables are incomplete and are part of the Retention Leadership Teams for the remainder of Fall 2025; however, even in an incomplete state they point to the nature, depth, and breadth of SLU's work to best support student success.

Addressed below are recent student retention and graduation rates, which reflect to varying extents the success of students in a variety of realms (academic, personal, etc.), as well as the varying impacts of our many efforts to support student success.

Retention Rate Performance

For the new, first-time, first-year undergraduate student cohorts of Fall 2020 through Fall 2023, SLU's first-to-second year retention rates were between 87-89% when rounded. However, as the table below illustrates, for the Fall 2024 cohort, their second-year retention rate in Fall 2025 fell to 86%.

Retention Rate 2020 Cohort (Fall 2021)	Retention Rate 2021 Cohort (Fall 2022)	Retention Rate 2022 Cohort (Fall 2023)	Retention Rate 2023 Cohort (Fall 2024)	Retention Rate 2024 Cohort (Fall 2025)	Rolling 5-Year Avg
88.8%	86.6%	88.7%	87.8%	85.5%	87.5%

Per the most recently-published IPEDS data (for the entering cohorts in Fall 2022 returning in Fall 2023), these rates compare favorably with several of SLU's benchmark/peer institutions – but also trail the rates of other such institutions, as documented in the table below:

Benchmark Institution	Most Recently IPEDS-Reported 1st- 2nd Year Retention Rate*
Georgetown University	97%
Boston College	95%
Villanova University	95%
Gonzaga	94%
Santa Clara University	94%
Creighton University	92%
Marquette University	91%
Drexel University	90%
Fairfield University	90%
Saint Louis University	**89%**
University of Dayton	89%
Fordham University	88%
Loyola Marymount University	88%
University of Denver	88%
Loyola University Chicago	84%
Benchmark Average	*91%*

While the above-noted data address entire entering new student cohorts, SLU also tracks and analyzes separately the retention rates of key subgroups of students – particularly those historically underrepresented at SLU.

From an equity standpoint, SLU strives for no measurable differences in student success – including as reflected in retention and graduation rates – across its various sub-populations. However, this is an area of performance that continues to challenge the SLU community and other institutions nationally. For example, the table below highlights retention rates of key subgroups that often lag those of each "All Students" cohort as a whole:

First term at SLU	Second year at SLU	All Students	Black or African American	Hispanic	Pell Recipients	First Generation	RISE* (BFC/SOAR)
Fall 2020	Fall 2021	89%	79%	89%	85%	82%	n/a
Fall 2021	Fall 2022	87%	70%	90%	81%	84%	83%
Fall 2022	Fall 2023	89%	81%	88%	85%	85%	87%
Fall 2023	Fall 2024	88%	84%	88%	85%	82%	92%
Fall 2024	Fall 2025	86%	74%	82%	78%	78%	81%

* *"RISE (BFC/SOAR)" students are those, as addressed in 3.D., who participate in special advising, coaching, and support programming offered upon their admission to SLU. Many of these students are also represented in other categories in this table.*

While the table highlights that the retention rates of Hispanic students sometimes meet or even exceed those of the full cohort population, the same is not true of Black or African American students, nor of Pell recipients or first generation students in the aggregate. However, students in our RISE (BFC/SOAR) population are typically retained at rates higher than the rates for Pell recipients, or first-generation, or even Black or African American students as a whole. This points to the generally positive impact of the RISE program (and its predecessors in the BFC/SOAR programs). More targeted assessment of the impacts of the RISE program is planned, as we anticipate learning more about how our investments in this kind of program can be leveraged more broadly for greater support of student success.

Also being studied is the impact of our move to becoming test-optional in admissions. What we have already learned is that our incoming undergraduate student populations have, generally, required notably more academic support and, to some extent, academic remediation when compared to earlier generations of students. We have responded in turn with substantive – but perhaps still not sufficient – investments in new forms of placement testing and new or expanded summer "bridge" program opportunities to help students who now enter SLU less prepared for our current curricula and academic expectations. We have also added new, lower-level mathematics courses in particular, as math skills are so foundational to the many health and science-related majors that SLU students choose upon entry (but from which many must change if they struggle academically for too long). Accordingly, faculty and academic leaders also review "DFW" rates and the rates of students who are placed on either academic warning/probation or are academically dismissed (available via the above-noted dashboards).

Indeed, academic challenges are at the heart of many – but certainly not all – student decisions to leave SLU at some point in their undergraduate careers. Although academic-related supports are perhaps most widely represented in our Retention Strategy, they are well-complemented by initiatives that embody SLU's commitment to *cura personalis* and holistic student support for success through graduation.

While first-to-second year retention is addressed above, below we address longer-term attrition as represented in four- and six-year graduation rates.

Graduation Rate Performance

Listed below are the rates at which the five most recent cohorts of new, first-time degree-

seeking undergraduate students (first-time, full-time undergraduate students as reported to IPEDS, exclusion adjusted) graduated from SLU within four and six years:

Cohort	Four-Year Graduation Rates				Six-Year Graduation Rates			
	All students in cohort	Historically Under-Represented Populations	Pell Recipients	First-Generation Students	All students in cohort	Historically Under-Represented Populations	Pell Recipients	First-Generation Students
Fall 2015	73%	63%	65%	62%	80%	74%	74%	72%
Fall 2016	74%	56%	60%	58%	81%	72%	72%	72%
Fall 2017	73%	55%	59%	58%	80%	64%	67%	66%
Fall 2018	72%	59%	63%	62%	80%	70%	73%	70%
Fall 2019	72%	57%	63%	62%	79%	67%	72%	69%
Fall 2020	70%	56%	61%	65%	-	-	-	-
Fall 2021	67%	50%	54%	54%	-	-	-	-

These four- and six-year graduation rates reflect the trends evidenced in our first-to-second year retention data (as is true at many universities). Historically under-represented populations do not graduate from SLU at the same rates as any total SLU cohort population. The "good and bad news" about this fact is that the graduation rate gap between our population as a whole and our historically under-represented students decreases between the fourth and sixth years. That's good news to the extent that the gap closes somewhat. But it remains disheartening that those who, generally, come to SLU without the same financial or cultural resources as our white or Asian students (generally speaking) must take more time to complete their degrees at SLU. This reality, however, informed by these kinds of data, resulted in our decision (as explained on page 14 of the Retention Strategy document) to offer an extension of all University financial aid through the fifth year of study (10 semesters) for nearly all students. While there are internal questions about the cost-benefit analysis to SLU of extending this aid, there is no doubt that it is helpful to our SLU students in need.

