

CELEBRATING THE PRESENT, SUSTAINING THE FUTURE

Self-Study Report 2020

Franklin University Switzerland

2019-2020

*Dedicated to Professor Ann Gardiner
for her unwavering dedication to the Franklin community
and her tireless work on this Self-Study.*

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Glossary of Key Acronyms

AA	Associate Degree
AACU	Association of American Colleges and Universities
AAICU	Association of American International Colleges and Universities
AAQ	Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance
ALEKS	Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces
ALP	Academic Literacy Program
AMICAL	American International Consortium of Academic Libraries
AS	Accessibility Services
AT	Academic Travel
AYF	Academic Year at Franklin
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BOT	Board of Trustees
CAP	Capstone Assessment Plan
CEPP	National Association of College Admissions Counseling's Code of Ethics and Professional Practices
CIS	Council of International Schools
CLA	Collegiate Learning Assessment
CLCS	Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies Course Code
CPA	Certified Public Accountant
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DAP	Department Assessment Plan
DOE	Department of Education
EAIE	European Association for International Education
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EEA	European Economic Area
EEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EKIT	EvaluationKit
ENV	Environmental Studies Course Code
EU	European Union
EucA	European university college Association
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FTE	Full Time Equivalency
FUS	Franklin University Switzerland
FY	Fiscal Year
FYE	First Year Experience
FYS	First Year Seminar
GAPP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GLAA	Global Liberal Arts Alliance
GPA	Grade Point Average

GSS	Gruppo Sicurezza SA
IACAC	International Association of College Admissions Counseling
IDI	Intercultural Development Inventory
IS	Italian Studies
ITA	Italian Course Code
ITS	Information Technology Services
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual
LIT	Literature Course Code
LLLS	Life-Long Learning Scholarship
MAP	Major Assessment Plan
ML	Modern Languages
MSCHE	Middle States Commission on Higher Education
MSIM	Master of Science in International Management
NACAC	National Association of College Admissions Counseling
NAFSA	Association of International Educators
NASPA	National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
OSL	Office of Student Life
PACE	Student LGBTQIA+ organization
POL	Political Science Course Code
PRR	Periodic Review Report
RNL	Ruffalo Noel Levitz
SFS	School for Field Studies
SGA	Student Government Association
SJS	Social Justice and Sustainability
SLO	Student Learning Outcomes
SLOAC	Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee
SMU	Southern Methodist University
SP	Strategic Plan
SRM	Student Relationship Manager
SSI	Student Satisfaction Inventory
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
VCA	Visual and Communication Arts
VP	Vice President
VPEM	Vice President for Enrollment Management
WLC	Writing and Learning Center
WTG	Writing Course Code

Executive Summary

This 2019-2020 MSCHE Self-Study Report provides a snapshot of Franklin University Switzerland (FUS) on the cusp of our 50th Anniversary: a time to honor the past, celebrate the present, and ensure the sustainability of Franklin for the future. Franklin has always delivered on its mission to provide a cross-cultural, multinational learning and living environment that prepares students to become compassionate and responsible leaders in a changing world. Our self-study report shows how we have evolved our mission, our strategic plan, our programs, our student-support services, and our assessment practices to keep pace with that self-study process also enabled us to identify and articulate emergent challenges, as well as the next steps we need to take to ensure our success in the future.

Themes and Goals Articulated by the 2019-20 Self Study Report

- Developing and articulating more fully Franklin's mission, vision, strategic plan, Learning Outcomes, and a Facilities Master Plan.
- Integrating the mission, strategic plan and Learning Outcomes more effectively in institutional processes at all levels.
- Assessing and revising our core curriculum to more effectively deliver on Franklin's mission.
- Settling into and advancing Franklin's status as a Swiss University, offering and assessing graduate programs in line with our core mission.
- Strengthening co-curricular and student support services.
- Evolving more effective assessment practices at the institutional, program, and course level, creating a stronger culture of assessment overall.
- Securing Franklin's sustainability for the future.

Progress Toward Franklin's Goals

Mission and Vision

As shown in Chapter 1, Franklin instituted a thorough and collaborative process for revising the mission in 2013, supplementing it with specific vision Statements that include the entire Franklin community: Administrators, Faculty, Staff, Students, and Alumni. The mission highlights Franklin's unique offerings as an institution of international education; as such, the mission guided the institution in creating Institutional Priorities and University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes specific to the Franklin community. Franklin has fostered community awareness of,

and connection to, the mission and has created and uses assessment practices that support the mission and Goals.

Strategic Planning

As shown in Chapter 1 and Chapter 6, Franklin has addressed MSCHE's request to better integrate planning and budget: the mission and strategic plan are an essential part of these processes, guiding careful planning for the most efficient use of resources. Franklin has improved its overall planning processes and involves the entire community as much as possible. As such, the university's planning and budgeting processes are now more fully integrated with Franklin's Institutional Priorities. Franklin also now has a draft Institutional Master Plan to guide further expansion; this plan was created with input from the entire Franklin community.

Evolution of the Core Curriculum and Graduate Programs

As shown in Chapter 3, over the past fifty years Franklin has created, refined, and delivered a unique international education experience that fosters cross-cultural competencies as well as general education outcomes for undergraduates. Academic Travel and Franklin's core requirements demonstrate rigor and make good on Franklin's promise of a global education. We have also developed interdisciplinary minors with links to professional pathways.

In 2010, Franklin founded the Taylor Institute for Global Enterprise Management to house its first graduate program: the Master of Science in International Management (MSIM), a 12-month cohort program whose mission is to develop responsible, collaborative, and innovative global leaders in companies and organizations. The MSIM currently has two concentrations or tracks: The Master of Science in International Management with an emphasis in Responsible Management and Climate Action, and the Master of Science in International Management with an emphasis in Digital Transformation. Both concentrations respond to the needs of employers in the 21st century, working within Franklin's mission to "prepare students to become responsible, compassionate, and collaborative leaders in an increasingly complex and interconnected world."

In the last ten years, Franklin's evolution from college to university designation has focused our attention even more fully on how we assess and implement our foundational values in every aspect of a Franklin education, from undergraduate to graduate. Franklin's strong core curriculum—which includes our revised Academic Travel program—coupled with our vibrant majors and minors, continue to animate the university's mission to "challenge students through a curriculum that integrates the liberal arts with professional pathways, and classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world." As we strengthen our focus on

University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes, Franklin can fulfill its promise to nurture “critical thinkers who are culturally literate, ethically aware and intellectually courageous.”

Co-Curricular and Student Support Services

Franklin enacts a holistic and compassionate support system; every aspect of the Franklin experience prioritizes helping students achieve goals unique to an international education. As shown in Chapter 4, Franklin’s Office of Student Life works to ensure that all Franklin students receive the support they need, including a comprehensive orientation program that prepares students for an international experience; housing services; visa and permits services; coordination of student government; and support for athletics and other co-curricular activities. The Admissions’ and Registrar’s offices provide comprehensive services at all stages of a Franklin student’s career.

As shown in Chapters 3 and 4, the Library, the Writing and Learning Center, and the Office of Admissions have all evolved to provide strong co-curricular support to students from their first day on campus until graduation.

Fostering a Culture of Assessment

As shown in Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6, Franklin has greatly improved its overall culture of assessment. University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes derived from Franklin’s mission guide big-picture assessment, while individual programs have refined assessment practices in line with the mission. Assessment practices also form the foundation of curricular revision. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee now coordinates and supports assessment efforts in both curricular and co-curricular programs. Franklin has also integrated institutional assessment into its regular operations.

Our ongoing efforts to improve assessment practices support Franklin’s 2018-2023 strategic plan. Over the last decade, Franklin has devoted much time, energy, and resources to developing strong and visible assessment practices; in particular, we are now doing a much better job of “closing the loop,” using assessment results to make recommendations that lead to positive change.

Sustainability

As Franklin has evolved from “college” to “university” status (see [Introduction](#) and [Chapter 1](#)), our institutional priority to “foster institutional sustainability and innovation by developing plans and initiatives that address current and future institutional needs” has become even more paramount. As shown in Chapters 6 and 7, Franklin has adopted new or revised administrative

structures, working committees, and shared governance models to provide a stronger decision-making process, identify necessary resources and support, and ensure focus on strategic goals over the duration of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan.

Franklin is also in a better position with respect to its advancement efforts. We recently received a large donation of \$4,000,000 for the Capital Campaign as well as an unrestricted donation of \$2,000,000 to provide relief to the budget, and especially to the scholarship challenges: momentum is building around the Advancement team with our 50th Anniversary approaching.

Franklin's Draft Facilities Master Plan—the first of its kind for this university—also provides a roadmap to Franklin's future sustainability. The plans for new buildings, along with the processes put into place to integrate planning and institutional priorities, indicate that the university has taken key steps to invest in the present and the future.

Franklin's Key Challenges and Next Steps

Resources and Enrollment Management

As is the case for many institutions of higher learning today, one of Franklin's main challenges is maintaining and increasing enrollments. As a tuition-driven institution, Franklin is vulnerable to swings in enrollment and can be challenged in using limited resources effectively, remaining competitive with faculty salaries and allocation of resources equitably across the university. In addition, as seen in Chapter 6, organizational changes in Enrollment Management have had repercussions; we have not yet been able to pursue more aggressive measures in the face of declining enrollments. Enrollment Management is high on the priority list for Franklin's immediate future.

Given Franklin's emphasis on sustainability in the strategic plan, the role of the Office of Advancement will also need to be further integrated into Franklin's planning processes. Working closely with the Vice President for Advancement, we need to develop revenues from donors outside the Board, both for the annual fund and for developing our facilities.

Strengthening Our Culture of Assessment

While Franklin has made great strides in creating stronger assessment practices across the university, assessment practices need to continue to be emphasized at both the macro- and micro-level to ensure community buy-in and understanding. We need to continue organizing workshops on assessment to help faculty and staff with their own individual assessment endeavors, with the goal to have faculty and staff more invested in the benefits of assessment and how it can work to improve majors, programs and courses.

Articulating Franklin's University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes was vital to fostering consistent and widespread assessment, but we need to make those outcomes—along with the mission, vision, and strategic plan—more visible on campus. Since these SLOs date from 2013, it may be time to assess their efficacy in furthering Franklin's core values. We need to assess how faculty are using the SLOs in course and curriculum development and consequently devote resources to helping faculty and staff make better use of them when proposing curricular changes in line with Franklin's mission.

We also need to create more formal assessment mechanisms particular to our graduate programs to ensure quality control, as we continue to implement assessment recommendations for undergraduate programs. With upcoming retirements on the horizon, Franklin will have the opportunity to consider how to allocate resources for assessment and how to align Swiss and US accreditation requirements in regard to assessment practices.

Franklin also needs to increase assessment efforts and professional staff development in co-curricular support, not only by reserving time to analyze the data that we already collect, but also by brainstorming how we can improve assessment practices in general, particularly with learning how to use direct measures of assessment.

The Unique Challenges of Student Support in an International Context

As seen across higher education, student needs have gradually increased—especially in the areas of mental health and general well-being. These contemporary needs require Franklin to find the necessary resources to support our students effectively, especially within our international setting. We need to increase staff support in the areas of well-being, counseling, and Accessibility Services, all of which are understaffed.

Also, Switzerland's changing visa policies have become considerably more complicated over the years, demanding more staff time.

While Franklin's co-curricular support systems—such as the Writing and Learning Center—are strong, we also need to have more effective collaboration with academic units to establish firmer ties between academic and co-curricular support.

Conclusion

This Executive Summary highlights the areas that have come to the forefront in our self-study process. As will be seen in the report itself, we have provided detailed, nuanced analysis of Franklin's operations in the context of MSCHE's seven standards, with each chapter providing evidence that links directly to the Standard's criteria. We articulate Franklin's strengths, challenges, and next steps as we honor 50 years of success and look ahead to sustaining that success in the future.

Introduction

Franklin's 50th Anniversary

Coinciding with this MSCHE accreditation cycle, Franklin University Switzerland (FUS) will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2020. From its inception in 1969, Franklin has always been committed to courses of study that are international in perspective and cross-cultural in content. As early as 1973, we defined this philosophy as the *International Imperative* in education. This philosophy is designed to accommodate significant curricular changes in response to shifts in contemporary social, political, and economic conditions around the world.

Not only do students engage in international perspectives in the classroom, they experience and enact these values in the global community. Every semester, students participate in the Academic Travel Program, an integral part of Franklin's core curriculum that includes a travel component to apply ideas learned in class to the outside world. Students must complete four Academic Travel courses as part of their core requirement, and many choose to take Academic Travel throughout their four years of study. Students come away from these experiences more fluent in cross-cultural understanding. Through this merger of experiential learning, liberal arts curriculum, and international living, Franklin students gain a comprehensive knowledge available nowhere else.

FUS's home is Lugano, Switzerland, a culturally-rich city at the confluence of the Swiss Alps and Northern Italy. A microcosm of Europe, Switzerland offers the ideal setting for education with an international focus; this location encourages students to continually mingle among cultures in a country that has four official national languages. Beautifully maintained, our campus provides an environment that is both inspiring and reflective of the larger community in which our students learn, engage, and mature as strong global citizens.

Evolution of Franklin University Switzerland

In the last fifty years, Franklin has centered all its activities on evolving to fully realize its ideals. The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools first accredited Franklin in 1975 to grant the Associate of Arts degree. Franklin introduced the four-year baccalaureate (BA) degree in 1986 and had its accreditation as a BA-granting institution reaffirmed by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in 1990 and 2000. In 2005, all programs of study leading to the Franklin Bachelor of Arts degree were also awarded Swiss accreditation by the Swiss University Conference and the Swiss Organization for Quality Assurance; Franklin thus became the first institution of higher learning with dual Swiss-US recognition.

In 2010, Franklin created its first master's degree program—the Master of Science in International Management (MSIM)—and founded the Taylor Institute for Global Enterprise Management. In 2013, Franklin articulated a new mission statement and received full institutional accreditation from the Swiss University Conference, making it recognized as a university institution within the Swiss university system; we thus became the only higher education institution in the world fully accredited in both the US and Switzerland. In 2014, Franklin officially renamed itself *Franklin University Switzerland*.

Franklin University Demographics

Franklin delivers on its mission thanks to its dedicated staff and faculty. With 23 permanent faculty, another 24 adjunct faculty, and 55 staff members (Fall 2019), Franklin prepares students in their quest to become compassionate and responsible leaders in this international setting. Specifically, these professionals worked with 305 students in fall 2019, including 253 undergraduate degree seeking students, 47 study abroad students, and eight graduate students, both full and part-time. Within the small but diverse student body are students representing 61 nationalities.

FUS educates its undergraduate students through a rigorous core curriculum that includes a first-year experience, language learning, quantitative reasoning, writing across the curriculum, a global responsibility component, and our signature Academic Travel program. Students enroll in a major program of study in one of seven principle areas as outlined below.

Number Of Students In Program

Academic Major	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Art	26	24	20	21	14
Communication	26	26	18	14	12
Economics/Finance	61	41	34	38	25
Humanities	48	36	22	26	22
Management	68	54	58	57	38
Math/Science	21	12	11	16	12
Political Science/Psychology	58	44	37	35	27
TOTAL	306	235	198	205	148

Table 0.1: Distribution of students across academic majors (2015-2019).

Franklin's physical facilities encompass two connected campuses which hold fourteen buildings, including eight residence halls. We are in the process of creating our first Facilities Master Plan that will guide further expansion in anticipation of enrollment growth to meet our strategic goals.

Three Institutional Priorities

Since Franklin adopted its revised mission statement in 2013, much has changed in the landscape of higher education, with many small colleges closing, shifting demographics of high school students, and questions of affordability in international education. In April 2017 Franklin President P. Gregory Warden established a Strategic Planning Task Force charged with the creation of a new five-year strategic plan that would allow Franklin to fully realize its mission in the current environment. The Task Force's membership included representatives from the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, faculty, and staff. Although students weren't included in the membership of the Task Force their feedback on a draft report was sought at a Student Open Forum on the strategic plan held in December 2017.