Licensure and Certification Exam Performance

Undergraduate and graduate student success can also be measured, to an extent, by their performance on the various state or national licensure and certification exams required for professional practice in students' chosen areas of study and work. Our academic units individually track their graduates' success on these licensure and certification exams, and SLU publishes those results on our website via the Student Outcomes page on the Provost's website.

Overall, SLU student performance on these exams is exceptional, and there is no

program-level pass rate about which SLU has any substantive concerns. For example, the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy provides prospective and current students underlined detailed data on national certification and licensure pass rates for their program graduates; so, too, do the Medical Laboratory Science program, the Physical Therapy program, and several other programs. Nearly all such tracking of graduates' success is also included in individual program accreditation data and shared in each associated program's entry in the University Catalog.

Student Post-Graduation Success (Employment, Graduate School, etc.)

Data about post-graduation career and educational outcomes for our SLU undergraduate students is collected annually by our Office of Career Services through a First Destination Survey, with results shared via the Undergraduate Outcomes Dashboard. This survey is administered via Handshake, SLU's student and alumni career database, and is sent to each cohort of graduates (Spring, Summer, and Fall) beginning four weeks before graduation; the survey is open for five months with periodic reminders asking students to update their information.

Response data for the most recently-surveyed class (2024-25) was not yet available when this Assurance Argument was completed. However, the response rate for the 2023-2024 class was 55%. For that class of 2023-2024, of the 850 total respondents, 92% indicated they were either working full-time, enrolled in a graduate or professional education program, engaged full-time in a volunteer role, or serving full-time in the military. Their responses by category are as follows:

- 48% (410) were working full-time
- 44% (376) were continuing their education
- <1% (3) were engaged in a full-time volunteer position
- <1% (2) were serving full-time in the military

More detailed breakdowns of the results by undergraduate colleges and schools are also available via the dashboard. Another component to this dashboard is full-time salary information. For survey respondents in 2023-2024, the average full-time salary was $64,238, up from $63,314 for 2022-23 graduates.

Finally, regarding loan debt, Saint Louis University has a three-year cohort default rate of 0.00% -- which, of course, is attributed (to a great extent) to the suspension of student loan obligations initiated by the federal government during the pandemic. Now that the federal suspension has been lifted, that number will surely rise – but not by much. Historically, SLU's annual default rates rarely exceeded 1.5%. Despite our tuition rates and the average amount of debt incurred by our students, SLU graduates are, per the data above, (a) generally securing well-paying jobs upon or soon after graduation or (b) subsequently attending graduate and professional school, in which case they become even more able to cover ever their larger, aggregate student loan obligations.

Sources

- Census Reports on OIR Google Site
- Cohort Default Rate Webpage
- Degrees Granted Dashboard

- Division of Enrollment Management Webpage
- Fall 2025 Census Final Report
- Freshman Retention and Graduation Rates Dashboard
- Full-Time Salary
- Medical Laboratory Science Outcomes
- Occupational Science and Therapy Program Outcomes
- OIR Institutional Data Webpage
- Physical Therapy Outcomes
- Student Enrollment Dashboard
- Student Outcomes Webpage
- Test-Optional Policy FAQs Webpage
- Undergraduate Outcomes Dashboard
- University Undergraduate Retention Strategy
- University Undergraduate Retention Strategy (page number 7)
- University Undergraduate Retention Strategy (page number 10)
- University Undergraduate Retention Strategy (page number 8)
- University Undergraduate Retention Strategy (page number 14)

Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

As documented in this section, SLU demonstrates responsibility for the quality of our educational programs, learning environments and support services, and we evaluate their effectiveness in fulfilling our mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Additionally, this section has documented SLU's fulfillment of the HLC's requirements for embedded reports on (1) the maturity of our assessment of our new University Core Curriculum and (2) the quality and comprehensiveness of our academic program review process.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

At the highest level, SLU is organized as a series of operational "divisions" led by vice-presidents (or, in the case of the Division of Academic Affairs, the Provost). Most – but not all – vice-presidents report directly to the President; these include the following:

- VP for Mission and Identity
- Provost
- CEO/VP for Business and Finance
- VP and General Counsel
- VP for Medical Affairs (Dean of the School of Medicine)
- VP for Athletics
- VP for Marketing and Communications

Several vice presidents report to other vice presidents (or the Provost). For example, the Vice President for Human Resources and the Vice President for Information Technology Services both report to the CEO/Vice President for Business and Finance. Several other vice presidents report to the Provost: the Vice President for Enrollment Management; the Vice President for Diversity and Innovative Community Engagement; the Vice President for Research; the Vice President for Student Development; and the Rector of the Madrid Campus report to the Provost. The scope of responsibilities of the Provost, and the organization of the Division of Academic Affairs, are detailed in the orientation materials provided to new members of SLU's Board of Trustees .

Shared Governance

Most institutional decision-making at SLU is conducted via a formal, codified governance structure that includes bodies featuring broad representation of student, faculty, and staff constituencies. The importance of shared governance is widely held throughout the University community, and transparency in decision-making steadily increased under President Pestello's 11 years of leadership; all signs are that such transparency will

continue, and be advanced, under President Feser's presidency.

Faculty, students, staff, leadership, and the Board all have operational definitions of shared governance that are collaborative and consultative – but there is no single, all-governing, shared definition of shared governance at SLU. All constituents do understand that final operational decision-making authority rests with the President, and that the Board of Trustees is the corporate expression of the University and, therefore, is ultimately responsible for institutional actions.

The University Leadership Council (ULC) is the highest-level formal advisory body to, and decision-making body under, the President. The ULC consists of:

- all vice presidents
- all deans of all SLU colleges and schools (including the Rector of the Madrid Campus)
- president of the Faculty Senate
- president of the Staff Advisory Committee (SAC)
- president of the Student Government Association (SGA)

This key leadership group ensures a diversity of voices in truly institution-wide dialogues and deliberations. Matters requiring the highest level of University-wide perspective and deliberation – particularly University-level policies, and the annual budget – are deliberated by the ULC. More informally, President Feser is, thus far, continuing the tradition of the President also consulting his "Executive Staff," the subset of vice-presidents who report directly to him.

The Council of Academic Deans and Directors (CADD) is the principal advisory body to the Provost. As such, it deliberates and endorses as appropriate proposals for new/revised academic programs, policies, procedures, organizational structures, etc. Major CADD-deliberated policies impacting all of the units reporting to the Provost are first offered to the full faculty of the University for a 30-day review and comment period. CADD membership includes all deans of all SLU colleges/schools (including the Rector and senior academic leadership of the Madrid campus), as well as the Dean of Libraries, the Director of the University Core, the Director of INTO SLU, and the President of the Faculty Senate. Regular administrative resources to the committee include the Vice President for Enrollment Management, the Vice President for Student Development, all Associate and Assistant Provosts, and the University Registrar. CADD's bylaws codify its long-standing practices and membership.

The Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC) (addressed more fully in 3.A.) is the University-level curriculum and academic policy decision-making body situated above the academic governance structures of each college/school/center and below the CADD. UAAC's bylaws demonstrate the inclusivity of its membership. Like UAAC, the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC) is UAAC's counterpart at the graduate level (see 3.A.). GAAC's bylaws also document an inclusive membership evidencing SLU's commitment to subsidiarity and shared academic governance. The University Undergraduate Core Committee (UUCC) oversees the implementation of the Core curriculum. Per the UUCC bylaws, committee representation is very broad; the disproportionately large representation of faculty from the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) is intentional and recognizes the outsized role of CAS in delivering a majority of courses that fulfill Core requirements.

Faculty participate in the governance of the University at three levels: (1) the University level; (2) in their colleges/schools/centers/libraries; and (3) their various academic departments. At the University level, two structures allow for faculty governance: the Faculty Senate and University committees and task forces. The Faculty Senate's website makes available multiple resources, including the Senate's constitution, bylaws, meeting minutes, and the Faculty Manual. The Senate's five standing committees (Budget and Finance, Compensation and Fringe Benefits, Academic Affairs, Faculty Governance, and Professional Relations) are key vehicles via which the Senate operates and addresses issues that inform CADD and ULC deliberations. The Provost regularly presents and responds to the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate and Provost's Office collaborate in multiple ways, including by jointly establishing committees and task forces to address major issues such as gender equity among the faculty, the recently-adopted Teaching Effectiveness Framework, and the Joint Statement on Faculty Review of Policies. Through various other University committees, Faculty Senate representatives address issues related to curriculum, instructional design, academic affairs, research, and rank and tenure.

Each college/school/center/library has its own procedures for faculty governance within the unit. All include some form of representative faculty council/assembly, convened by the faculty themselves to address significant issues, initiate academic/curriculum and governance proposals, and communicate their views to the University Faculty Senate, their respective administrations, and/or the administration of the University. At the department level, faculty members participate in meetings and committees that help to develop the goals of the respective department, courses, student advising, service, research, assessment, and related mission-driven initiatives.

The Faculty Manual outlines the general norms and responsibilities of the faculty with regard to teaching, research, student advising, governance, and service. It also is the primary document defining University-level academic leadership roles (Provost, deans, chairs) and outlining the relationships among them. The Faculty Senate is the representative governing body for the faculty and the primary means by which the faculty participate in the larger governance of the institution.

Shared governance is addressed in Article III. H.4. of the Faculty Manual (pg. 29). This provision articulates highlights the shared governance responsibilities of Board of Trustees, the President, other members of the administration, faculty members, students, and the University staff. This vision for shared governance acknowledges the importance of interdependent roles, communication, and joint planning. Per the *Faculty Manual*, primary roles of the faculty include:

- setting the academic requirements for the degrees offered by the University;
- determining the contents of University courses and the methods of instruction to be used;
- setting standards for admission of students to the University;
- recommending the specific individuals who will be granted earned degrees; and
- recommending faculty appointments, promotions, and tenure according to institutional norms

SLU's Madrid Campus operates as a separate but integrated campus from the perspective

of the HLC and U.S. Department of Education. However, as a private company incorporated in Spain, it is subject to all Spanish laws governing corporations, privacy, taxes and labor-related activities. While the Madrid Campus aligns policies with SLU in the United States as often as possible, Spanish laws impact the campus' hiring, promotion, academic scheduling, and other areas that are articulated in the University *Faculty Manual* or regulated by United States federal or state laws. Also, SLU-Madrid adheres to Spain's Ministry of Education requirements for foreign universities to receive annual authorization to operate in the country. Accordingly, the faculty at the Madrid Campus are not governed by the University's *Faculty Manual (St. Louis)*. Rather, along with administrative staff, they are bound to Spanish labor laws, national worker bylaws (Estatuto de Los Trabajadores) and a collective private university sector agreement (Convenio). All employees may be represented on labor matters by an elected worker's committee (*Comité de Empresa*). In addition, the Madrid faculty have established their own Faculty Senate with its own Constitution.

Madrid academic leadership is regularly represented on key University-wide committees, such as the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee (GAAC), the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC), the University Undergraduate Core Committee (UUCC), the Council of Deans and Academic Directors (CADD), and the University Leadership Committee (ULC). Zoom and related video-conferencing technologies have brought the two campuses much closer together and have significantly facilitated shared governance and decision-making throughout the overall organization. Faculty, staff, and leaders of both campuses make periodic trips to attend meetings in person on the other campus. Additionally, there is always a Madrid faculty member in attendance in person at the Core Assessment Workshops each year. A Policy on Short-Term Inter-Campus Travel was approved in Spring 2024 to govern inter-campus travel and help ensure prudent use of institutional funds for such travel.

The Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) represents the interests and concerns of the University staff to faculty administrative leaders. Membership is open to any staff member who is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Officers are elected annually. The President of SAC is a member of the University Leadership Council and is regularly asked to provide SAC member representation on standing and *ad hoc* committees and task forces throughout the University. Meetings of SAC are held monthly with the Vice President for Human Resources in attendance. SAC fulfills the following functions:

- to communicate the interests and concerns of a diverse University staff;
- to function in an advisory capacity in the development, review and implementation of University policies which affect staff;
- to provide a means of communication with the administration, faculty, and students, and support them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the staff; and
- to create and nurture a spirit of unity among all employees at the University

The Student Government Association (SGA), chartered by the University's Board of Trustees, is the governing body which oversees the governance and funding of student organizations and represents the students' perspective to administration. The SGA officers and senators are elected by the student body. The SGA charters all student organizations and nominates students to serve on University-wide committees. Senators represent all colleges and schools, residents of every hall and apartment complex, and commuters. In addition, there are senators representing the Graduate Student Association (GSA), the Black Students Alliance (BSA), the International Student Federation (ISF), and first-year

students. Although the SGA represents all graduate students as well as undergraduate students, a separate graduate student-focused group (the Graduate Student Association), exists to complement the SGA's work.

The SGA meets weekly to create and debate legislation concerning all aspects of student life. University officials are regular participants in SGA meetings, communicating about institutional activities and proposals, and answering questions from student leaders. The SGA has representation on the ULC and several committees of the University Board of Trustees, including the Academic and Medical Affairs and Student Development committees.

> *Note: References here and throughout this Assurance Argument to the committees of the Board of Trustees describe those committees as they existed in August 2025. Since then, the Board has worked with new President Ed Feser on several changes to those committees; however, as of the final writing of this Assurance Argument those changes have not been finalized (e.g., revised committees do not yet have formal charge documents, etc.).*

The SGA's Doctrine of Shared Governance serves as the official position of the Associated Students of Saint Louis University Student Government Association regarding shared governance. The SGA statement specifically articulates the Student Government Association as the official voice of the student body, the function and expectations of students in shared governance.

Student participation in other University-level work has also expanded. For example, the University Undergraduate Core Committee created an Undergraduate Core Curricular Fellows Program. Students submit applications to serve on one or more of the seven Core Curriculum subcommittees; they participate in the course approval and assessment of student learning review processes alongside faculty.

Data-Informed Decision-Making

Beyond the increasing involvement of multiple constituencies in formal decision-making processes, one of the most prevalent characteristics of the University's operations today is the use of transparently-shared data to inform those decisions. While there are sometimes legitimate disagreements about what data points best inform certain decisions, what is clear is that the President's Office, Provost Lewis, and other current academic and administrative leaders are committed to:

- identifying appropriate data pertinent to the shared understanding and deliberation of University challenges and initiatives (typically internally-developed data points and metrics)
- sharing those data as widely as possible (given legal constraints, commitments to confidentiality of personally identifying salary and related information, etc.)
- referencing the data in communications in which draft and final decisions are shared with related constituencies

Today, SLU's efforts to deliver on its Mission in a manner that not only preserves but strengthens the institution's financial standing is rooted in the proactive sharing of academic program productivity/efficiency/feasibility and related financial data amongst all colleges and school leaders – and often with the full faculty of the University. Data that used to be kept

within each academic unit – and often just among its leaders – is now more likely to be shared among all, or at least among a committee of faculty representatives of each college/school, so that both interdependence and distinct strengths and challenges are better understood by all. The Board, President, Provost, Vice Presidents, deans, faculty, staff, and students now regularly expect this of each other (and often demand it with the creation of each new initiative, task force, or committee).

As noted in our previous Assurance Argument, the Provost's Office implemented an Academic Portfolio Review process in 2020-2021. This was a one-time process through which the viability of each current SLU academic program was reviewed by a committee of faculty and academic leaders who then made recommendations regarding program closure to the Provost. The Academic Portfolio Review Committee (APRC) analyzed enrollment, retention, graduation, and related financial data, all of which were critical to the Provost's decisions regarding which academic programs to close. As a result of that APRC initiative, approximately 30 programs (majors, minors, and certificates) were closed – resulting, however, in no loss of tenured or tenure-track faculty or staff positions. All programs to be closed were "sunset" and "taught out" fully, so that no student's academic progress was negatively impacted by the decision.

To continue this data-informed work on a more consistent basis (which is an expectation of the Board of Trustees), the University approved in Spring 2025 a new, ongoing, systematic process: *Viability and Sustainability Review (VSR)*. The policy/process, approved in March 2025 after an extensive period of development and iterative consultation with academic leaders of all levels, outlines the guiding principles, definitions and scope, design, and a timeline/cycle. In fact, the multi-stage VSR process was intentionally modeled on the multi-stage annual data review process used by the HLC to evaluate risk indicators, which leads to increasingly more rigorous, detailed review – but only when demonstrably needed. VSR is designed intentionally to dovetail with, draw from, and complement other existing review processes so that it does not overburden chairs and program directors, deans, or other university personnel. It features a scaffolded, three-stage process conducted over a nearly 12 month period. The first implementation of the new VSR process began in late Spring 2025, with Stage II being conducted this Fall. Any programs requiring a Stage III review will undergo that review in early Spring 2026, so that the Provost and, ultimately, the Board of Trustees, can make decisions before the end of the academic year on any proposals for program closure or investments needed to better sustain certain programs.

Ultimately, SLU leaders are working to best utilize the most appropriate quantitative and qualitative data in their decision-making. Growing faith in the data provided centrally via our Office of Institutional Research (OIR) – and shared transparently across multiple constituencies – is facilitating our data-informed work. In particular, OIR's extensive suite of Tableau data dashboards (related to faculty, programs, student enrollment, financial performance, etc.) are fostering greater trust among faculty and academic and administrative leaders. Dashboard data is used for academic program reviews, to inform new program development proposals, to support our 50+ disciplinary/programmatic accreditation efforts, for HLC's AIDU and related reporting obligations, and academic planning at multiple levels. Additional details about the nature and scope of these dashboards are included in 3.G. in our discussion of data informing student success and retention.

Overall, SLU's "culture of assessment/continuous improvement" continues to develop. At the

heart of our efforts is our maturing capacity for employing data appropriately for critical self-analysis and strategic decision-making. As we mature, more coordinated, holistic, data-driven assessment and improvement remains the goal.

Engagement with Internal and External Constituencies

SLU is the leading member of the St. Louis Midtown Redevelopment Corporation, established via collaboration with SSM Health and supported by the City of St. Louis. The Midtown Redevelopment Plan governs the redevelopment of approximately 400 acres of un- and under-utilized land and buildings between the "North Campus" and "South/Medical Campus" areas of SLU's main St. Louis campus. The Plan was adopted in 2017, and has resulted in major redevelopment projects surrounding SLU's home campus. For example, students and visitors now have access to a variety of resources all within a few blocks of campus, including a new Target store featuring a CVS pharmacy, Ulta and Starbucks; Fresh Thyme Market grocery store; Ikea; Topgolf; and City Foundry STL's local retailers, food hall, restaurants, activities and entertainment hot spots.

One of the key responsibilities of the Redevelopment Corporation is to serve as an "umbrella redeveloper" tasked with overseeing and facilitating development efforts within the Redevelopment Area. The Redevelopment Corporation reviews and approves plans for construction and rehabilitation of improvements within the Redevelopment Area to ensure that these projects comply with and further the goals of the Redevelopment Plan. That guidance is informed by SLU faculty and staff members who provide research/input about community needs and concerns. SLU houses the office and staff of the Redevelopment Corporation; the Corporation's Director is a SLU employee; and SLU employees (including our Chief Financial Officer) hold three of the five seats on the Corporation's Board of Directors.