The Task Force carried out an assessment of the University's challenges and opportunities and used this assessment to develop a set of goals further refined through input and feedback from members of the wider Franklin community. The outcome of this process has been the identification of three institutional priorities the Task Force believes will enable Franklin to continue to grow and to flourish:

1. Enhance integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs.
2. Implement strategic enrollment management.
3. Foster institutional sustainability and innovation.

Table 0.2 shows how each of these institutional priorities aligns with MSCHE standards. These priorities will continue to shape Franklin University's progress as we aspire to strengthen our unique place in higher education.

Standards	Enhance integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs	Implement strategic enrollment management	Foster institutional sustainability and innovation
I: Mission and Goals	✓	✓	✓
II: Ethics and Integrity	✓	✓	✓
III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	✓	✓	✓
IV: Support of the Student Experience	✓	✓	✓
V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment	✓		
VI: Planning, Resources, and Administration	✓	✓	✓
VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration			✓

Table 0.2: Alignment of institutional priorities with MSCHE standards.

2019-2020 Self-Study Approach

Franklin has chosen the Standards-based approach for the 2019-2020 Self-Study. This model provides the opportunity to consider all aspects of the University's operations against MSCHE Standards, while also guiding our assessment and fulfillment of Franklin's institutional priorities. Throughout this process, we continually revisited our MSCHE 2015 Periodic Review Report (PRR)—and the recommendations that emerged from that PRR review—to ensure that we have been on track to improve our performance in key areas identified by MSCHE.

Our primary intended outcomes of the Self-Study include:

- Documenting compliance with the Middle States Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation.
- Coordinating our self-study process with Swiss University re-accreditation.
- Facilitating the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan 2018-2023, ensuring that our institutional priorities, mission, and strategic goals provide clear and effective guidance for the entire Franklin community,
- Facilitating a culture of continuous assessment, improvement and quality assurance in both Swiss and American contexts.

We organized this Self-Study Report by chapters that focus on each MSCHE standard in turn. We use Franklin's mission statement and institutional priorities as guiding themes throughout

the report, while relying on the evidence inventory to show how our progress is articulated and measured. Each chapter concludes with a summary that includes an articulation of Strengths Connected to Standard Criteria; Challenges; Next Steps; Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations, where appropriate; and an Evidence Inventory relevant to each Standard. We invited feedback from the Franklin community at several stages in the self-study process to ensure accuracy and a broad-based perspective (see [Appendix B - FUS Self-Study Design](#)).

Since the last five years have also been the time frame in which Franklin grew from “college” to “university” status, we have been acutely aware of the need to clarify how this evolution serves to satisfy the requirements of both MSCHE and the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ). In working with accrediting bodies from two separate accreditation cultures—often with varying standards and even different criteria within each standard—Franklin has sometimes found itself pulled in separate assessment directions. For example, while MSCHE has recommended that we not develop more graduate programs until the current MSIM is stabilized, AAQ has stipulated that we should develop a second graduate program by the time we start re-accreditation efforts with them in 2020. This Swiss requirement for a second graduate degree stems partially from long-standing European ideas of what a “university” is (from the Latin *universitas*, universe, whole), which by definition means comprehensive in scope; a “college,” by contrast, especially in the linguistic context of our region, usually connotes a college-preparatory high school or “finishing school.” In the European context, it would be very unusual, if not impossible, for a “university” to have only one graduate program because the scope or spectrum of knowledge does not fully extend to graduate education.

We have kept all these factors in mind as we seek to blend and satisfy our guiding accreditation requirements, while at the same time remaining true to our core values. While Franklin has grown from its initial roots, our fundamental values have always remained the same: personalized learning through interactions both inside and outside of the classroom, true understanding of people and cultures through direct contact and guided travel, and active engagement with the world as an imperative of a global, liberal education.



Chapter One

Standard I: Mission and Goals

The mission of Franklin University Switzerland is to provide a cross-cultural and multinational learning and living environment that inspires students to engage the world. We challenge students through a curriculum that integrates the liberal arts with professional pathways, and classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world. A Franklin education produces critical thinkers who are culturally literate, ethically aware and intellectually courageous. We prepare students to become responsible, compassionate, and collaborative leaders in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

—Franklin University Switzerland Mission Statement (2013)

A Revised Mission and Matching Statement of Vision

Franklin University is justifiably proud of its mission and the way it manifests in all of the university's programs and operations. The current mission statement—revised in 2013 to more fully articulate and emphasize Franklin's core values and strengths— is highly visible on our campus; it appears in a number of physical and digital places, including on our website ([1.1.1](#)) and in our 2018-2020 Academic Catalog ([1.1.2](#)). We also showcase it word-for-word on one wall of the North Campus administration building—where the Department of Enrollment Management, including Admissions, is housed—so that visitors and prospective students can read it as they come into the building. We also have plans to replicate the statement on other key sites, such as near the front door of our main campus (Kaletsch Villa). These literal, physical reminders of Franklin's mission greet students, staff, professors, and visitors daily.

We supplement this mission with a strong, collaborative vision statement, written by and representing all community stakeholders—including students, staff, faculty, trustees, and alumni. Found on our website ([1.1.1](#)), these affirmative goals guide Franklin's operations:

- We, the Franklin students, seek a unique liberal arts education in a new era of globalization. An insatiable curiosity about the world drives our shared passion for traveling. On campus, during academic travel and during our own independent excursions, we encounter cross-cultural experiences on a daily basis. We use the world as our classroom and approach learning opportunities and challenges with a keen sense of adventure.

- We, the Franklin staff members, contribute our expertise, our compassion and our commitment to create a supportive environment for students, faculty, parents and alumni in which we may all learn and grow.
- We, the Franklin professors, are driven by our passions for producing and imparting knowledge in equal measure ([3.2.1](#)). Our many roles sustain us: as teachers we foster the bright and demanding energies of our students, and are fostered in turn by them; as colleagues we respect and thrive in the many worlds we offer each other; and as employees we receive, and give in turn, the encouragement to jointly shape an intellectual environment that enables us all to flourish.
- We, the Franklin trustees, strongly believe all students should have an international, educational experience which imparts a knowledge, respect, and appreciation for cultures other than their own. As such, we strive to ensure an environment that provides opportunities for students to become articulate, informed and productive leaders of their communities.
- We, the Franklin alumni, recognize the great gift of a Franklin education and want to see others benefit from the exceptional, international learning community that is the Franklin family. Grateful for the confidence and zeal we have gained, we contribute to the continued vitality of the University as ambassadors, volunteers, investors and stewards of its mission, so that future generations may join us as lifelong explorers.

Evolution of the Current Mission and Vision Statements

Franklin's President, Dr. P. Gregory Warden, took office in July, 2012. During his first year at Franklin, he initiated a revision of the mission as part of a 360° strategic planning process to refocus the entire institution on what Franklin strategically strives to do best:

- Develop intercultural competences through academic travel and a residential campus.
- Build critical thinking skills within a liberal-arts tradition through small classes and innovative teaching by qualified professors.
- Instill a sense of global civic accountability through a core curriculum centered around “global responsibility” and “international engagement.”
- Help students prepare for their post-Franklin life through professional pathways opportunities and career skills development.

This revision process involved all constituencies of the community: students, staff, faculty, alumni, parents, trustees, and representatives of the community of Lugano and Sorengo ([1.4.1](#)). This process was spearheaded by a Strategic Planning Task Force, convened by the

President in 2013, that included faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, and students (see also [Chapter 7: “University-Wide Committees”](#)). Those individuals communicated with and received feedback from their respective constituencies, and they distributed periodic updates to the entire Franklin community.

The aspirational mission statement that resulted from this collaborative process focuses entirely on the nature and quality of the University’s core goal: preparing students to succeed in “an increasingly complex and interconnected world” ([1.1.1](#)). The mission highlights the residential nature of Franklin that creates a “multicultural environment” both within and outside the classroom. It emphasizes our integrated curriculum that combines classroom and experiential learning, and our goal to nurture critical thinking, ethical awareness, and intellectual rigor. The last sentence of the mission statement articulates the university’s ultimate goal to generate “responsible, compassionate, and collaborative leaders.” The revised mission is clearly defined, emphasizes outcomes by asserting the qualities that should exemplify Franklin graduates, and focuses on the students as future active participants in a global landscape.

Although our revised mission process involved the full participation of every member of the Franklin community, Franklin recognizes that this community involvement may not be evident to outsiders. That is why we made certain that the supplemental, collaborative vision statement embraced views from all Franklin constituencies. It is deliberately personal, written in the first-person plural, and inclusive. Each section of the vision statement was created by the individuals involved (students, staff, faculty, trustees, and alumni), shaped by the collaborative process of working with the Strategic Planning Task Force, and approved by the individual constituencies, the Cabinet, the President, and the Board of Trustees.

Franklin’s vision statement begins with the students who commit to engage in a multi-cultural process through classes, travel, and their interactions outside the classrooms. The staff commit to creating a supportive environment for all students. The faculty commit to producing and imparting knowledge, working together, learning from students, and finally, producing an “intellectual environment that enables us all to flourish.” Trustees commit themselves to the educational mission of the institution, and alumni remain engaged by giving back to the institution and its students. The mission and vision statements thus fully address external and internal contexts and constituencies.

Mission and Vision as Guiding Forces in Strategic Planning

Internally, the mission and vision statements have guided all constituencies of the institution in departmental strategic planning, and in fact were created as part of Franklin University’s

previous Strategic Plan 2013-2019 ([6.1.1](#)). They were just as integral to the planning process that produced the current Strategic Plan 2018-2023 ([6.1.2](#)). In addition, the mission is now part of annual reviews: staff and administrators are now asked to evaluate their contribution to the university's mission as part of their review processes (see also [Chapter 6: "Responsibilities and Assessment of Performance"](#))

Externally, we have endeavored to have our mission understood by the broader communities of Lugano and Ticino. This is a challenge in a part of the world where private institutions can be considered elitist, inconsistent with Swiss culture and values. As noted in the Introduction to this Self-Study Report, this impression may have been exacerbated by the name Franklin College, as a "collegio" in Italian is a private college-preparatory school, or even a "finishing school." Our accreditation as a Swiss *University* institution in 2014 allowed us to change our name to Franklin University Switzerland. We have also worked hard with local constituencies, including the Lugano and Sorengo municipal administration, to help them understand that we are an institution of higher learning where research informs teaching, that we are a not-for-profit institution, and that the majority of our students receive some form of financial aid.

Collaboration with the surrounding community and other organizations beyond our local community has taken on many forms and includes such programs as Scholarship without Borders, which offers full scholarships to Franklin for refugees who meet specific admission requirements; the Franklin Lecture Series, which offers topics of university and community interest and often draws large numbers of non-university attendees ([2.6.1](#)); and sustainability efforts with the local electricity provider, Aziende Industriali di Lugano (AIL), with whom we have recently erected solar panels on some of the campus buildings ([2.6.2](#)). The mission and vision statements combined now provide all audiences with an accurate overview of our most important values.

Strategic Planning 2018-2023

The President charged the Strategic Planning Task Force with creating a new five-year strategic plan that would allow Franklin to realize its mission more effectively ([1.1.3](#)). Through regular meetings, both collectively and in smaller working groups, the Task Force carried out an assessment of Franklin's challenges and opportunities, and then used this assessment to generate a set of major goals. These goals were then further defined through input and feedback from other members of the Franklin community.

Three primary goals now guide the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan ([1.2.1](#)), all emerging from Franklin's mission and vision statements:

1. **Support academic excellence by enhancing integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs.** This goal supports the second sentence of the mission: “We challenge students through a curriculum that integrates the liberal arts with professional pathways, and classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world.” Fulfillment of this goal will also develop alumni with the talents and values inherent to the mission and vision.
2. **Implement Strategic Enrollment Management by developing one-, three-, and five- year enrollment plans to meet the academic, net revenue, and learning community needs of the University.** Enrollment is clearly at the heart of budgetary planning that will allow the institution to grow to meet changing demands while adhering to our mission. Long-term planning has been difficult in the past due to enrollment fluctuations, currency issues, and other variables, but our goal is to institute more effective planning processes that will support our mission.
3. **Foster institutional sustainability and innovation by developing plans and initiatives that address current and future institutional needs.** We understand that curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular offerings will need to address future needs, and that innovative planning is necessary.

The following nine plans and initiatives directly emerge from and address Goal 3 ([1.3.1](#)):

1. **Develop and maintain a campus facilities plan that identifies the ongoing and future needs of the community.** Provide guidelines for future campus improvements and developments that support the University’s academic mission and the institution’s aesthetic. Allow optimal use of campus facilities and resources in accommodating growth in enrollment and in university programs.
2. **Develop and maintain a plan for Information Technology that addresses the ongoing and future needs of the community and regulatory bodies.** Assess the IT infra-structure and develop a plan to implement improvements that will ensure our systems are, and remain, secure, up-to-date, reliable, effective, cost and environmentally efficient.
3. **Develop a plan to increase the safety and security of the campus community.** Sorengo, Switzerland is a remarkably safe place and the student satisfaction survey does not list security as a concern. Nonetheless, in order to ensure best practices, FUS performs an annual assessment of safety on and off campus so as to maintain a feeling of safety and security for all.
4. **Develop a plan to increase the salaries of staff and faculty, and to increase opportunities for faculty and staff development.** After undergoing a period of stagnant

salaries, we have implemented a faculty salary scale, increased Academic Travel stipends, and are developing a plan for regular staff raises in line with what the local universities have implemented.

5. **Increase the support for student professional development and career preparation. Identify key partners throughout the university to serve as core career services staff.** Career preparation has been an ongoing concern and an area where we understand we need to improve. Career Services is going through a critical makeover to offer support to students in their various career pathways that fits their needs (discussed more fully in Chapter 4). In the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan (2018-2023 SP), Career Services has prioritized development, with plans to have a Career Center that will provide resources such as workshops/seminars, career development courses, alumni trips, and a career boot camp.
6. **Create an Innovation Hub that supports innovative initiatives by faculty, staff, and students.** The 2018-2023 Strategic Plan has several goals that foster institutional sustainability and innovation through initiatives that address current and future institutional needs and that support the university's mission. Most importantly, as part of our current strategic plan, an Innovation Hub has been constituted and a group of campus leaders is preparing a charge for a Task Force that will oversee its implementation ([2.6.3](#)).
7. **Foster a campus community that values inclusiveness, respect, trust, and wellness.** The mission stresses our multicultural nature. Civil dialogue is an essential component.
8. **Develop advancement goals that specifically support the strategic plan.** Advancement goals are currently focused on the annual fund, scholarships, and the Facilities Master Plan (see [Chapter 6: "Facilities Master Plan"](#)). All of these support Franklin at a fundamental level in fulfilling its mission.
9. **Continue to institute governance structures that enable the Board of Trustees to embody and further the multicultural mission of the university.** The University by-laws have just been redesigned and passed by the Board of Trustees. The goal is to reduce the size of the board but at the same time increase its global representation.

Assessing Mission and Strategic Plan Goals

(See also Effectiveness" and [Chapter 6: "Institutional Assessment"](#))

Since our Self Study in 2010, Franklin has progressed in our use of direct measures of assessment. Franklin now deploys a variety of tools—such as alumni surveys, annual Ruffalo

Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventories (SSI), surveys initiated by the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), student evaluations of courses, and other departmental assessment initiatives—to measure outcomes and evaluate the effectiveness of our mission and strategic plan goals. Evaluation of these goals is also documented in Cabinet meeting minutes, Board of Trustees meeting minutes, Strategic Plan Task Force meeting minutes, SLOAC meeting minutes, Curriculum Committee meeting minutes, and Faculty Assembly minutes.