Sources

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- Faculty Senate Constitution
- GAAC Bylaws
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- Madrid Campus Estatuto de los Trabajadores
- OIR Tableau Data Dashboards
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- Provost-Faculty Senate Faculty Gender Equity Committee Webpage
- Saint Louis University Faculty Senate Webpage
- SGA Doctrine of Shared Governance
- Short-Term Inter-Campus Travel Policy
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- SLU Teaching Effectiveness Framework - FINAL
- St. Louis Midtown Redevelopment Corp Plan
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- Staff Advisory Committee Webpage
- Student Government Association Webpage
- UAAC Bylaws
- Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC) Webpage
- Undergraduate Core Curricular Fellows
- Undergraduate Core Webpage
- University Leadership Council Webpage
- University Undergraduate Core Committee (UUCC) Webpage
- UUCC Bylaws
- Graduate Academic Affairs Committee Webpage

4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

NOTE #1*: In Summer 2022, SLU transferred ownership and operation of the SLUCare clinical medicine practice to our partner, SSM Health (SSM). The agreement aligns the SLU-SSM relationship with the national trend in academic medical center integration with their health system partners. Our Jesuit colleagues at Georgetown University, Creighton University, and Loyola University Chicago have executed similar agreements, and their successes in doing so informed our planning with SSM.*

This change substantively altered both SLU's annual revenue and expenses going forward, as well as provided a long-term stream of funding for SLU from SSM as part of the agreement. All financials addressed below reflect this change.

Also note that SLU <u>shared with the HLC</u> our plans for this agreement with SSM prior to finalizing it. We wanted to ensure that we met all expectations for HLC's awareness and approval, which <u>our notification and explanation did, per our then-HLC Liaison Jeff Rosen</u>.

NOTE #2: *Just several days before the submission of this Assurance Argument, SLU received from our external auditor, KPMG, our final <u>audited financials for fiscal year 2025</u>. With the Assurance Argument already written, and with multiple references throughout it to our FY24 financial audit, we opted to keep our financial-related text throughout "as is" (meaning premised on our FY24 audited financials). However, we offer here the following summary notes from the FY25 audit to demonstrate our improved financial state:*

- *Page 3: SLU's total assets increased in FY25 to $3,048,858,000 (up from about $2.95 billion in FY24)*
- *Page 4: Increasingly positive return on investment income enabled SLU to designate even more endowment money for operations in FY25 (just over $120 million) than FY 24 (about $90 million)*
- *Page 4: For FY25, SLU posted a positive operating margin of nearly $9 million*

<u>Resource Base</u>

The University maintains a resource base that effectively supports its current operations. Per page 3 of our <u>FY24 independently-audited financial statements</u>, SLU holds nearly $3 billion in assets ($2,956,410,000), including the following:

- $1,879,430,000 in endowment funds (with approximately 67% in unrestricted funds) (p. 24)

- $732,101,000 in physical plant/property assets ($1,400,916,000 minus $668,815,000 allocated for depreciation) (p. 18)

Also per that FY24 audit (which SLU publishes on its <u>website</u>, along with a <u>one-page summary</u>), SLU had $296,242,000 available to meet cash needs for general expenditures (p. 14). To provide additional financial security when facing unforeseen challenges (such as the COVID pandemic), SLU maintains open lines of credit totaling $80 million – with no outstanding borrowings (p. 20).

Overall, our external audit confirms FY24 total operating revenues (and other support) of nearly $600 million, with total operating expenses of approximately $650 million. Former President Pestello addressed this pending shortfall when he shared with the University community a <u>May 2024 budget update</u>:

> …We are not immune from the pressures of our environment, or from the need to adjust and adapt in response. …Though our net tuition revenue has been favorable, our FY24 operating deficit is evidence that our expenses have begun to outpace our revenue growth. We need to make wise and proactive fiscal adjustments to more closely align expenses with revenue. This will require the provost and vice presidents to work with deans and other leaders to analyze and propose potential expense reductions over the next several months.

Those foreshadowed expense reductions included the elimination of approximately 20 staff positions in Fall 2024 (with standard severance packages). In Spring 2025, approximately 40 non-tenure track faculty in low-enrolled programs were informed that their one-year contracts would not be renewed (as noted in Section 3.C, *Faculty Manual* protections allowed most to remain at SLU through the 2025-2026 academic year).

As detailed by Provost Lewis in his <u>"Faculty Town Hall" presentation in April 2025</u>, more strategic management of faculty workload, class sizes, and our portfolio of academic programs were all necessary and underway. Slide #9 of that presentation forecasts a lower faculty headcount achieved via multiple levers, including our revised <u>phased retirement</u> and <u>full retirement</u> policies and an <u>updated faculty workload policy</u>. As personnel salaries and benefits constitute the great majority of SLU's expenses – and as filled and open administrative positions have been the primary targets of several recent rounds of reductions – Provost Lewis has emphasized more efficiency in delivering our academic programs by a smaller cadre of faculty.

That strategic efficiency also includes (as noted in 3.C. and in Provost Lewis' April 10 Town Hall presentation) SLU's first en masse offering of long-term (three-year and five-year) non-tenure track contracts to approximately 30 faculty from well-enrolled programs and who met criteria outlined in our new <u>Long-Term Non-Tenure Track Contracts Policy</u>. While some assessed the nearly simultaneous faculty layoffs and issuance of long-term faculty contracts as contradictory actions, Provost Lewis and the deans argued that they represented more intentional and strategic responses than across-the-board cuts or non-strategic elimination of open positions.

Additionally, several working groups of faculty, staff, and institutional leaders were charged in late Fall 2024 to research and offer recommendations to support enrollment growth, administrative efficiencies, and <u>organizational re-structuring</u>. Implementation of several of

the recommended changes, along with the reductions of faculty and staff, have improved SLU's financial position but have not eliminated our challenges. Many recommended changes have not yet been adopted but are under consideration. For example, we have just initiated a process to study the potentially merger of some of our health sciences-related academic units; final recommendations will not be offered until late Spring 2026.

As President Pestello noted in an April 2025 message to the SLU community, a budget gap was anticipated again for FY26. The better news was that the FY25 year was likely to end with a balanced budget (echoed by new President Feser in his first budget update to the SLU community). President Pestello's final budget-related message also confirmed that, despite SLU's financial challenges – exacerbated by the growing uncertainty in federal research funding and geopolitical concerns that dramatically impacted international student enrollment at SLU in Fall 2025 – SLU continued to hold a AA- credit rating from S&P Global, which "praised our 'very strong enterprise risk profile,' 'trend of increasing enrollment despite operating in a competitive market with demographic pressures,' and 'active management of expense growth.'"