The President presents annual reports to the Board of Trustees that include progress made in achieving the university's strategic plan Goals ([7.3.1](#)). The University's mission and the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan inform procedures and planning, for example curricular development, graduate and undergraduate admissions, student academic progress, as well as faculty assessment and promotion. Progress towards meeting the goals of the current strategic plan is also assessed regularly by the members of the President's Cabinet responsible for the various initiatives within the document and presented to the Board of Trustees. Franklin's ongoing discussion of the strategic plan shows that it is integral to the goals expressed in our mission and vision.

University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes Consistent with Franklin's Mission

(See also [Chapter 5: "Assessment of Educational Assessment"](#))

At the institutional level, and as reported in our 2015 Periodic Review Report (PRR), Franklin has now developed a series of University-Wide Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). These outcomes, which the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC) drafted and refined during the 2011-2012 academic year (see also [Chapter 5](#)), were approved by faculty in the spring of 2013, following several requests for revisions. They are published both in our Academic Catalog ([1.3.2](#)), hard copy and in PDF, and on our website ([1.3.3](#)). The preamble and thirteen SLOs read as follows:

Franklin's university-wide learning goals articulate the competencies, skills and stage of development that all Franklin students should reach by the end of their university career, regardless of their specific area of study. Through engaging in the curricular and co-curricular life of the university, Franklin students will be capable of:

1. Interacting competently in intercultural situations (Intercultural Competencies)
2. Engaging with international and civic issues (International Engagement)
3. Acting in a socially responsible manner (Social Responsibility)

4. Applying skills of inquiry, analysis and critical thinking (Intellectual Development)
5. Engaging knowledgably in debates about the natural world (Scientific Literacy)
6. Creating original and innovative works, ideas and solutions (Creativity)
7. Demonstrating holistic personal development and intercultural maturity (Holistic Student Development)
8. Using effective oral communication skills in English (Oral Communication)
9. Using effective writing skills in English (Writing Competencies)
10. Using a language other than English capably (Language Competencies)
11. Applying functional mathematical skills (Mathematical Competencies)
12. Handling information adequately (Information Literacy)
13. Using information technology adequately for scholarly and professional work (General IT Competency)

With an emphasis on intercultural awareness and ethical decision-making (SLO 1, 2, 3), these outcomes fully align with our mission to develop global, ethically responsible citizens. Their intent is not only to provide students with guiding principles about the characteristics of a Franklin student, but also to offer faculty a distinct set of guiding recommendations to which all new initiatives should strive to adhere. For faculty and staff, this means considering which University-Wide SLOs their areas can cover and also referring to specific goals when describing their programs or proposing changes to their curriculum.

At the program level—such as in our Academic Literacies Program (ALP) for writing competency or our Academic Travel Program (AT Program)—these outcomes help define the specific learning objectives of the respective programs (see also [Chapter 3](#)). They also contribute to shaping both majors and minors. No major covers all thirteen of these University-Wide SLOs, but any chosen major, combined with our core curriculum, Academic Travel and co-curricular offerings, aims to cover these outcomes in their entirety.

Assessing the Efficacy of University-Wide SLOs

In a March 2019 targeted alumni survey about these University-Wide SLOs ([1.4.2](#)), we asked former students to answer the following question with respect to each SLO: “By the time you left Franklin University, how well do you feel you had acquired each of the following skills/competencies?” The survey had five possible answers: not at all, not much, somewhat, quite a bit, and very much. We sent the survey to students who had graduated between 2008 and 2018, which translated into 819 former students. We received 159 responses over the course of one month, which comes to 19.4 % of students responding.

The survey results were quite positive when it came to intercultural competencies, oral competencies, and writing competencies. We scored lowest with questions that dealt more with STEM skills, such as scientific literacy and math competencies. To a large degree, the survey confirmed that graduating students were meeting the above SLOs, while also providing us with a specific challenge to improve scientific literacy and math competencies in future curriculum development.

SLO	Not at all	Not much	Somewhat	Quite a bit	Very much	Total
1 Interacting competently in intercultural situations (Intercultural Competencies)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	3.77% 6	31.45% 50	64.78% 103	159
2 Engaging with international and civic issues (International Engagement)	0.00% 0	1.26% 2	15.09% 24	38.36% 61	45.28% 72	159
3 Acting in a socially responsible manner (Social Responsibility)	1.26% 2	5.66% 9	10.06% 16	42.77% 68	40.25% 64	159
4 Applying skills of inquiry, analysis and critical thinking (Intellectual Development)	0.00% 0	2.52% 4	16.35% 26	33.96% 54	47.17% 75	159
5 Engaging knowledgeably in debates about the natural world (Scientific Literacy)	2.52% 4	13.21% 21	36.48% 58	26.42% 42	21.38% 34	159
6 Creating original and innovative works, ideas and solutions (Creativity)	1.26% 2	5.66% 9	25.16% 40	41.51% 66	26.42% 42	159
7 Demonstrating holistic personal development and intercultural maturity (Holistic Student Development)	1.26% 2	1.26% 2	15.09% 24	33.96% 54	48.43% 77	159
8 Using effective oral communication skills in English (Oral Competencies)	0.63% 1	1.89% 3	9.43% 15	24.53% 39	63.52% 101	159
9 Using effective writing skills in English (Writing Competencies)	0.00% 0	1.26% 2	10.06% 16	25.79% 41	62.89% 100	159
10 Using a language other than English capably (Language Competencies)	5.03% 8	12.58% 20	27.67% 44	25.79% 41	28.93% 46	159
11 Applying functional mathematical skills (Mathematical Competency)	13.21% 21	20.75% 33	33.33% 53	20.13% 32	12.58% 20	159
12 Handling information adequately (Information Literacy)	1.26% 2	1.89% 3	17.61% 28	39.62% 63	39.62% 63	159
13 Using information technology adequately for scholarly and professional work (General IT Competency)	4.40% 7	19.50% 31	26.42% 42	24.53% 39	25.16% 40	159

Table 1.1: Alumni Survey Results on Student Learning Outcomes (2019).

Conclusion

The process to revise our mission and create comprehensive vision statements provided the Franklin community with a rich opportunity to reevaluate our core values, strengths, and challenges. In turn, this MSCHE Self-Study has been a valuable way to assess how the products of that process are serving their purpose, and how we can continue to enhance, clarify, and articulate the nuances of our guiding principles.

Our approach for responding to Standard I included reviewing earlier MSCHE feedback to our mission and Goals. MSCHE had suggested, for example, in their feedback to our 2010 Self-Study Report, that “as a great deal has happened in the world and at Franklin in recent years, and as more change is highly likely in the future, the completion of the [2010] self-study and the forthcoming search for a new president present an opportunity to review, revise and sharpen the current mission statement ([1.4.3](#)). We took these and other MSCHE comments into account—along with our chapter research questions and Self-Study institutional priorities—to guide our analysis, delineate our accomplishments, and to note where we need to improve.

Strengths Connected to Standard I Criteria

- In 2013, Franklin instituted a thorough and collaborative process for revising the mission, supplementing it with specific vision statements that include the entire Franklin community. The mission is approved and supported by the Franklin administration and Board of Trustees, and it accurately reflects the university’s strengths and defining characteristics. (Criteria 1 a., b., c., g.)
- The mission highlights Franklin’s unique offerings as an institution of international education; as such, the mission guided the institution in creating strong University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes specific to the Franklin community. (Criteria 1 d., e.; Criteria 3)
- Franklin has fostered community awareness of, and connection to, the mission and has created and uses assessment practices that support the mission and Goals. (Criteria 1 f.; Criteria 4)

Challenges Connected to Standard I Criteria

- Franklin needs to continue its efforts to provide sufficient resources to support the aspirations of the strategic plan. (Criteria 1 d.)
- Franklin needs to continue its efforts to ensure university-wide understanding of and adherence to the mission, strategic goals, and the University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes. (Criteria 1 f.)

Standard I: Next Steps

- In the near future, we will assess our mission statement to stay current, since it has been six years since the last university-wide process. Specifically, we would like to see sustainability efforts with respect to the environment incorporated more directly into our mission.

- Given Franklin’s emphasis on sustainability (Goal 3) in the strategic plan, the role of the Office of Advancement will need to be further integrated into Franklin’s planning processes, as MSCHE noted in their feedback to our 2015 PRR (p. 4) and subsequent progress report.
- We need to devote sufficient attention to our University-Wide SLOs and make those outcomes—along with the mission, vision, and strategic plan—more visible on campus. Since these SLOs date from 2013, it may be time to assess their efficacy in furthering Franklin’s core values. We need to assess how faculty are using the SLOs in course and curriculum development and consequently devote resources to helping faculty and staff make better use of them when proposing curricular changes in line with Franklin’s mission.

Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations Relevant to Standard I

- The 2015 PRR reviewers noted Franklin’s 2013 process to revise our mission and wrote that, “Given the mission driven accreditation process to which Middle States adheres, developing a new mission provides a rare and consequential opportunity for a refocus and possible re-alignment of an entire institution” (1.4.4). This chapter shows Franklin has taken steps to ensure the mission, vision Statements, and strategic plan continue to guide decision-making at all levels of the institution.
- The readers recommended that “Franklin clarify goals, objective, and targets as they pertain to the Office of Advancement because of the essential element of their work in the diversification of income.” As noted above, one of our next steps is to strengthen the Office of Advancement’s role in strategic planning process to ensure we have the resources to reach our goals.

Evidence Inventory Relevant to Standard I

- 2010 Visiting Team Comments
- 2013-2018 Strategic Plan
- 2015 Periodic Review Report
- 2018-2023 Strategic Plan
- Academic Catalog 2018-2020
- Alumni survey (2019)
- Board of Trustees minutes
- Board Report (May 2018)
- Cabinet Meeting minutes and summaries
- Faculty publications (2014-2019)
- FUS Website news piece: Franklin and AIL Bring Solar to Dorm and Green Awareness to the Community
- Leadership Meeting minutes and summaries
- Lecture series (2018 – 2019)
- Message from the President: Executive Education and Global Outreach
- Mission Statement and Vision Statement as expressed in the catalogue, website, and official university publications
- Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes

Chapter Two

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

Introduction

Franklin’s mission and practices fully align with the principles articulated in MSCHE Standard 2 that “ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions.” Our mission, as described in Chapter 1, emphasizes ethical awareness, respect for different cultures and viewpoints, and the need to prepare students to become responsible, compassionate, and collaborative leaders. In order to achieve these goals, Franklin embraces a commitment to academic and intellectual freedom, while also promoting fairness and impartiality in our recruitment practices, support systems for student success, and employee policies.

Fostering a Climate of Respect

Perhaps the most important aspect of Standard 2 for Franklin’s mission is “a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives.” Given our international, global focus—with Academic Travel at the heart of our curriculum—fostering respect for different cultures and viewpoints is key to our success.

In our Institutional Priorities, referenced in Chapter 1, we identify the goal of “fostering a campus community that values inclusiveness, respect, trust and wellness”. It is also one of the sub-goals in our Strategic Plan 2018-2023, where we aim to create an environment in which *all* students, faculty, and staff feel they belong. We have identified actions designed to develop resources and programs that foster intercultural understanding, civil dialogue, constructive behavior, and respect for others’ needs, perspectives, cultures, and experiences ([2.2.1](#)).

The pursuit of this aspect of our mission can also be seen in the desired results of our University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes (see also [Chapter 1](#)), specifically:

- Interacting competently in intercultural situations (International Competences).
- Engaging with international and civic issues (International Engagement).
- Acting in a socially responsible manner (Social Responsibility).

We pursue these goals through the core curriculum requirement for undergraduate students to take eighteen credits linked to “Global Responsibility” courses. ([2.1.1](#) for a description of a how a course meets the Global Responsibility requirement.)

President Warden’s public talks and forums reiterate Franklin’s firm commitment to open dialogue between the many constituencies and cultures that make up the “Franklin family” and the larger Ticino community. During the Faculty-Trustee dialogue in September 2017 ([2.2.2](#)), for example, we discussed “what respect for difference means at Franklin.” This discussion included consideration of the challenges of teaching respect for difference and inclusivity, including the fact that American measures of difference and inclusivity can often differ or clash with cultural norms and values abroad. At Franklin, we see it as our job to help students (and faculty) navigate these challenges.

Teaching respect for difference also features prominently in co-curricular programs. Student club events—such as Arab Night, Latin Night, and Queer Prom—celebrate difference in the Franklin community. Student orientation programming also includes numerous activities that stress the importance of respect as part of Franklin’s international educational experience ([2.2.3](#)). These activities include:

- A session about life in Switzerland, including some important cultural considerations. In particular, we stress the Swiss values of respecting others and the community, and minimizing one’s negative impact.
- Discussions about students’ countries of origin and cultures, both in official group settings and informally. We also encourage reflection on what it means to study in a country as a visitor and guest.
- A talk from Student Life dealing with safety and security covering topics such as consent, expectations for conduct, etc.
- Resident Assistant training that stresses the importance of creating an inclusive, respectful environment.

As Franklin revised the Student Life Handbook, Staff Handbook, and Faculty Manual, we sought to refine Franklin’s articulation of respect for intercultural difference and in particular, how our community deals with grievances. In 2015, in response to a misconduct allegation against a member of staff, Franklin called for a town hall meeting in which students asked for clearer procedures for addressing complaints, especially with regard to sexual misconduct allegations and questions of harassment more generally. With speed and efficiency, Franklin posted its established sexual harassment policy on Moodle (our course management system) for easy

reference and high visibility ([2.3.1](#)). Students appreciated this positive change but called for similar changes to be adopted to address complaints, conflicts, and grievance in other areas of student life. Since 2015 there have been four grievances filed with the Office of Student Life by students against staff and/or faculty.

In spring and summer 2018, faculty, staff, and cabinet-level administration continued to work towards the refinement of procedures to improve university-wide protocols for bias response and conflict resolution. The 2018-2019 Student Conduct Code ([2.1.2](#)), published in the Student Handbook, reflects the increased effort to foster the respect for difference by identifying the Assistant Dean as a student facilitator and conflict mediator, a role that was previously conflated with the Assistant Dean's role as Co-Chair of the Judicial Board. The neutrality of this new position allows the Assistant Dean to encourage productive dialogue; this new role parallels the role of Ombudsperson, created in 2016, who operates as a mediator and facilitator when conflicts arise for staff and faculty (See also [Chapter 6](#)). The faculty passed revisions and updates to the grievance policy for the Faculty Handbook so as to reflect this change during their March 2019 meeting ([2.3.2](#)).

Assessing our Responsiveness to Issues of Inclusion and Respect

Since respect for difference is a cornerstone of Franklin's culture, we take quite seriously any breaches in that code of conduct. Franklin initiated a review of our grievance policies following an incident involving students from Franklin's LGBTQIA+ community who alleged that injurious language had been used against them. The student LGBTQIA+ organization (PACE) had noted at that time that the Sexual Harassment and Harassment policies did not extend to conflicts between students using insulting language targeting gender, race, or sexual orientation.

PACE called for more transparency in protocols for students wishing to bring bias-related complaints against peer behavior that didn't necessarily call for a Judicial Board case but which spoke, rather, to Franklin upholding the University's commitment to core values such as tolerance, inclusiveness, and respect for difference. This student concern was brought to Cabinet on the recommendation of faculty and staff members, and it was decided that the Dean of Student Life and Engagement and the Dean of Academic Affairs would work to clarify protocol and procedures for conflict resolution not only among students, but also for staff and faculty. In addition to ensuring we had well-documented, fair, and impartial policies disseminated widely, we also aimed to bring as much consistency as possible to the procedures across all three constituencies. Franklin concluded work on the revision of the grievance policies for students, staff and faculty in spring 2019.

Academic Freedom and Intellectual Property Rights

In order to enact Franklin's core value of nurturing "critical thinkers who are culturally literate, ethically aware and intellectually courageous," we naturally embrace academic freedom for both students and faculty. Franklin's Faculty Manual elucidates our commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and freedom of expression as basic faculty rights ([2.1.3](#)). We directly endorse two key statements from the American Association of University Professors:

Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition...

—Statement of principles on academic freedom and tenure, 1940.

A college or university is a marketplace of ideas, and cannot fulfill its purposes of transmitting, evaluating, and extending knowledge if it requires conformity with any orthodoxy of content and method. In the words of the United States Supreme Court, 'teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and to evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding: otherwise our civilization will stagnate and die.'

—Recommended institutional regulations on academic freedom and tenure, 1972.

Franklin follows a US promotion ladder and offers multi-year contracts, non-renewal of which, as stated in the Faculty Manual, would happen only in the case of poor performance, programmatic/curricular changes or financial exigency. We have never restricted a professor's research or pedagogy interests, nor declined renewal of a contract for any such reason.

We practice this same attention to academic freedom for students, encouraging and nurturing freedom of expression. We assess our efficacy in this regard through the Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). In the 2016 survey, student response to the statement "freedom of expression is protected on campus" was rated 6.40 in terms of importance (on a scale of 1-7) and 5.00 in terms of satisfaction. This difference was regarded as a "challenge" by RNL. However, in 2017 the satisfaction rating rose to 5.65, and in the fall 2018 survey the satisfaction level had risen to 5.75. The gap between importance and satisfaction at Franklin is still less than the average for US four-year private universities.

	Franklin University Switzerland			National Four-Year Privates			
	Importance	Satisfaction / SD	Gap	Importance	Satisfaction / SD	Gap	Difference
2016	6.40	5.00 / 1.64	1.40	6,26	5.46 / 1.55	0.80	-0.46 **
2017	6.75	5.65 / 1.70	0.92	6.27	5.47 / 1.55	0.80	0.18
2018	6.48	5.75 / 1.39	0.73	6.28	5.48 / 1.56	0.80	0.27

** Difference statistically significant at the 0.1 level

Table 2.1: SSI Responses to statement “Freedom of expression is protected on campus.”

Intellectual Property Rights

Strongly linked to academic freedom, Franklin recognizes the importance of intellectual property rights; this concept is covered in the Academic Catalog ([2.1.4](#)). This statement provides a clear articulation of Franklin’s stance on cheating and plagiarism. Faculty also discuss concerns about plagiarism and how to educate for it in both committee and full faculty assembly. ([2.1.5](#)).

Franklin pays subscription fees to enable full legal access for library resources, and the library provides instruction sessions that empower our students to use these resources properly. Our Writing and Learning Center (WLC) also provides workshops for First Year Seminar courses on plagiarism and proper citation. Similar workshops are also given in EAP: English for Academic Purposes, WTG 150: Academic Writing: Crossing Borders, and WTG 200: Advanced Academic Writing: Ethics at Work.

Ethical Integrity in Recruitment and Admissions

Franklin’s commitment to student success depends upon ethical integrity in every step of a student’s experience with the University, beginning with clear and honest communications around recruitment and admissions. Franklin—primarily through recruitment efforts centered in the Admissions office—engages prospects through a variety of written and electronic communications including the University’s website, webinars, the Admission Ambassador Program, Higher Education publications and online education portals, industry guides for college students (Peterson’s IB Registry, CIS Registry, etc.), viewbooks, and institutional brochures ([2.6.6](#)). The Office of Marketing develops marketing and communications strategies in cooperation with appropriate university departments to increase enrollment, fundraising, and brand awareness among targeted audiences, in line with the University’s strategic plan. To fulfill the University’s mission, both the Office of Admissions and the Office of Marketing work together to recruit students who support academic excellence, experiential learning, global leadership and multicultural awareness.

We articulate Franklin's admissions process clearly to prospective students, as well as the general requirements for admission. We readily provide detailed information about academic program options, the availability of financial aid and loans, as well as a range of other administrative policies, procedures, and deadlines. We incorporate recent alumni placements, as well as recognitions from outside organizations and publications, into recruitment materials, along with statistics about the academic profile of incoming students ([2.6.4](#)).

Once students begin the admissions process and are accepted, Franklin continues clear communications that emphasize key aspects of our mission and vision statements, including our international distinctiveness; opportunities for study abroad; student satisfaction; faculty, staff and student accomplishments; and opportunities for undergraduate student research and internships. We provide this information via the Franklin website and other extensive print and online resources.

Franklin is also a member in good standing of several professional associations such as Council of International Schools (CIS); International Association of College Admissions Counseling (IACAC); and the National Association of Admissions Counseling (NACAC). As such, Franklin abides by all ethical codes for these organizations, including NACAC's code of Ethics and Professional Practices (CEPP).

Promoting Diversity, Affordability, and Accessibility in Recruitment and Admissions

Given Franklin's aspiration for diversity and inclusion at all levels of the institution, the Office of Admissions plays an important role in reaching that goal. Admissions embraces Franklin values and aims to provide the highest quality of professional service to prospective and enrolled students ([2.7.1](#)). It also maintains the integrity of the admissions process, ensuring efficient and systematic evaluation of applicant credentials. Through multiple recruitment strategies and a selection process based on several independent elements of assessment—such as academic rating, international background and/or openness to an international experience, engagement with clubs and activities, etc.—the Office of Admissions works to ensure an objective and unbiased selection of students.

The Office of Admissions embraces differences and diversity of all types, including, but not limited to: racial, ethnic, religious, geographic, socioeconomic, gender, and sexual orientation. The four key admissions criteria consist of: academic potential, interpersonal and leadership skills, teamwork skills and multicultural awareness. These criteria are evaluated through

standard application review forms with pre-determined scales and a final fit score is calculated for each applicant.

The Admissions Office, in strict cooperation with the Financial Aid Office (both under the umbrella of Enrollment Management), promotes affordability and accessibility through generous scholarships and financial aid (FAFSA and institutional) for all students, regardless of their nationality, and 86% of incoming students receive financial aid every semester. Applicants are automatically considered for merit-awards (scholarships) during the application review process. Merit-award amounts are determined based on the applicant's academic performance throughout high school (GPA), ranging from CHF 5,000 to CHF 28,500. The University continues to intensify its efforts with a 40% increase in need and merit awards since 2010.

Year	Number of students receiving aid	Tuition revenues	Average amount of financial aid
2010	297	15,674,678.00 CHF	13,654.00 CHF
2011	271	14,632,151.00 CHF	14,394.00 CHF
2012	312	15,565,918.00 CHF	14,306.00 CHF
2013	276	15,413,961.00 CHF	16,852.00 CHF
2014	279	15,183,302.00 CHF	19,694.00 CHF
2015	272	15,060,967.00 CHF	16,572.00 CHF
2016	212	13,400,327.00 CHF	17,121.00 CHF
2017	246	13,748,931.00 CHF	17,456.00 CHF
2018	233	13,369,156.00 CHF	19,168.00 CHF

Table 2.2: Tuition and Other Expenses vs. Financial Aid Disbursed (2010-2018).

We provide detailed information regarding scholarships and financial aid on a dedicated section of the Franklin website ([2.7.2](#)) and throughout the enrollment process through specific monthly webinars, Skype consultations, the Slate matriculation portal, and one-to-one consultations with Admissions Counselors, the Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Management, and the Director of Financial Aid. Students (prospective and current) may also book one-to-one consultations through the dedicated portal on our website in order to receive guidance on how to fill out the FAFSA and institutional financial aid application forms, as well as understand the different resources available.

Employment Practices and Commitment to Equal Opportunity

All staff and employees at Franklin contribute to the fulfillment of our mission. So Franklin's policies concerning employee hiring, evaluation and dismissals also provide clear definitions of

terms, contexts and procedures. We use fair, ethical and impartial practices in human resource management, in conformity with the University principles of equal opportunity and non-discrimination in employment and education ([2.5.1](#)), and these policies are included in the Staff Handbook. Franklin regularly reviews and updates these policies. Both the Faculty and Student Handbooks have similar statements relating to equal opportunity and employment practices. We have outlined University-wide employment procedures in the document *Hiring and Promotion Procedures and Employment Contracts* ([2.5.2](#)).

Honesty in University Communications

We strive to ensure that *all* communications emanating from the University— whether in the form of publications, electronic media, or public relations materials—are accurate. For the most part, individual offices assume responsibility for controlling the quality of the information they produce and disseminate. Franklin also abides by a broad range of policies to promote sound ethical practices and respect for institutional values to ensure that we address issues of institutional integrity promptly, appropriately and equitably. We disseminate and make available these policies to the campus community and the public.

Operating in the public trust, the University also reaches beyond the campus to report news to media organizations, to share information with outside agencies, and to gain input from external stakeholders. Since we live and work in a region where English is not the primary language, we also communicate this information to local media outlets in Italian, the official language of Ticino.

Avoiding Conflict of Interest

Franklin's policies on conflict of interest provide clear definitions of terms, contexts and procedures. The Staff Handbook and the Faculty Manual contain several statements relating to conflicts of interest in different contexts. These have been drawn together in the document *Summary of Conflict of Interest Statements* ([2.4.1](#)). Conflict of interest also has the potential to arise in relation to decisions made by the members of the Board of Trustees; see Chapter 7 for more information on the role and practices of the BOT as well as the *Board Trustees of Franklin University Switzerland, Conflict of Interest Policy* ([2.4.2](#)).

Compliance with Reporting Policies, Regulations, and Requirements

Franklin is in full compliance with all applicable Federal, State, and MSCHE Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements. This includes full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification and licensure or licensing

board pass rates, and the institution's compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation 5 and 6. In relation to federal reporting policies, regulations and requirements, this compliance is detailed in the separate document *Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Related Federal Regulations*. Adherence to the Commission's policies, regulations and requirements is detailed in the separate document *Vital Signs* and our *Annual Institutional Update* on the MSCHE portal.

Conclusion

Honesty and consistent adherence to strong moral principles are the essence of ethics and integrity. We are proud to show that, as stated in our institutional goals, Franklin strives at all levels to “foster a campus community that values inclusiveness, respect, trust and wellness” as well as to “foster institutional sustainability and innovation”.

Strengths Connected to Standard II Criteria

- Franklin is committed to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights. We articulate this commitment in writing and in our practices. (Criteria 1)
- By its very nature as an institution focused on international education, Franklin continually fosters a climate of respect and celebrates diversity among students, faculty, staff, and the community. Franklin also emphasizes cross-cultural ethical development in the core curriculum. (Criteria 2; Criteria 7)
- Franklin follows ethical practices in public relations, creating honest and accurate recruitment and admission materials. (Criteria 6)

Challenges Connected to Standard II Criteria

- While many improvements have been made regarding employment terms and conditions over recent years, there remain challenges in relation to issues such as salary improvement. (See also [Chapter 6: “Salaries”](#))
- Due to the age of our campus, Franklin is challenged in ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities to many of our buildings and classrooms.
- Franklin operates in an environment that must satisfy two different legal and cultural systems.
- While Franklin embraces diversity and inclusion, we can still be challenged in ensuring that all students, faculty, and staff feel welcome in this multicultural environment.

Standard II: Next Steps

- Continue efforts to further the sub-goal of the strategic plan to “Foster a campus community that values inclusiveness, respect, trust, and wellness”. A specific action in the strategic plan is to “enhance orientation for all members of the Franklin community to set expectations for civility and respect, and develop a foundation of cultural understanding.” This action should be expanded to include these expectations for all employees, not just new members, and added to annual performance review processes for all employees.
- Instead of having both a Staff Handbook and a Faculty Manual, with considerable overlap in the topics covered, Franklin should consider creating a comprehensive Employee Handbook for all employees, with separate supplements for staff and faculty respectively, dealing with issues that are unique to each group.
- As plans for renovation of buildings evolve, prioritize how access can be improved for people with disabilities.

Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations Relevant to Standard II

No specific recommendations relevant to Standard II emerged in the 2015 Periodic Review.

Evidence Inventory Relevant to Standard II

- 2018-2023 Strategic Plan
- Academic Catalog
- Admissions Representatives Manual
- Annual Institutional Update
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Confidentiality Statement
- Crime Statistics (2011-2018)
- Faculty Assembly Meeting minutes
- Faculty Manual
- Faculty Trustee Dialogue (2017)
- Fall 2019 Census
- FUS Fact Sheet
- FUS Power Point Slides for information sessions
- FUS View Book
- FUS Website: Equal Opportunity Employer
- FUS Website: Financial Aid Applications and Information
- FUS Website: Safety and Security
- Grievance Policy
- Hiring and Promotion Procedures and Employment Contracts
- Moodle Sexual Harassment
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Staff Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Student Orientation Program
- Summary of Conflict of Interest Statement
- Verification of Compliance with Accreditation-Related Federal Regulations
- Vital Signs 2019



Chapter Three

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

I learned about my passions. I never thought I would be a person with a cause and a purpose, but Franklin helped me find mine and strive in all possible ways to expand my horizons and eventually serve my cause.

— Majeda Dakkak, Class of 2015

Introduction

Student learning that expands an individual's horizons forms the heart of Franklin's mission, vision statements, and strategic goals (see [Chapter 1](#)). To that end, Franklin continues to renew its curriculum to provide academic programs grounded in the mission and that foster connections between curricular and co-curricular programs. We are continually guided by Franklin's strategic priority of offering an international, interdisciplinary, and innovative academic experience.

The liberal arts foundation of this small, international institution drives the design and delivery of the student learning experience. Our core curriculum—including our signature Academic Travel program—as well as our major and minor programs, allows the University to fulfill its mission to “challenge students through a curriculum that integrates the liberal arts with professional pathways, and classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world.” With a renewed focus on assessment of student learning outcomes, we can confirm that “a Franklin education produces critical thinkers who are culturally literate, ethically aware and intellectually courageous.” Building off nearly 50 years' experience designing undergraduate programs, we are now fine-tuning our current graduate program and planning a second program in Global Political Economy that organically grows from our undergraduate offerings in Economics. As such, graduate programs should now become an integral part of fulfilling Franklin's mission.

Student Learning in a Global Context: Franklin's First Year Experience

Franklin uses a strong linkage between curricular and co-curricular programs for our incoming students. Our First Year Experience (FYE) program intentionally embeds a wide variety of educational components required for success at a university, especially one with an international focus. A key component of the FYE is the First Year Seminar (FYS), required of all

incoming students and described in the catalog as “discipline-specific courses” that introduce students “not only to a particular topic and the fundamental analytical skills needed to produce university-level work, but also to the everyday tools necessary for grappling with real-life multiculturalism and the processes of cross-cultural encounter” ([3.1.1](#)).

As part of their elected FYS, students also become acquainted with the Library and its resources; they complete assignments specifically designed to foster research and database use. They also make strong use of the Writing and Learning Center (WLC), where they participate in dedicated workshops, or the WLC professionals lead targeted classroom activities. The library and the WLC are both key resource centers that are vital to the First Year Experience and to the larger student learning experience at Franklin. (See also [Chapter 4](#) for a more thorough description of these student support services, as well as the leadership opportunities available to upper-division students through the Academic Mentor program).

The FYE is also enhanced by our unique, co-curricular *Tutte le strade* program ([4.1.1](#)). Based on the Italian proverb, *Tutte le strade portano a Roma* (all roads lead to Rome), *Tutte le strade* events provide opportunities for engagement for the entire community, with at least one activity planned for every day between the first day of class and their first Academic Travel experience. Faculty choose the *Tutte le strade* events that they feel best suit their First Year Seminar class and make attendance at events mandatory. *Tutte le strade* aims to give students a successful transition to Franklin life, an appreciation for Lugano, and a better understanding of the region.

Franklin’s Core Requirements and General Education Student Learning Outcomes

A Franklin student’s academic trajectory begins with the Core Requirements and then extends to majors and minors, culminating in a capstone experience. We built the Core Requirements around our identity as an international, interdisciplinary, and innovative university. The “BA Core Requirements” include the First Year Seminar, Academic Travel, Academic Writing, a series of courses under the rubric of Global Responsibility, a five-semester modern language requirement in one of the Swiss languages, as well as Quantitative Reasoning. The sum total of the Core Requirements is designed to respond to the University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). (See also [Chapter 1](#) for a discussion of the development of these SLOs.)