Resource Allocation

The University allocates its resources in a manner consistent with its multi-faceted corporate purposes of teaching, research, service, and health care – each of which is a corporate expression of our Mission.

As detailed in our FY24 audit, SLU had total functional expenditures of $652,554,000. Those expenditures were distributed by auditor-defined functional category as follows:

Expenditure Category	Amount
Instruction	$224,612,000
Instructional Support	$171,873,000
Auxiliaries	$53,929,000
Academic Support	$64,708,000
Research	$51,573,000
Student Services	$35,380,000
Operations & Maintenance of Physical Plant	$41,175,000
Public Service	$9,124,000
*Total Expenditures	$652,554,000

These data document that SLU's expenditures are demonstrably well-aligned with its mission and priorities. Expenses for instruction and related support ("Instructional Support" and "Academic Support") comprise the bulk of our expenditures (70%). SLU's expenditures

on research are also significant, and have been increasing substantively (as addressed in Section 1.A) since the re-imagining of our Office of the Vice President for Research, which included substantive increases in staffing and operational funding. These investments "paid off" in SLU being formally classified as a Carnegie Research I institution in February 2025. However, we recognize that key investments in research infrastructure have lagged our steadily increasing federal funding; we must accelerate such investments to ensure continued compliance with internal and external grants management standards. And while expenditures supporting public service are lower compared to SLU's other expenditure categories, SLU's community service efforts and accomplishments are impressive, and have earned SLU the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification and the #3 national ranking for service from The Princeton Review.

Per the most recent publicly-available IPEDS data (FY23), SLU's financials compare favorably with other private institutions similar in size, educational scope, and mission. IPEDS' definitions are different than those used in our independent audit, and do allow for some inconsistencies in reporting categories across institutions; however, the data below demonstrate generally that SLU's expenditures are allocated in ways that are fairly consistent with peer institutions.

	Total Enrolled	Instruction	Research	Public Service	Institutional Support	Total Expenses	Total Revenues	End
Baylor University	20,824	366,033,000	72,518,000	8,826,000	106,594,000	886,347,000	973888000	1,96'
Loyola University Chicago	17,397	210,184,660	36,881,948	4,823,919	123,139,923	634,883,953	723335528	97'
Marquette University	11,373	156,941,000	55,459,000	5,561,000	57,431,000	453,669,000	498796000	916
Saint Louis University	17,202*	256,965,334	58,875,147	9,796,850	131,035,213	623,429,567	947,904,627	1,73'
University of Denver	13,387	221,195,616	23,317,551	19,135,821	80,141,541	580,472,128	595911006	1,022

Additionally, note that the SLU's total enrollment figure in the table above includes approximately 3,000 high-school students in our 1818 Dual Credit Program, one of the largest such programs nationally for a private institution; however, that program does not demand per-student investment on anywhere near the scale required for our certificate- and degree-seeking students. Without those non-degree students included in our IPEDS total enrollment count in the table above, our total enrollment would be approximately 14,000 – making several comparisons among the group of peers above notably more favorable.

Many in the SLU community recognize that our generally strong financial standing, as well as our ability to weather tough financial storms (due to unexpected losses in research or

enrollment revenue, for example), results, in no small part, from our leadership's ability and willingness to make tough, strategic expense reductions. However, all recognize that our financial standing is also rooted in the strength of our nearly $2 billion endowment, which is conservatively managed so that its earnings can be used to strategically support annual operating costs.

SLU's endowment spending policy is articulated in our FY24 audited financials (p. 23), as is confirmation of SLU having and implementing with fidelity an endowment investment policy. Approximately 67% of SLU's formally-defined endowment is comprised of unrestricted funds, affording SLU greater flexibility in using endowment funds than is the case at many other institutions with similarly-sized endowments.

The need for additional infusions of annual operating funds from the endowment has grown in recent years. Since the COVID pandemic first dramatically impacted SLU's budget in FY2020, the Board of Trustees has approved higher endowment spend rates than the 4.5 percent that was more common prior to FY21 – particularly in FY25 and FY26:

Fiscal Year	Board-Approved Endowment Spend Rate
FY21	5.0%
FY22	5.0%
FY23	5.0%
FY24	4.9%
FY25	6.5%
FY26	6.25%

However, as evidenced on pg. 15 of our FY24 audit, the total net return on our endowment investments has regularly exceeded, by a substantive margin, the amount designated to support annual operations. As noted above, our increased dependence on endowment funds for annual operations has also not negatively impacted our strong credit ratings.

The Board of Trustees has, however, made clear that these more substantive endowment draws cannot, and will not, continue long into the future. Accordingly, President Pestello and, now, President Feser, have been leading the charge to reduce expenditures institution-wide, generate greater net tuition revenue from students, and seek new sources of revenue.

Budgeting

SLU's Division of Business and Finance oversees University-level budgeting and financial monitoring for the University. The Division annually produces highly-detailed budgeting guidelines and related timelines, part of a well-scheduled, and participatory budget planning and governance cycle. However, major factors introducing uncertainty into budget planning

can force amendments to that schedule. For example, given the unanticipated changes in federal research funding and constriction of visas issued to international students in Spring 2025, SLU's FY26 budgeting timeline was delayed; the final FY26 budget was eventually approved by the Board of Trustees in a special meeting on August 12.

To ensure clarity across the institution in developing FY26 budgets, SLU adopted an Interim University Budget Policy that better defined and directed the use of (a) operating funds, (b) designated and sponsored funds, and (c) capital funds.

The University utilizes an annual, incremental budgeting process for its operations. Essentially, new institutional operational budgets are based on the previous year's budgets and changed, incrementally, based on analysis of data from multiple sources. This occurs at most levels/in most units of the institution, although individual budget managers may engage in some other, complementary forms of budgeting that help them arrive at their annual budget change requests. Year-to-year budget change requests come from budget managers for the following:

- requests for new spending (for personnel, programming, etc.)
- increases to meet contractual obligations
- increases for previously-approved academic programs
- capital requests
- requests grounded in projected changes in enrollment

Annual budgets are developed via a set of budget forms distributed by Business and Finance leaders. For FY26, as documented in the budgeting guidelines, budgets at the division level of the University were reduced by three percent, making requests for any new funds typically reliant on reallocations, instead.

Many academic programs are approved by senior leadership under the expectation that, as enrollment grows annually, so too will the need for additional faculty and/or staff; this is to be based on prior market analysis required as part of the new program development process, detailed in 3.A. Accordingly, academic deans and directors annually request budget amounts for such expenses that were committed to by the institution at the point of program adoption by academic leadership and, in most cases, the Board of Trustees.