Franklin has intentionally built these requirements around our international identity. The Global Responsibility requirement asks students to choose two courses from a selection that meet the learning goals established for Intercultural Competencies, International Engagement, and Social Responsibility. Modern Languages asks students to achieve intermediate to advanced

proficiency in one of the three official Swiss languages (Italian, French, or German), highlighting the importance of the multilingual Swiss community for students. Recent revisions to the Modern Languages (ML) requirement ([3.8.1](#)) instituted extra hours of first-year language instruction in the WLC with advanced student language tutors. This means that students have an extra hour of review as part of the course requirement while introducing them to the WLC resources, including language tutoring. The WLC assessment in 2018-2019 ([4.6.1](#)) shows that students logged 1500 appointments for language tutoring alone.

General student learning outcomes cross the curriculum and include intellectual development, scientific literacy, creativity, holistic student development, oral communication, writing and math competencies, and information literacy. Franklin is committed to helping students develop these skills both inside and outside of the classroom because they are embedded in the Franklin experience as a whole.

Evolution of Academic Travel in the Core Curriculum

Academic Travel (AT), Franklin's signature program, integrates a ten-day to two-week travel experience into what is, as of 2014, a three-credit course each semester, providing both international experience on the ground and an integrated approach to learning. Academic Travel not only provides learning opportunities outside the classroom, this key program offers a prime setting to put into practice almost all of Franklin's learning goals: intercultural competencies, international engagement, social responsibility, intellectual development, creativity, and holistic student development. Academic Travel thus brings the classroom into the field, fulfilling our promise to students and on our mission to "challenge students through a curriculum that integrates...classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world."

In the feedback to our 2010 Self-Study, reviewers suggested that Franklin do more to fully integrate Academic Travel into the curriculum, given its significance to the Franklin experience. Therefore, Franklin embarked on a rigorous review, documented in Franklin's 2015 Periodic Review Report ([3.8.2](#)). As a result, we made fundamental changes to the core curriculum, including the creation of three-credit travel courses that intentionally integrate the experiential learning piece (travel) into a semester-long academic course. This change allows for excellent preparation prior to travel, followed by the opportunity to unpack the learning that went on during the final half of the semester. This best practice allows students to reflect and write about their experiences in a structured environment, a component often missing from other study-abroad programs.

Students now need to complete four three-credit travel courses as part of their core curriculum ([3.5.1](#)). Once they have completed these requirements with a passing grade, they may continue

to take travel courses for general elective or major credit, and they can choose between one- and three-credit travel courses. The one-credit travel options remain popular for juniors and seniors, especially for those in majors with little room for elective credit. The one credit option allows students to continue travel experience while completing all requirements.

Assessment of Academic Travel

As of 2018-2019, the data collected suggest that our new three-credit travel program is running quite well from an educational effectiveness point of view ([3.8.3](#)). In terms of academic content, the extra depth and breadth of the course material covered, combined with experiential learning on site, has allowed professors to develop innovative assignments to engage students more fully with the material and the sites themselves, and students have also indicated positive experiences with the new configuration. Finally, it is exciting to note the integration of three-credit travel with faculty research and publication ([3.2.2](#)).

From the Core Requirements to the Major Requirements

Built on the strong foundation set by Franklin's Core Requirements, the major programs of study offer students the opportunity to study in-depth their chosen area of specialization while progressing toward fulfillment of Franklin's University-Wide SLOs. Coursework in the majors allows students to develop critical thinking, writing, and presentation skills beginning with the introductory courses, moving on to more advanced classes that concentrate on literature in the field and rhetoric in the discipline, eventually leading to the student's capstone experience. Capstone experiences vary according to discipline, ranging from a capstone course or a research seminar, to an internship experience or undergraduate thesis.

Franklin has been responsive to MSCHE feedback that we expand our major and minor program only within the framework of a complete assessment-based process; as a community, we have been careful to avoid a proliferation of new majors or minors without thorough assessment and the resources available to support them. Therefore, any new program proposals—and revisions to existing programs—must be based on assessment processes we have implemented in line with the goals of the 2018-23 Strategic Plan. (See [“Assessment-Based Curriculum Revision”](#) later in this chapter, as well as [Chapter 5: “Educational Effectiveness Assessment.”](#)).

Interdisciplinary Collaborations

Honors Program

Franklin's Honors Program highlights a co-curricular approach to working both within and across the disciplines. As its mission articulates, the Honors Program provides “an opportunity to

engage in interdisciplinary research and scholarship with expert faculty and other highly qualified peers.” All students with a 3.5 GPA or higher are eligible for the program. It uses an Oxbridge tutorial model—in which students meet separately with the professor outside of class and one-on-one for in-depth discussion—as well as an interdisciplinary Honors seminar and a year-long Honors thesis. In addition to academic rigor in the classroom, students challenge themselves through a series of Learned Conversations offered throughout the semester ([3.5.2](#)). These conversations, open to the community at large, introduce students to academic debate outside of the classroom setting. The senior theses produced by the Honors students provide testimony to how these students master the University-Wide SLOs for critical thinking, critical writing, and oral presentations ([3.5.3](#)).

Year	Count of Students graduating from the Honors program
2014	4
2015	7
2016	9
2017	11
2018	5
2019	5

Table 3.1: Students graduating from the Honors program (2014-2019).

Social Justice and Sustainability

Franklin’s first self-designed major, Social Justice and Sustainability (SJS), offers Honors students and others with the required 3.2 GPA or better the opportunity to design their own major in Social Justice and Sustainability studies ([3.5.4](#)). The major has a single course requirement—the introductory class in SJS—and then asks students to shape their own curriculum according to their research interests. Students typically choose a problem they wish to solve and think of ways to confront that problem across disciplinary lines. Sample programs of study culminate in an interdisciplinary thesis and practical internship experience ([3.5.5](#)). Since its inception in 2017, we count two new graduates from the program with 5 currently declared in the major and minor.

Internships

Franklin creates strong partnerships and collaborations when necessary to support student learning and success. As Franklin reviews and promotes new and continuing programs, we pay close attention to our home programs as well as to the quality of student learning opportunities provided by third parties.

Internships provide a co-curricular experience that adds value to a Franklin student's classroom learning. To systematize and better coordinate this complex program, Franklin's Curriculum Committee developed a comprehensive policy on credit-bearing internships, provided in the Internship Program Guide ([3.6.1](#)). Students undertaking an internship must now have both an on-site and an on-campus academic supervisor (typically the student's academic advisor). Students must also complete a minimum of 90 hours on-site and undergo evaluations by both the on-site and the academic supervisors. The evaluation includes a review of formal work completed by the student during the internship experience and a written report that discusses the internship experience within the context of the student's academic program and future career goals.

Transfer Credit

At the undergraduate level, Franklin students are allowed to transfer up to 60 credit hours towards their BA degree (or 30 credit hours for an AA). As outlined in Franklin's Academic Catalog 2018-2020, transfer credit undergoes thorough review by both the Office of the Registrar and the relevant academic department ([4.2.1](#)). All potential transfer credits must be from an institution of higher education that has proper accreditation in its home country and students must have earned the equivalent of a C or higher for credit to transfer.

For third party providers without their own accreditation (e.g. the School for Field Studies (SFS)), Franklin requires that the provider have a formal relationship with an accredited institution that issues the student's transcript. For example, SFS partners with the University of Minnesota to issue transcripts and formal credits. Franklin also allows for up to 30 credits of transfer credit from specific secondary school experiences for incoming students, including Advanced Placement exams (scores of 4 or 5), International Baccalaureate (HL scores of 5 or higher), and French Baccalaureate (for coefficients of 4 or higher). Incoming students may also receive credits for passing grades on the German Abitur, the Italian or Swiss Maturità, British A-levels, AS levels, or the completion of college-level courses on campus of US colleges or universities.

Student Learning in a Global Context: Graduate Programs

In 2010, Franklin founded the Taylor Institute for Global Enterprise Management to house its first graduate program: the Master of Science in International Management (MSIM), a 12-month cohort program whose mission is to develop responsible, collaborative, and innovative global leaders in companies and organizations. MSCHE approved this program in January 2011 and the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ) approved it in 2013 after a lengthy self-study process, a visit, their follow-up assessment and recommendations, and a

confirmation of Franklin's university status in 2014. Both AAQ and the "swissuniversities" (a joint body of higher education policy) recognize graduate programs as an essential part of any university ([3.1.2](#)). Franklin's transition from college to university thus, by necessity, included the addition of graduate programs. (See also the [Introduction](#) to this Self-Study Report for a discussion of Franklin's transition from college to university status.)

The MSIM currently has two concentrations or tracks: The Master of Science in International Management with an emphasis in Responsible Management and Climate Change, and the Master of Science in International Management with an emphasis in Digital Transformation (a reconfiguration of our former E-Business and E-Commerce track). Both concentrations respond to the needs of employers in the 21st century, working within Franklin's mission to "prepare students to become responsible, compassionate, and collaborative leaders in an increasingly complex and interconnected world."

Graduate Program Assessment

Franklin's recent (spring 2019) assessment of MSIM ([3.8.4](#)) began with a review of past student evaluations of individual classes as well as of the overall program. Student dissatisfaction coupled with low enrollments in 2016-2017 and in 2017-2018 (Table 3.2) spurred a thorough review of the program in fall 2018 ([3.6.2](#)). Subsequently, in collaboration with the new Dean of Executive Education, the Director of the MSIM proposed several changes to the course offerings in the MSIM program, including internship opportunities involving the United Nations Institute of Training and Research (UNITAR), in Geneva.

While we see these new concentrations in a positive light and look forward to developing this promising collaboration with UNITAR, a current, ongoing assessment of Graduate Studies has identified several areas needing improvement. These include, in particular, more efforts with recruitment, more robust assessment, and more attention to student learning outcomes specifically formulated for Graduate Studies. In fall 2020, after the first cohort completes the new program, we will re-assess the program and consider how to further improve graduate studies at Franklin, ensuring they both emerge from and support Franklin's mission. As of spring 2019, the new Graduate Programs Committee offers oversight of this critical area ([3.8.5](#)).

MSIM Cohort	Fall Enrollment Count	Spring Enrollment Count	Count of Graduated
2012-2013	9	9	9
2013-2014	5	6	5
2014-2015	9	8	6
2015-2016	16	14	14
2016-2017	10	10	10
2017-2018	9	9	9
2018-2019	11	10	

Table 3.2: MSIM enrollment (2012-2019).

Assessment-Based Curriculum Revision

(See also [Chapter 5: “Educational Effectiveness Assessment”](#))

The faculty-run undergraduate Curriculum Committee meets regularly and deliberates on the basis of an agenda announced in advance so as to allow all faculty to be aware of issues facing the Committee. The Committee works with the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs in deliberating on issues and making recommendations concerning:

- Overall academic program review, planning and change.
- Coordination and approval of course offerings, scheduling and Academic Travel.
- Formulation of curricular policies.
- Consideration of the needs for academic staffing.
- Serve as a hearing board for appeals or dismissal of students for academic insufficiency that result from the recommendations of the Standards Committee.

The Curriculum Committee supervises proposed alterations and developments of all new courses and programs. This committee meets weekly and reports to the Faculty Assembly. For our undergraduate majors and minors, Franklin has been proactive in revising curriculum based on assessment data and student needs. The emphasis in Marketing within the International Management (IM) major and the Marketing minor provide excellent examples of this revision process ([3.8.6](#)).

For example, in 2019, the faculty revised the Visual and Communication Arts (VCA) major. The 2018-2020 Academic Catalog offers a single VCA major with two different emphases, one in studio art and one in Fashion Studies. Assessment showed that while the VCA major with an

emphasis in studio art has steadily increased enrollment over time, the VCA major with an emphasis in Fashion Studies has never enrolled a consistent number of students. We attributed this trend, in part, to the practical design portion of the major which required students to take nine credits in the summer or at a partner institution. This requirement created third-party complications outside of Franklin's control. To address these concerns, faculty in Art History, Communication and Media Studies, and Marketing joined together to review the major and propose an alternative path.

In spring 2019, the Curriculum Committee reviewed the proposal for a revised, independent and interdisciplinary major in Fashion Studies that can be completed wholly within Franklin's campus structure. Further, it promises opportunities for students to integrate courses within the Academic Travel program into the major. As a result, the new major also meets the strategic plan directive to encourage innovative, interdisciplinary, and international programs. The faculty approved the new major to replace the Fashion Studies track in Visual Communication Arts (VCA) major at the March 2019 meeting of the Faculty Assembly ([3.8.7](#)).

We also revised the relatively new Psychology major, which we established in 2014. This major built on the success of our popular Psychology minor and responded to information from Admissions that the lack of a full psychology program discouraged students from matriculating at Franklin. But as of spring 2019, two students had enrolled in the major and eight in the minor—suggesting slow growth even for our small student population—and thus not providing enough revenue to warrant a full-time hire in the discipline.

To serve these students and make the program viable, Franklin pursued collaborations and partnerships to increase student opportunity, diversify available coursework, and offer new internships. We collaborated with our US partner, Southern Methodist University (SMU) and with other universities outside of our regular partner groups, but these opportunities proved unpopular or untenable. So Franklin turned to our Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA) partners and, beginning in 2017, invited visiting psychology faculty with interests in cross-cultural psychology to offer a summer course. As a result, two new courses have been added to psychology major electives. We also now partner with a faculty member at San Raffaele in Milan who brings psychiatry doctoral interns into the classroom to deliver modules on mental illness and criminality, thus adding depth to a small department.

Franklin also recently created a new minor in Film Studies. Approved for inclusion in the 2018-2020 Academic Catalog, courses in the new minor promote a shared philosophy that “transmedia literacy and practice currently represent an indispensable means for striving towards global citizenry and professional success in an increasingly image-based world” ([3.3.1](#)).

The minor includes options for film courses in French, Italian, and German, thus tying into the international and interdisciplinary pieces of the curriculum. Students may complete the minor by participating in the Emerson College program entitled *Film as Fine Art in Europe*, offered at their campus in the Netherlands each summer, potentially broadening an already global perspective. The Film Studies minor concludes with a professional portfolio to help students link their studies to their future work or graduate study.

Film Studies represents just one of several exciting new minors, including both Media Production and Publishing as well as Postcolonial Studies, that explicitly link professional pathways with interdisciplinary pursuits ([3.3.2](#)) and that grew out of rigorous curricular assessment ([3.8.8](#)).

Communicating Curricular Information

Franklin provides up-to-date information that assists prospective and current students in making informed decisions through a variety of channels, in print and online. These channels pertain to programs, faculty, activities, courses, testing, transfer credit policies, financial aid, and scholarships and allow students to have better access to a variety of possibilities available to them for becoming more engaged in their university experience and to apply their knowledge.

Specifically, all program information is listed on a wide variety of both online and print media: our website, social media, print publications, Academic Catalog ([3.1.4](#)) and Syllabi ([3.3.3](#)), Moodle and the Self-Service portal. In addition, the FUS App, launched internally in January 2019, gives current students easy access to our resources.

The Enrollment Management and Marketing Department (see also [Chapter 4](#) for a comprehensive description of this office) has worked hard to improve the content, navigation structure, and search optimization for Franklin's website, so as to allow students and parents to have easy access to information. For example the Self-Service and Moodle portals allow students to have immediate and transparent access to educational information. Current students can thus view academic plans, course schedules and descriptions, and grades, register for classes, and make payments. Students can also search for course sections for a specified year, term, and session. Moodle specifically contains a link to the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) which is easily accessible by staff and faculty ([5.3.1](#)). The department has also implemented a new social media strategy to provide students with correct timely information.

Teaching Students in a Global Context: The Franklin Faculty

A dedicated team of faculty designs and delivers Franklin’s student learning experience. Franklin strives to hire academics who embody the ideals of a teacher-scholar and who are able to effectively share their expertise with students. This dual role has become even more central since Swiss university accreditation in 2013 and Franklin’s shift from college designation to university the following year.

As noted in Chapter 1, while the name change solved a long-standing linguistic dilemma (the use of “college” in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland routinely evoked the secondary school experience), the move from Franklin College to Franklin University Switzerland represented more than a semantic shift. University status allowed for the slow growth of graduate programs and the development of new executive education programs—both essential to the financial security of the institution by creating new revenue streams. Further, for faculty, it means that research can more fully inform what they do in the classroom; faculty are now eligible for Swiss grant funding, providing important resources that were previously unavailable. As a result, we recruit faculty wholly committed to the teacher-scholar model in an international and interdisciplinary environment. Faculty-run and chaired search committees select candidates based upon mutually agreed upon rubrics ([3.2.3](#)) in collaboration with the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs.

Franklin maintains sufficient numbers of qualified faculty to deliver courses to the student body (3.2.7), and we have recruited in the past ten years to match student numbers and demand. As demonstrated in Figure 3.1 below, Franklin has either maintained or increased the number of faculty in all areas except Languages, Literatures, and Cultures between 2009-2019:

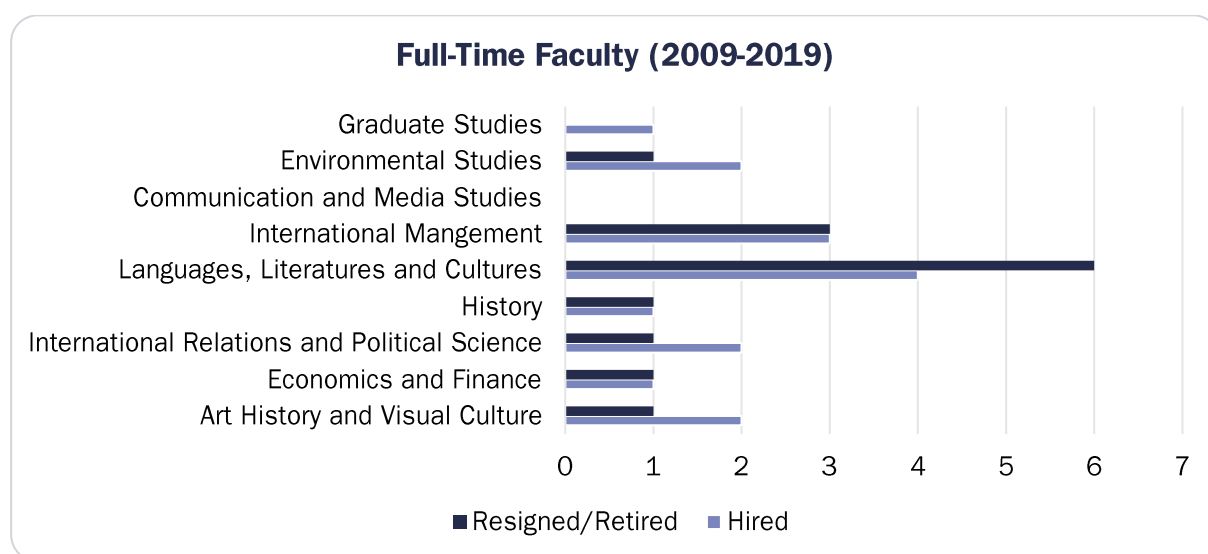


Figure 3.1: Full-time faculty (2009-2019).

Faculty Evaluations

Franklin evaluates full-time faculty annually. Faculty members submit annual updates to the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs according to criteria published in the Faculty Manual. Franklin assigns relative weights to faculty responsibilities: teaching and advising 50%, scholarship and professional engagement 30%, and university service 20% ([3.2.4](#)). This hierarchy emphasizes the University's attention to pedagogy by scholars who are active both in their fields and in their participation in University life.

For promotion, faculty members are evaluated along these same criteria by the Personnel Committee after six to seven years for assistant to associate professor, and after eleven to twelve years for associate professor to full professor. Faculty provide a substantive narrative on their courses, syllabi, and students' course evaluations ([3.2.6](#)); we also use Course Assessment Plans (CAPS) and Major Assessment Plans (MAPS) that inform departmental orientation in both courses and programs. (See also [Chapter 5: "Educational Effectiveness Assessment"](#) for more description of CAPS and MAPS).

Teaching and Scholarship: Supporting the Franklin Faculty

To support the continued engagement of faculty members in scholarly research and publication, Franklin allots research funds through its Faculty Development Funds, which are allocated in quarterly reviews by the Personnel Committee. Regular workshops are held during and prior to the semester to provide support around pedagogy, curricular reform, and training ([5.3.9](#)).

Over the past ten years, expenditures from the Faculty Development Fund have increased considerably from just under CHF 16,000 in 2008-2009 to over CHF 97,000 in 2018-2019, a total increase of 600%. Because research is essential to classroom pedagogy, to the ongoing development of undergraduate and graduate research, to the mission of the university at large, and finally to the stipulations of our Swiss accreditation ([3.1.3](#)), Franklin also now offers faculty the possibility of funded research leaves for a given period of time through Franklin's research leave policy. As of spring 2020, six faculty have taken advantage of this competitive opportunity. While faculty still provide 10% of their own sabbatical funding, the institutional investment has increased substantially underlining the importance of faculty research. Figure 3.2 summarizes total amounts expended with regards to Faculty Development.

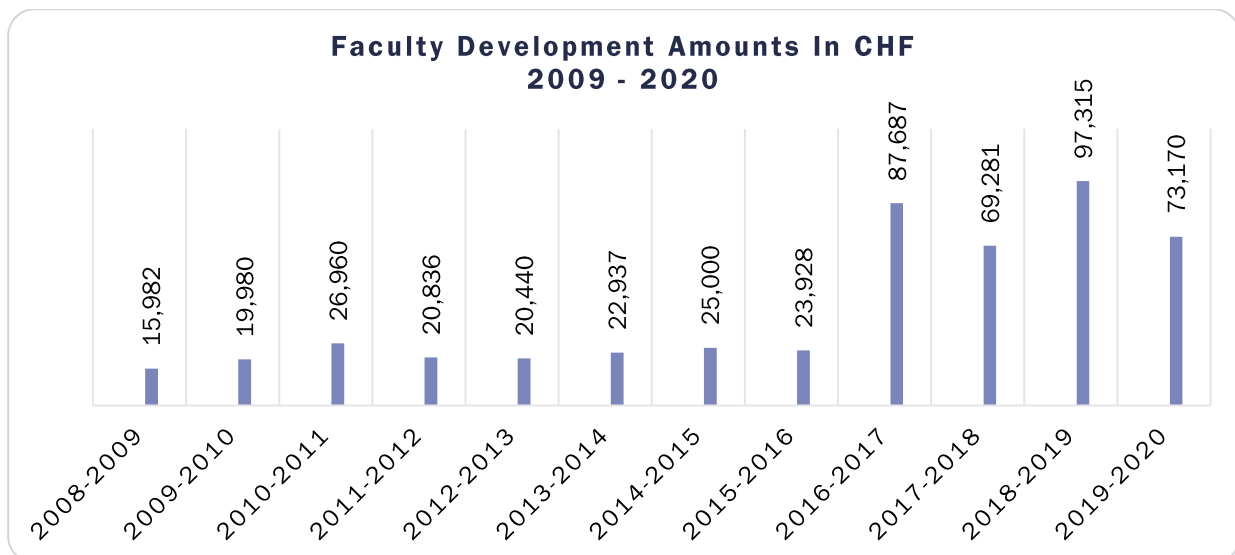


Figure 3.2: Faculty Development Amounts in CHF (2009 - 2020).

Such a policy complements the University's dedication to provide students with evolving knowledge in the context of interconnected global societies by affording faculty a way to expand their research agendas and make networked connections ([3.2.5](#)).

Year	Total Number of External Grants	Number of Swiss Grants*	Number of Conference Presentations	Number of publications
2017	4	3	10	42
2018	5	5	11	47
2019	3	1	6	13

*As a part of "Total Number of External Grants"

Table 3.3: Full-time Faculty Grants, Conference Presentations, and Publications (2017-2019) as of May 2019.

Conclusion

In the last ten years, Franklin's evolution from college to university designation has focused our attention even more fully on how we assess and implement our foundational values in every aspect of a Franklin education. Franklin's strong core curriculum—which includes our revised Academic Travel program—coupled with our vibrant majors and minors, continues to animate the university's mission to "challenge students through a curriculum that integrates the liberal arts with professional pathways, and classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world." As we strengthen our focus on University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes, Franklin can fulfill its promise to nurture "critical thinkers who are culturally literate, ethically aware and intellectually courageous."

Franklin continues to strengthen program development through assessment deployed in support of the university's strategic priorities. Franklin faculty are directly involved in curriculum development and revision, thinking "outside the box" to solve problems and try new tactics. We also continue to evaluate the role of our new graduate programs in relation to our strategic priorities, and how these programs serve Franklin's international and intercultural priorities.

Strengths Connected to Standard III Criteria

- Over the past fifty years, Franklin has created, refined, and delivered a unique international education experience that fosters cross-cultural competencies as well as general education outcomes for undergraduates. Academic Travel and Franklin's core requirements demonstrate rigor and make good on Franklin's promise of a global education. We have also developed interdisciplinary minors with links to professional pathways. (Criteria 1; Criteria 5)
- Franklin employs a diverse faculty, sufficient in number, who are well-qualified in their fields and who are proficient in this type of international educational experience. With Swiss University designation, Franklin has been able to increase support for faculty research that in turn supports classroom teaching and student research. (Criteria 2 a., 2 b., 2 c., 2d.)
- Franklin has improved its overall culture of assessment. University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes derived from Franklin's mission guide big-picture assessment, while individual programs have refined assessment practices in line with the mission. Assessment practices form the foundation of curricular revision. (Criteria 7; Criteria 8; see also Chapter 5)

Challenges Connected to Standard III Criteria

- As a tuition-based university, Franklin can be challenged in using limited resources effectively and remaining competitive with faculty salaries. (Criteria 2 d., Criteria 4)
- Assessment practices need to continue to be emphasized at both the macro- and micro-level to ensure community buy-in and understanding.

Standard III: Next Steps

- Create formal mechanisms particular to graduate programs to ensure quality control, review, and assessment.
- Consider investing in a full-time faculty position in psychology in order to strengthen and encourage growth in what seems to be a fundamental program.

- Continue to implement assessment recommendations as we review capstones and majors.
- Continue to develop collaborative opportunities for students and faculty to address institutional priority 1: Enhance integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs.

Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations Relevant to Standard III

- Reader response to Franklin's 2015 PRR specifically suggests that Franklin slow down the growth of new major and minor programs. Further, the response makes clear that faculty interest does not provide a solid rationale for new programs. In response to these recommendations, Franklin has now made new program development assessment-based and in support of the strategic priorities, including enrollment and retention goals. This is true of the core requirements, which reflect Franklin's core values, as well as of the major and minor programs.
- The 2015 PRR readers also question the relevance of offering graduate programs in line with Franklin's mission, writing that Franklin should "reconsider the projections for graduate programs and evaluate the degree to which [they] put demands on institutional resources and adequately contribute to overall enrollment." We have clarified the importance of small graduate programs as strategic priorities, essential to Franklin's international and intercultural identity as well as to our Swiss University accreditation. (See also [Chapter 1: "Mission and Goals"](#))

Evidence Inventory Relevant to Standard III

- 2015 Periodic Review Report
- 2019 Academic Travel Assessment
- 2019 MSIM Assessment
- AAQ Institutional Accreditation Guide
- Academic Catalog
- Academic Literacy Program Assessment (2016 – 2019)
- Academic Mentor Training (2019)
- Academic Year at Franklin Assessment (2019) and DAP (2019)
- Executive Education Events (Fall 2019)
- Faculty Assembly Meeting minutes
- Faculty CVs
- Faculty Development Fund

- Faculty Innovation (2019)
- Faculty Manual
- Faculty Publications (2014-2019)
- Faculty Search Rubric
- Fall 2019 Syllabi
- First Year Seminar Assessment (2019)
- Full-time Faculty CVs
- Guest Lectures Honors Society (2009 – 2019)
- Honors Theses (2009 – 2019)
- Internship Program Guide
- Italian Studies Major Assessment Plan (2017)
- Marketing Emphasis and Minor proposals
- Math Program Assessment (2019)
- Media Production and Publishing minor proposal
- Moodle
- MSIM Committee Charge
- MSIM IDI (2018)
- MOU Al Banawi Scholarship (2017 – 2020) and Report (2018 – 2019)
- Postcolonial Studies minor proposal
- Social Justice and Sustainability Major Plan
- Social Justice and Sustainability Sample
- Summary of Faculty Course Evaluations (Spring 2018 – Fall 2019)
- Tutte le Strade Program
- Writing and Learning Center Mission
- Writing and Learning Center DAP (2018-2019)

Chapter Four

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

Coming to Franklin was one of the hardest decisions I have had to make. But if I was given the option... I would choose this experience again and again. Ultimately, it was also the BEST decision I have made.

— Tasha Stachowiak, Class of 2016

Introduction

Franklin offers a vast menu of co-curricular services and programs to support students during their education at Franklin. From the moment students apply and into their alumni years, we provide assistance and encouragement to ensure that each student's transition from one stage to the next is smooth, tangible, and appropriate. Given our mission to educate global citizens—and our transnational identity as a small, English-speaking liberal arts institution based in Switzerland—our concept of student support has been tailored to fit our students' international experience. We seek to effectively guide students in alignment with our mission to educate global citizens, specifically, to “provide a cross-cultural and multinational learning and living environment that inspires students to engage the world.”

Supporting Students in a Global Context: Academic Support

As a global institution, with students matriculating from all around the world, Franklin embraces diversity on a grand scale. We encounter a wide spectrum of differences with respect to English levels, expectations about what college means, and a host of other factors that influence how well students will be able to successfully manage the Franklin experience.

One of these challenges is varying cultural attitudes towards education. For example, we encourage professor-student interaction through in-class discussions and office hours, while some students come from cultures where this type of collaboration is non-existent or even frowned upon. We encourage sharing of ideas in the classroom through active learning strategies, while some students are used to memorizing information. We have small classes and attendance policies, while some students come from university systems where attendance is not required. The First Year Seminar program (see [Chapter 3](#)) addresses expectations across the disciplines. Franklin has developed both academic and co-curricular support to address these and many other nuances of diversity at Franklin.

The process for identifying which Franklin students need extra support – and in which areas – formally begins with Admissions. Here, we note incoming levels of English, Math, documented learning difficulties, and any other medical issues that can impact the student's learning. Once accepted to Franklin, a student submits specific information regarding their need for support. If necessary, the student is also asked to submit documentation, signed by a certified expert, confirming the extra support that the student might require. Personal one-to-one meetings with students happen as soon as possible after they arrive on campus, and a student may meet with any number of people involved with support resources.

The Role of the Writing and Learning Center and the Library

In Chapter 3, we describe the way Franklin has developed strong programs—such as the First-Year Experience, which includes the First-Year Seminar—to support new students as they begin their university career. Within this context and others, both Franklin's Library and the Writing and Learning Center (WLC) perform essential supporting roles.

Beginning in their first semester, students receive targeted assignments in their FYS that bring them to both the Library and the WLC. The Library holds approximately 36,000 volumes, as well as a small collection of print periodical titles, and a variety of multi-media materials. Electronic databases, providing access to many thousands of full-text journals and eBooks across the disciplines, support student work from the FYS through the thesis as well as faculty research. Investments in the Library, more specifically in books, publications and electronic subscriptions remain an important part of Institutional Support expenditures (Figure 4.1). Especially investments in electronic subscriptions have allowed for such resources to be more easily accessible. In addition to the expensed amounts in books and publications, an average of CHF 30,000 over the past 5 years have been capitalized as Library resources. Total Library Expenditures include the above as well as salaries and other expenses directly related to providing these resources. Total Library Expenditures as compared to FTEs have increased over the years showing that although there has been a decrease in FTEs, the institution has continued to invest in Library books, publications, and electronic subscriptions in order to have such resources available to students and faculty (Figure 4.2).