Each year, with a wealth of historical enrollment data and input from the deans, the Office of the Provost works with colleagues in the Division of Business and Finance on enrollment projections and related budget projections. As SLU is a fundamentally tuition-driven institution, enrollment forecasts drive the University's gross tuition revenue budget. Other factors incorporated into projected budgets include merit increases for faculty and staff (if applicable; no raises were included in the FY26 budget) as well as increases in tuition, room, and board rates for the upcoming year. A separate Capital Projects and Equipment Policy governs budgeting for major expenditures that qualify as capital expenditures; the capital budget process implements that policy.

SLU's Faculty Senate operates its own Budget and Finance Committee, the charge of which is to (a) share budget information between administrators, faculty, and students, and (b) work collaboratively on budget and finance issues that impact the academic enterprise. Members of the committee are regularly invited to select budget development meetings, and regularly report to their constituent faculty about the state of the University budget.

Budget presentations are made by Business and Finance leaders upon request to many groups, but are also regularly offered to the following groups throughout the annual budgeting process:

- Faculty Senate
- Staff Advisory Council
- Student Government Association
- Academic deans and directors

Ultimate approval of the University budget resides with the full Board of Trustees, typically at the quarterly meeting immediately preceding the start of each new fiscal year. By the time the budget is submitted to the Trustees for a vote, it has been vetted by the President, the University Leadership Committee, and the Faculty Senate Budget and Finance Committee.

Following approval of each annual budget by the Board, funds are released into the appropriate accounts (at multiple levels) throughout the institution in the Workday system. Monthly and annual financial reports tracking budgets are available to all budget managers via Workday.

As a non-profit, private educational institution subordinate only to its volunteer Board of Trustees and the constituencies it exists to serve, SLU is not beholden to any other financial or corporate interest to which financial or other resource allocations are directed.

Physical Infrastructure

SLU's St. Louis, Missouri campus is composed of 132 buildings, spread across 260 urban acres and 7,999,581 GSF – all of which is maintained by nearly 250 staff. SLU's Madrid, Spain campus features three buildings with 52,122 GSF in the historically-protected Metropolitano neighborhood. Both campuses are readily accessible via public transportation.

Also in Missouri, SLU owns (a) a retreat center (the Lay Center) set on nearly 340 acres and featuring 12 buildings; and (b) the Reis Biological Field Station, set on 200 acres with 11 buildings.

As noted above, our FY24 independent audit report establishes that the net worth of SLU's land, buildings, and equipment totaled $732,101,000. In the past decade, the University has significantly accelerated its efforts to reshape its physical presence to be increasingly sustainable. The newest major building on our St. Louis campus is the Sinquefield Science and Engineering Center, opened in Summer 2020. As our Madrid campus enrollment continues to climb, SLU is continually seeking to add space there; however, restricted availability of adjacent buildings (or space within those buildings) remains a challenge.

SLU's campus Master Plan, updated in 2024, presents a comprehensive treatment of SLU's planning related to our St. Louis campus' physical infrastructure. The Master Plan Executive Summary notes challenges (e.g., building/classroom usage, demand for active learning/flexible classrooms, research space needs, deferred maintenance needs, etc.) and related recommendations – some of which have been or are in the process of being implemented, while others are still under consideration.

Technology Infrastructure

Implementing institution-wide technologies designed to streamline, integrate, and otherwise improve faculty, staff, and student work is a shared goal, and has driven the purchase and successful implementation of software for managing contracting (Agiloft), course evaluations (Explorance Blue), and e-mail (Outlook). SLU has also implemented the finance and human resources modules of Workday; senior leaders have begun assessing the propriety of SLU also implementing Workday's student module (which covers enrollment, financial aid, and student and program academic records).

Planning for, adopting, and evaluating key academic/learning technologies (e.g., learning management system, lecture capture software, classroom technologies, etc.) is the charge of the Learning Technologies Advisory Committee (LTAC). LTAC is primarily a faculty body, but includes two student representatives in addition to a few staff from our Provost's Office and ITS Office. Recent LTAC recommendations include a recommendation to adopt PollEverywhere as the single, University-supported polling tool for SLU, and the recommendation to not adopt any University-sponsored plagiarism detection tool (due to their lack of accuracy). SLU's Learning Management System Steering Committee, separate from LTAC, provides guidance on key aspects of the learning management system (currently Canvas), including: functionality changes; system configuration; timelines for and potential impact of system outages/changes; and other system management concerns.

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- Faculty Retirement Policy
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- Health Science Reorganization Kick Off Meeting
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- Campus Master Plan

4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

SLU's most recent University-level strategic plan, <u>Magis: Saint Louis University's Strategy for the Future</u>, was initiated by President Pestello in his first year in 2014 and approved by the Board of Trustees in September 2015. This plan was designed to guide SLU's efforts for the next five years. As noted in the 2021 Assurance Argument, a new plan was not initiated mostly due to other priorities and emergent situations, namely the *Magis* Operational Excellence Program (focused on major budget reductions), the development of the Core Curriculum, and the University's response to COVID-19.

President Feser committed to the Board and the SLU community that he would initiate a new strategic planning initiative by his 100th day, and he has fulfilled that commitment. Early in October 2025, the Office of the President began forming four teams of institutional leaders, each to address one of the following sets of key strategic planning questions:

Strategic Plan Initiative	Key Questions to Address
Student Success	- Why is our first-year retention rate (undergraduate) falling? - What are SLU's student success rates (retention and graduation) for other categories of students (transfer undergraduate, graduate, by demographic)? - How well-positioned are we to maximize student success? - What actions must we take to significantly increase retention and student success?
Enrollment	- Where are there opportunities for enrollment growth? - What programs need to be retooled or retired, given shifts in demand or our internal capacity? - What opportunities are there for us to diversify the learners we serve (returning, alternative credentials, lifelong), and by what modalities? - What organizational changes need to be implemented to ensure SLU is as agile and strategic as possible in responding to shifts in demand and opportunities for growth?

Research and Scholarship	- Where are our most promising areas of research distinction? - What actions do we need to take to advance faculty excellence? - What prospective areas of research distinction align most closely with existing or promising areas of teaching distinction?
Athletics	- How does athletics contribute to SLU's brand, recruitment, and mission? - What actions are needed to leverage athletics to its highest potential impact? - What should SLU's approach be in the new environment of the NCAA: Roster limits, scholarships, revenue sharing, and other changes? - What operational adjustments are required to meet the programmatic goals/objectives? - How will SLU fund the necessary investments to meet its goals/objectives? - Does SLU have the appropriate mix of sports?