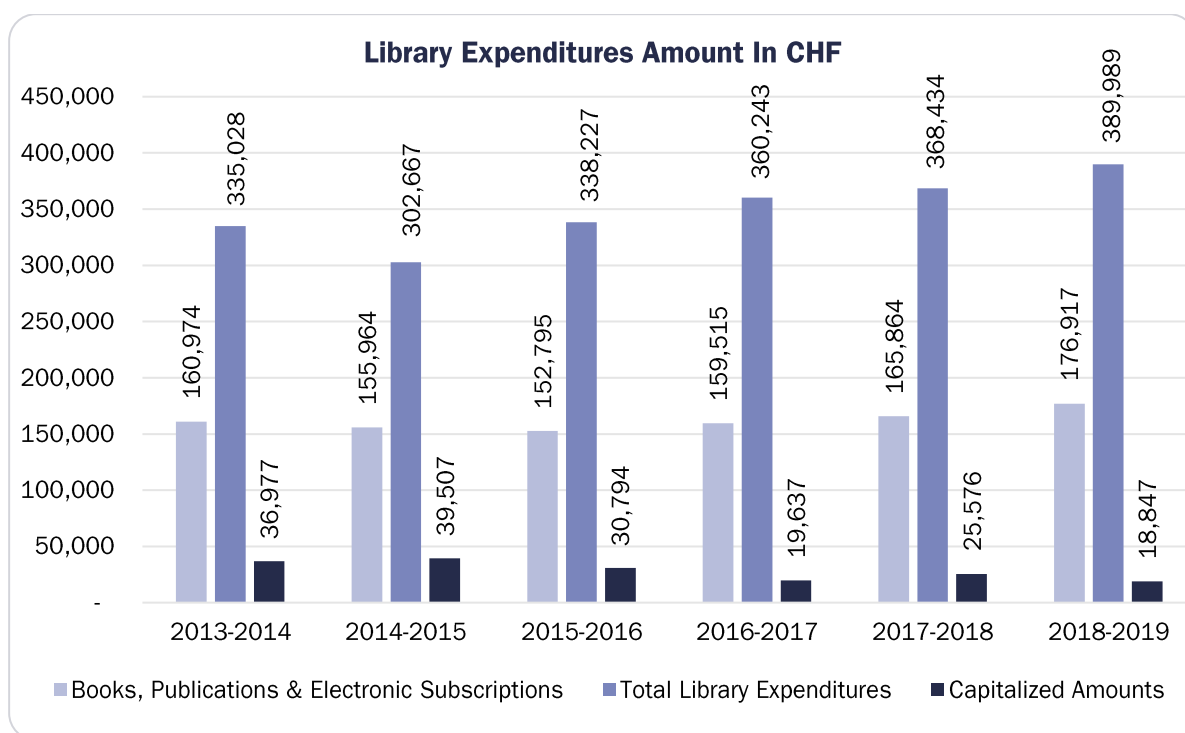


Figure 4.1: Library Expenditures Amount in CHF (2013-2019).

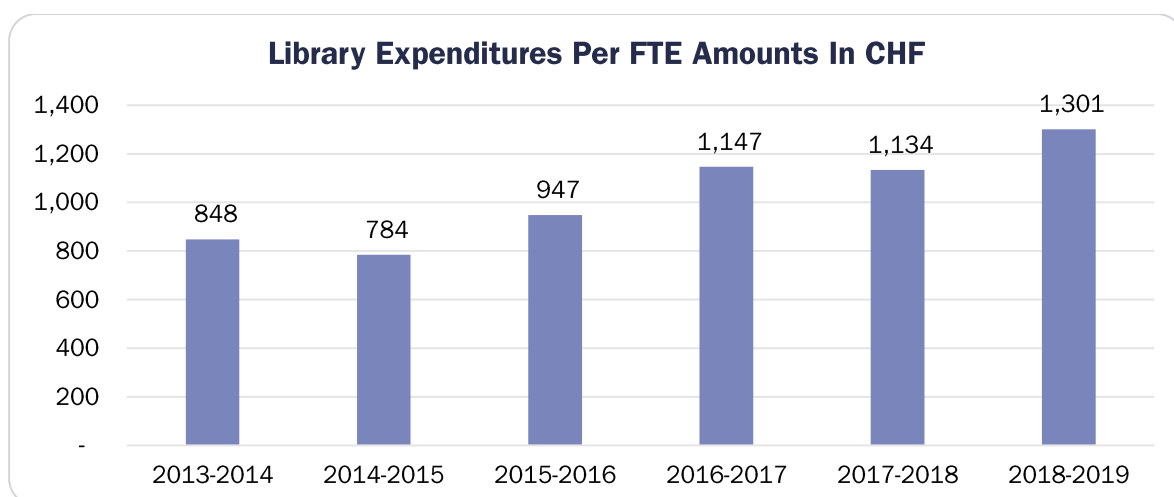


Figure 4.2: Library Expenditures per FTE (2013-2019).

Franklin’s Library is an active member of AMICAL, an international consortium of liberal arts institutions working on common goals for libraries, technology and learning aligned with the Association of American International Colleges and Universities (AAICU). AMICAL, according to its website, “brings together 29 institutions of higher education located in 22 countries across Eastern, Central and Western Europe, West and North Africa, the Middle East, Central and Southern Asia, and Russia. Operating in diverse cultural contexts but committed to the American model of liberal arts education, AMICAL institutions have chosen to collaborate for mutual benefit and to support the advancement of learning and teaching.” Franklin’s Library is staffed by a director (the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment) and the Instructional

and Access Services Librarian. They, in turn, are supported by a local apprentice training in library services and a team of student Life-Long Learning Scholars (see later in this chapter: [“Student Leadership and Professional Development”](#) for a description of this program). Details on the Library and the work that it does are available in the Library Services Departmental Plan ([6.9.1](#)) and the Library website ([4.1.2](#)).

In concert with the Library, the WLC serves a broad student constituency. First-year students attend workshops in the WLC as part of the First Year Seminar, so they quickly become familiar with what the WLC offers. Student tutors staff the WLC, and student leaders—including academic mentors from the first-year seminar classes and the language mentors from the language classes—frequently hold tutoring and review sessions there. The WLC also provides support for all courses across the Franklin curriculum.

Since 2010, our student support system has grown substantially, mainly through the increased use and training of student and peer mentors. In addition, we have added a part-time person to handle academic accommodations and provide further academic support. We have designed the new Academic Literacies Program (ALP) for writing competencies and enlarged the role of the WLC to include discipline-specific tutoring, math tutoring, language tutoring, and study-skills tutoring.

In Fall 2015, the WLC also began a peer-to-peer language tutoring program. The first two years met with mixed success, and Franklin determined—through the WLC Language Tutoring Program Assessment Report—that using language mentors in the language classroom was not meeting learning outcomes for basic-level language classes ([4.6.2](#)). We saw two main problems with the language mentor configuration: the mentors did not receive much training and the meetings were held with the entire class (+/- 15 students). The new peer-to-peer language tutoring program, developed under the auspices of the WLC, sought to resolve these problems by offering tutoring to smaller groups (three to five students each), with each tutor receiving special training in non-directive tutoring to organize activities such as leading discussions, reviewing homework, and preparing for quizzes and exams.

In addition, the Al Banawi Scholarship for Personal Development Program—introduced in the 2010-2011 academic year—allows upper-level, highly motivated students in financial need to become private tutors for students requiring extra help. As noted in the 2017 scholarship agreement ([3.4.1](#)):

The Al-Banawi Scholarship for Personal Development has been, by all measures, a resounding success. It has provided needed assistance to students whose language,

learning, and/or cultural challenges presented clear obstacles to their successful growth and development. At the same time, the Scholarship has provided very important financial resources to a group of student mentors for whom the Scholarship provides necessary financial support. Finally, the Scholarship highlights the importance of leadership for both mentors and mentees. Franklin and Sheikh Hussein Al-Banawi recognize leadership as a core value essential to the education of all Franklin students.

Franklin believes strongly in the peer-to-peer tutoring system. Students often respond to help better when working with their peers than with their professors and we have seen some tremendous success stories come out of the Al Banawi Program, with peer tutors not only helping but literally turning around some of our most struggling students ([3.4.2](#)). As these are often non US students who have trouble understanding the US system of education as we practice it, having a peer help them navigate that system has proven to be beneficial. We would like to develop more extensive training for the Al Banawi scholars, who currently peripherally take part in the regular non-directive training that WLC tutors receive.

Assessment of Peer Tutoring

In 2018, the WLC completed a 2018 Language Tutoring Program Assessment Report ([4.6.2](#)) by collecting several types of data, including: a survey of students in 100-101 level language classes in Spring 2016 and Fall 2017; comments on official Franklin student course evaluations in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018; personal stories from students in the language tutoring program, collected by the peer tutors; the MAP for Italian Studies (IS) in 2017 ([3.8.1](#)); and a Tutors' Self-Assessment in Spring 2018 (in [4.6.2](#)).

The results from the data collected suggest that the introduction of peer-to-peer language tutoring has been fulfilling our goals. Students report that they are “satisfied to very satisfied” with the tutoring they get in the WLC, and tutors reported that student learning outcomes for the specific tutoring sessions were being met by most of the students, who generally found working with peers quite helpful. As noted in the IS assessment plan, the initiative helps on several levels: “Language Tutoring in the WLC gets ITA 100-101 students to devote an extra hour per week to guided peer-to-peer support with trained language mentors, under the supervision of two highly competent and creative staff/faculty professionals. This support net has been an invaluable addition to our program goals. Furthermore, the LLLS students working as Italian tutors are usually interested in Italian minors and majors. The program celebrates student accomplishment by making them leaders” (Chair of Modern Languages, [3.8.1](#)).

While the report confirms that the peer-to-peer language tutoring program has been successful overall, it also suggests that we still need to improve systematic tutor training and coordination

with language instructors. In response, Franklin is taking steps to improve these aspects of the program and will be assessing these efforts in the near future.

Accessibility Services

Our Accessibility Services, run under the auspices of the WLC, is also instrumental in providing academic support. Under that umbrella, we have increased the hours of the University Counselor, who meets with students requesting accommodations, reads accommodation reports and other documentation, communicates if necessary with parents, and informs the Academic Affairs Coordinator of any accommodations accorded to the student. Since Fall 2016, the Academic Affairs Coordinator has received extra hours to organize the logistics of all accommodated exams.

A recent assessment of Accessibility Services (Spring 2018) recommended more resources be devoted to this service, which is struggling to keep up under the sharp increase in cases related to anxiety and depression ([4.6.3](#)). Current ADA guidelines include anxiety and depression in academic accommodations ([4.1.3](#)). We will continue to assess the efficacy of Accessibility Services, striving to increase student participation in surveys we periodically undertake to evaluate student satisfaction of our services. However, even with low numbers of responses, results suggest that most students are “satisfied to very satisfied” with the system we have adopted for managing accommodations. The 2019 Annual Assessment Report for Accessibility Services indicated the growing complexity of dealing with disabilities on campus and our need to carefully consider how we best help students who need this support while staying within the concept of “reasonable accommodations” ([4.6.4](#)).

Franklin will also be considering how to create a better physical presence for Accessibility Services, as currently no central place exists where students can receive information about these services. Instead, those working within Accessibility Services are spread out over three buildings and several different offices. We are advocating that a dedicated Accessibility Office with proctored exam space be considered in future building plans.

Changes in the Future of Academic Support

Using assessment data, in Fall 2018 Franklin discontinued its Academic Year at FUS Program (AYF) ([4.1.4](#)). This program, introduced in Fall 2013, served as a transition year for students with special needs in study skills, university-level writing, or any other difficulties with the curriculum. The program sought to provide these students with individualized advising and mentoring, as well as offering a college skills course to prepare them adequately for a university education. Students who successfully completed the one-year AYF program were fast-tracked

for admission to Franklin's regular undergraduate curriculum and continued their studies from there (or applied elsewhere). In five years we admitted a total of 93 students, 65 % of whom continued their studies at Franklin. Many of these students have since graduated, and some have successfully moved on to graduate programs.

Despite the relative success of the program overall, numerous issues arose about how to integrate these students into the curriculum and simultaneously provide them with the extra support they needed. The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (See [Chapter 5: Assessment](#)), performed an Assessment of AYF in Spring 2018, which underscored several difficulties perceived by both AYF and traditional Franklin students, especially in regard to how to integrate these AYF students into the Franklin community successfully. The assessment also revealed larger structural issues, including balancing the program with the rest of the undergraduate curriculum and effective collaboration between administrative offices ([4.1.5](#)). In light of this assessment, potential AYF students have now provisionally been identified as "conditional admits" as we consider our next steps in this direction.

Franklin is also currently brainstorming a way to offer sophomores and juniors the kind of supportive experiences we have developed for incoming students. We'd like to mirror the First Year Experience (FYE) and create a "Milestone Experience", now called Franklin Futures 5.0, focusing specifically on career preparation and intercultural competencies in a global context. We're concerned that perhaps sophomores and juniors have received the least amount of targeted academic support; incoming freshmen are strongly supported through orientations, mentorships, FYE, and the like, while seniors receive direct support from their professors and advisors as they complete their capstone projects and theses. This new program should bring fresh attention to those in the middle of their academic trajectories.

The Intercultural Development Inventory

Franklin aims to increase the development of intercultural competencies among all students, as well as to improve assessment practices, by using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). A 50-item online questionnaire, this inventory assesses intercultural competencies, measures an individual's capability to shift cultural perspectives, and provides guidance for appropriately adapting one's behavior to cultural differences and commonalities. This tool seems tailor-made for Franklin's core goals and values, so we sent two staff members—The Dean of Student Life and Engagement, and the Assistant Dean of Student Life and Career Services—to the IDI training program. They are now certified to administer the survey and work with students on the results.

In Fall 2018, Franklin began piloting the program within the graduate program. We administered the IDI to all MSIM students and undergraduate students taking MSIM courses ([3.5.6](#)). Individual students then met with an IDI administrator for about one hour to discuss results and develop a personalized Intercultural Development Plan. We also organized several collective workshops to discuss intercultural competency, and we're now developing a program to expand IDI administration to undergraduate students in 2020-2021. Ideally, students take the IDI twice: once at the beginning of their college careers and once at the end. By collecting longitudinal data such as this—which will allow Franklin to chart a student's intercultural development—we should be able to better assess how we can more effectively support students in fulfilling this important institutional goal.

Supporting Students in a Global Context: Co-Curricular Support

The Office of Student Life (OSL) plays a vital role in offering co-curricular support to Franklin students. As articulated in its mission, OSL is keenly aware that “student engagement outside the classroom is critical to success in the classroom and in life. Our programs and services are designed to help students achieve their academic goals; engage in experiential learning; develop intercultural maturity; cultivate relationships within FUS and the surrounding communities; exhibit civic responsibility, and graduate with a stronger sense of cross-cultural perspectives that allows them to build careers that take them beyond national boundaries” ([4.1.6](#)).

As the Organizational Chart below shows, OSL is divided into six units, headed by the Dean of Student Life and Engagement and staffed with five full-time members and seven part-time members.