To best address those strategic planning "key questions," President Feser's formal strategic planning process outline calls for each of these four teams to engage in the following community-engaged activities throughout the 2025-2026 academic year:

- Data collection & analysis
- Surveys
- Campus convenings
- Focus group engagement (developed and facilitated by various individuals and offices)
- Student experience review/market analyses

The goal is that, drawing on the input and insights gathered from the SLU community, a new institutional strategic plan is completed and published University-wide by the end of the Spring 2026 term.

In lieu of an active institution-wide strategic plan when he was appointed in Fall 2021, Provost Lewis committed to the development of an Academic Strategic Plan (ASP). The official Academic Strategic Planning process began in February 2022 with an email from Provost Lewis to the SLU community, outlining the steps in the process and the opportunities for everyone to participate, beginning with collaborative listening sessions hosted by a local consulting firm hired to facilitate the process.

Over 500 members of the SLU community attended one of over 20 sessions during March and April 2022 to share insights and ideas and provide feedback about our potential academic priorities. Following this information-gathering stage, the Provost worked with the ASP Steering Committee, academic deans, and key leaders in the Provost's Office to develop several drafts of the ASP. The Provost shared the initial draft with a variety of key stakeholders, including the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and

the Academic and Medical Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. Based on that round of feedback, the Provost shared an updated draft with the entire SLU community via email in October 2022 and asked for additional feedback via a Google form. In January 2023, the Provost sent out a final call for feedback, including the opportunity to attend open fora at which he walked through the latest version and gave stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. From there he presented the final ASP draft to the Board of Trustees and the plan was finalized and presented to the campus community in May 2023.

The resulting five-year Academic Strategic Plan is entitled "Living Our Institutional Vocations." The plan includes five strategic priorities:

- Strategic Priority #1: Teaching and Learning
- Strategic Priority #2: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work
- Strategic Priority #3: Community Well-Being and Equity
- Strategic Priority #4: Access and Reach
- Strategic Priority #5: Institutional Planning

Each priority is to be advanced via the achievement of a set of strategic goals by the end of the five-year ASP timeline. Each goal has a short list of Priority Actions, which are some key actions likely necessary for the achievement of the goals.

Major reporting on progress toward Academic Strategic Plan is planned for the third year (Fall 2026) of the five-year plan. However, progress on multiple initiatives is already both evident and shared with the University community in various ways. Perhaps most visible is the steady progress on Goal 1.1 of Priority #1, to "Recognize and reward inclusive, evidence-based, and learning-center instruction and curriculum design." As noted in 3.C., a highly-participatory year-long process resulted in SLU adopting its first Teaching Effectiveness Framework, the first step in a series of planned ASP initiatives focused on improving teaching and learning, and on recognizing and rewarding faculty for effective teaching in promotion and tenure decisions. A recent update announced the start of phase two of that project.

Additional ASP updates include:

- The Fall 2025 update on our JED Campus project documents progress on an initiative key to fulfilling Goal 3.1: "Implement programs, policies, and processes that help create a culture of well-being for students, faculty, and staff."
- SLU initiated its plan to increase stipends and benefits for graduate assistants in our graduate and professional programs; some of that progress is on hold while the University and a newly-formed Graduate Assistant Union work toward an initial contract.
- As noted in 3.F., we continue to monitor our test-optional approach to admissions in most programs (Goal 4.1).
- Per Goal 4.1, we have moved ahead with development of a B.A. degree completion program for our Prison Education Program. A committee of faculty, supported by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Provost, continues that work.
- We have fully implemented and begun expanding our programs offered in partnership with Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL). SLU is now offering bachelor's degree programs online at multiple locations (including refugee camps) in Africa; these highly

mission-centric programs, offered tuition-free, are supported on-ground by JWL staff working in concert with SLU faculty.
- The October 2025 Health Sciences Summit is an initiative supporting Goal 4.3. It is "a mechanism and support structure for incentivizing and rewarding faculty-driven efforts for innovative academic program (re)development."
- While we have not yet established the standing committee on institutional size and scope envisioned to support Goal 5.1, the final report of the Group D initiative in Spring 2025 fulfills a portion of this goal.

Other forms of data-informed planning illustrate the intentionality and follow-through of SLU faculty, staff, and leadership in fulfillment of their responsibilities. For example:

- Enrollment Management provided a comprehensive report to the Board of Trustees for the Board's September 2025 meeting. The 13-page report concludes with key strategies to be employed to more successfully impact enrollment in 2026-2027, as informed by the analysis presented.

- The Division of Research provided its own report to the Board in September 2025, documenting SLU's dramatic rise to Carnegie R1 status but also addressing the challenges faced along the way, and that remain ahead of us. The report addresses the related infrastructure and compliance challenges, and summarizes priorities for the coming academic years as SLU seeks to live its new R1 identity with fidelity. The report concluded with questions to drive related discussions with and among Board members to help best support future planning. Our Five-Year Research Growth Plan outlines our high-level goals for funded research.

- Our Undergraduate Student Retention Strategy Overview documents the multitudinous programs and services SLU strategically implements to support student success through timely graduation; it emphasizes data-informed efforts leading to action and follow-though.

- Reorganization of several key student support programs under the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education resulted from a year-long study facilitated by an external consultant. Data and recommendations from their final report greatly informed our reorganization decisions.

Other examples of SLU's maturing culture of planning are offered throughout this Assurance Argument.

Sources

- Academic Strategic Plan - October 2022 Draft
- Academic Strategic Plan - Final
- Classroom Strategy AY25-26 Plan
- Fall 2025 Update on JED Campus Partnership News Article
- Jan 2023 Final Call for Feedback on the Academic Strategic Plan
- Health Science Summit Agenda with Descriptions
- JED Report Fall 2025
- Jesuit Worldwide Learning Webpage
- Kicking off our Academic Strategic Planning Process

- May 2023 Academic Strategic Plan Launch Event
- October 2022 Update on the Academic Strategic Plan
- SLU and Jesuit Worldwide Learning Webpage
- SLU Strategic Plan (2015)
- Strategic Planning Process Outline 10.6.25
- Teaching Effectiveness Project Update 10.21.25
- Team 3 Work Group D - Report to the Provost
- Enrollment Management Report to BOT
- Graduate Assistant Message re Year 2 Support Implementation
- Research Report to BOT
- Student Support Reorganization from Kennedy and Co.
- University Undergraduate Student Retention Strategy
- Five-Year Research Growth Plan Webpage

Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

As documented in this section, SLU's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable us to fulfill our mission, improve the quality of our educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Sources

There are no sources.