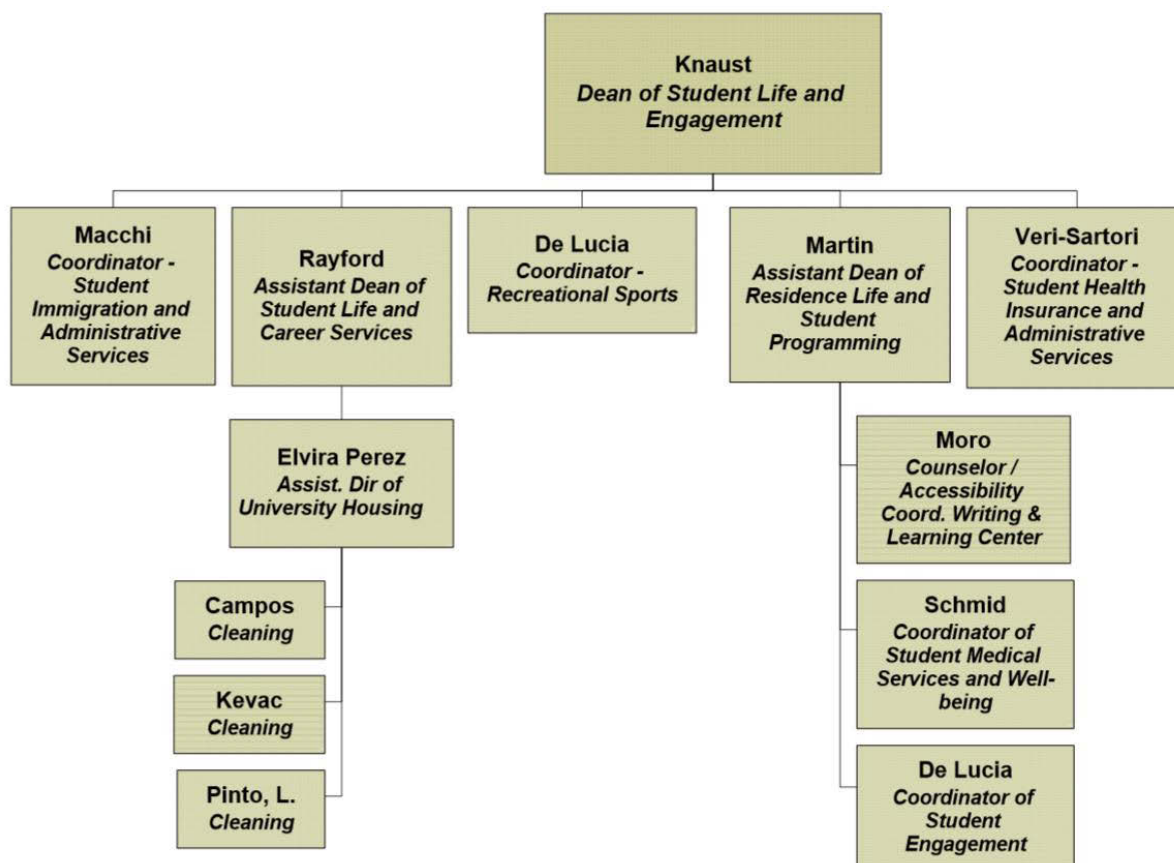


Figure 4.3: Student Life and Engagement Organizational Chart (2019 - 2020).

This group of dedicated staff brings to life the OSL mission to “facilitate student learning and development through intercultural opportunities, immigration support, health and wellness services, and other co-curricular experiences.” OSL has also articulated specific learning outcomes that derive directly from and support Franklin’s mission:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of, and develop relationships within the FUS and surrounding communities while utilizing FUS and local community resources.
2. Demonstrate civic responsibility, ownership, and accountability on- and off campus.
3. Display intercultural maturity, both personally and interpersonally.
4. Demonstrate the ability to contribute to accomplishing group goals and objectives.

Many of the essential co-curricular support services discussed in this chapter—including New Student Orientation, Health Services, student leadership opportunities and a plethora of other co-curricular programs—are provided by or overseen by the Office of Student Life, whose staff understands the complexities involved in completing a successful international education.

New Student Orientation

We introduce matriculated students to the Franklin experience with a thorough orientation before the beginning of the fall semester and, on a smaller scale, in the spring and both summer sessions. In the fall, we help students organize group flights from the US, and a group of current Franklin students—who are trained Orientation Mentors—stand ready at the airport to meet them. Students from Europe and other areas outside the US arrive, with or without parents, on their own.

During the four-day Orientation Program ([2.2.3](#)), with a separate program for parents ([4.1.7](#)), students take care of essential bureaucratic matters—from getting their room keys to starting the now quite complicated visa process. Students also complete a math placement exam and a writing sample to assess their level of English. We devote one day of Orientation to advising and registering for classes, and we schedule numerous other informational activities—such as personal safety and a session on sexual consent, both of which have been recently reviewed and updated—over the rest of the four-day program.

Orientation Mentors then introduce students to Lugano and the surrounding area. A simple trip to the grocery store or to IKEA, framed within the context of intercultural awareness—the organization of goods, the lack of free plastic bags, there is more than one type of “Swiss” cheese—already begins to open students’ eyes to the cultural complexities of moving to what, for most, is a new and strange country. We offer a “Taste of Switzerland” buffet dinner with parents, new students, faculty, and staff to round out this formal welcome to our community. Finally—as a way to encourage interaction among students and have fun before the semester formally begins—we organize a day-trip to one of the most picturesque Swiss valleys in the area, Valle Versasca, for new students, accompanied by Orientation Mentors. (See also [Chapter 3](#) for discussion of First Year programs, such as *Tutte Le Strade*, that support students at the beginning of their Franklin experience.)

After New Student Orientation, all new students are invited to complete an overall evaluation to assess the effectiveness of each component of the program. In addition to sharing feedback about their experience, students also rate how welcome they were made to feel and to identify areas in which they wish they had learned more.

Health Services

In our international context, the health support we offer can present specific cultural challenges: many students, for example, cannot necessarily speak the local language well enough to take care of health issues on their own (even German-speaking Swiss students may have difficulties

in Italian-speaking Ticino). We support our students' unique health needs through the very busy Health Services Office ([4.4.1](#)), run under the auspices of OSL. Most of our health services staff members are multi-lingual and speak the local language to assist students as they navigate a foreign health system.

We must abide by all Swiss laws related to health practices and health insurance, starting with the fact that all students (and all residents of Switzerland) are required by law to purchase private health insurance. Franklin provides an excellent insurance plan with SWICA, one of the leading health insurance providers in Switzerland. SWICA offers a low-deductible plan for Franklin students from non-EU countries; students from EU countries typically carry their own health service provider authorized by the Department of Health in Ticino. An OSL staff member serves as the liaison with SWICA to help students receive appropriate health insurance benefits, manage health-related bills, and find answers to their questions.

In addition to our SWICA liaison, OSL has one part-time Coordinator of Student Medical Services and Well-being and one part-time Counselor. The Coordinator of Student Medical Services and Well-being focuses on health-related support; if she confronts a health issue beyond the parameters of her authorized role, she assists students in making appointments with off-campus doctors and specialists. The Counselor provides psychological counseling for students and also connects with local service providers to help students make appointments with off-campus psychiatrists and psychologists.

As seen on many campuses throughout the US, our data show that the Counselor and Coordinator of Student Medical Services and Well-being have had to deal with increasing cases of anxiety and depression over the past five years ([4.6.5](#)). The increased stress involved in living in a foreign country may certainly add to our numbers. Franklin students previously had unlimited and free access to the University Counselor, but exponentially increasing usage rates have forced us to now limit the number of free visits. For example, during the 2011-2012 academic year, students were able to make five free appointments per academic year. This created an inequality for students who attended Franklin for a single semester: those students had access to all five sessions in one semester whereas students studying at Franklin for the academic year had the same number of sessions for the entire year. During 2018-2019 academic year, we addressed this issue with the following change: students now all have access to two free counseling sessions per semester during regular hours. After the two free sessions, a student's health insurance is now billed if they continue to meet with the counselor. Alternatively, they may prefer to receive counseling from an off-campus therapist and recommendations are made accordingly.

Assessment of Health Services

In an effort to better assess the effectiveness of student medical services, including well-being and counselor activities, we created a new survey in Spring 2019 using Qualtrics survey software that addresses students' health-related experiences, satisfaction of their experience, and where they believe additional attention and resources should be directed ([4.6.6](#)). Franklin administered this survey to all students; 53 students responded to the survey out of a total of 271, which gives us a 19.5 % response rate. This data will inform our decisions regarding possible future changes to the hours of the Coordinator of Student Medical Services and the Counselor, improve communication about these services and hours, and will help us identify external support services students might prefer. After reviewing the assessment we decided to add a 24/7 confidential helpline administered by an organization called Mondo Equilibrio.

In future health-related surveys, we plan to include an assessment of the Franklin- sponsored student health insurance plan and the staff administering it. A preliminary review of the data suggests that students do not have a clear idea about how health services work in Switzerland, or at Franklin, and that we need to do more from Orientation onwards to make students more aware of the framework in which we legally operate and what we can and cannot offer. We also need to decide whether we offer the survey on an annual or bi-annual basis.

Housing and Residential Life

Franklin maintains eight residences that offer various types of gender-neutral student housing. We also support a Swiss Living Community and two residence areas with extended quiet hours. In these specialized living situations, students must follow specific community-related policies (quiet hours, for example, apply after 5p.m. and before 7a.m. in the selected residences). The OSL offers residence-specific events to students living on campus with help from its Resident Assistants, who carry out their considerable training and post-training duties under the auspices of OSL. Typically, all Franklin students are expected to live on campus, but students who wish to move off campus may submit a request to the Office of Student Life.

Visa and Permit Coordination

OSL takes seriously its role in ensuring that students study legally in Switzerland. The process has become more complicated in recent years, with students now needing to go in person to the Immigration Office in the nearby city of Bellinzona to submit biometric data such as fingerprints and special photographic images. Orientation Mentors usually help with this requirement, bringing students to Bellinzona and back to campus to ensure that they respect their appointment times and do not get lost. We piloted the use of the four-month (120 days)

visa for one-semester study abroad students. During fall semester 2019, SMU first-year students studied at Franklin on a four-month visa. This visa category allows students to be enrolled in SWICA Swiss health insurance and Town Hall (as per Swiss law), but does not require students to visit an immigration office – allowing them to avoid missing class time during their one semester at Franklin. We intend to expand the four-month visa to other one-semester students during the fall semester 2020. In addition, the four-month visa reduces the university expenses, as this visa category does not require any Swiss residence permit fees.

Coordination of Student Government Association

The Student Government Association (SGA) represents all students and holds weekly General Assembly meetings during the fall and spring semesters. All Franklin students are invited to attend these meetings. The SGA is responsible for providing student opportunities to develop and enhance their leadership abilities while promoting institutional improvement and innovation. The SGA executive board is comprised of the President, Vice President, Head of Community Development and Initiatives Committee, Head of Finance, and Head of Public Relations. The weekly General Assembly meetings are held to manage assorted university social events, allocate student funds, and to discuss refinement of university policies in line with students' interests.

To promote transparency and community, Franklin invites one SGA member to participate in many of its faculty committees, including Curriculum Committee and Faculty Assembly, with the caveat that the representative leave when confidential matters are discussed such as other students, salaries, or the budget. In addition, SGA student representatives are invited to participate in various other committees and campus opportunities, such as the Outstanding Staff Performance Award, Judicial Hearing Board, MSCHE Accreditation Workgroup (Standard IV), and others.

Coordination of Student Clubs and Organizations

In addition to SGA, Franklin students are involved in a number of clubs and organizations, which they create depending on collective interests. Students in these clubs organize fun or educational events. One of the most popular clubs recently has been the Sustainability Club, which runs a small organic garden and organizes activities such as clothing swaps and the annual garden lunch party on our spring University Day, which celebrates the Franklin community. Clubs apply for funding through SGA and must adhere to a certain number of rules (pertaining to alcohol for example). They are self-regulating and currently include:

- Acappella
- Asian Culture Association
- Business Society
- Film & Photography Collective
- FUS Thespian Society
- French Conversation Club (only active in the fall)
- Latin American Club
- PACE (LGBTQIA+ organization)
- Political Discourse Society
- Sustainability Club
- Vagina Monologues Club

Recreation and Sports

Franklin has a small gym on campus, which students can use during their free time, but currently does not have any formal sports teams. To increase this kind of desirable activity for students, Franklin created a new position, Recreational Sports Coordinator, who began work in Fall 2018 to improve the variety of sports-related services we can provide for our students. The Recreational Sports and Student Engagement Coordinator plans events and programs both on and off campus to promote sport and wellness. He has connected students with local teams, brought in instructors, reached out to partner with others in the area and in the rest of Switzerland, and has led excursions. He has also been a part of the discussion regarding creating a fitness center in Franklin's new building currently under construction (see [Chapter 6: "Draft Facilities Master Plan"](#)). Franklin has now been able to better promote student health and well-being through these many initiatives.

Emergency Response

All students are informed of the 24/7 emergency phone and safety procedures. Individuals may contact the Franklin Emergency Number at any time in case of emergency. There are two levels of emergency phone response at Franklin. Resident Assistants carry the first-level phone for emergency response. Resident Assistants are highly trained student leaders who conduct nightly rounds in each Residence Hall and are prepared to respond to emergency situations. Professional staff from the Office of Student Life carry the second-level phone for emergency response to support Resident Assistants and respond to both phones during Academic Travel and university breaks.

Judicial Affairs

Franklin values its Code of Conduct ([2.1.2](#)) as a key instrument within an effective learning community. Students sign this Code, along with their Housing agreement, when they arrive at Franklin, so we set the foundation immediately for our high expectations of student conduct. When students violate the Code, they may need to meet with the Assistant Dean of Student Life and Career Services to determine a course of action. Class 2 and 3 violations are referred to the judicial board made up of students, faculty, and staff. This board may also assign sanctions if they have found an individual responsible for violating policy.

Student Leadership and Professional Development

Life-Long Learning Scholarship Program (LLLS)

In 2009-2010 Franklin developed the Life-Long Learning Scholarship Program (LLLS) to strengthen retention and guide all students through the Franklin experience. This program also serves our mission's imperative to "[integrate] the liberal arts with professional pathways." The name of the program emphasizes our holistic approach to providing students with career-related opportunities within the context of a liberal arts tradition. As its website explains ([4.4.2](#)):

The Life-Long Learning Scholarship Program (LLLS) supports students by preparing them to be career-ready upon graduation from FUS, not only with regard to academic foundations in their respective disciplines, but also by providing them with skills that are essential in public and private sector employment in a wide variety of settings. By participating in the Life-Long Learning Scholarship program, students will experience a strong sense of engagement with the University, develop leadership skills, and have the opportunity to learn and develop practical skills in a number of fields and areas.

Many departments and offices across campus offer LLLS opportunities, from admissions ambassadors to sustainable gardeners. Students may devote a maximum of ten hours a week to these roles, spread over one or several posts, and a third (33 %) of our population regularly take part in the program. We categorize the positions into three tiers, largely based on the degree of responsibility. Most students start at Tier I and move up from there, becoming Tier II or Tier III scholars. They may become tutors in the WLC, for example, or research assistants for faculty, in their upper-level years ([4.4.3](#)).

To comply with Swiss labor laws, we do not compensate these positions on an hourly basis, but rather calculate a total merit award, portions of which students regularly receive throughout the semester or academic year. In an expensive country such as Switzerland, where the cost of

living is quite high, the LLLS program contributes to our retention efforts, as the award often constitutes the student's main source of spending money.

Franklin has assessed this program through an annual survey and focus groups with students, the results of which suggest the LLLS is fulfilling its goals ([4.4.4](#)). One particularly relevant result shows that the majority of participants “strongly agree” or “agree” that the LLLS program contributes to their intercultural awareness. In the past few years, we have also developed specific learning outcomes for the overall program and created a handbook for the faculty and staff to ensure the quality of the professional experience and the full integration of learning components ([4.4.5](#)).

Student Leadership Program

Franklin has also continued to develop its strong Student Leadership Program. Our 2015 Periodic Review Report ([5.5.3](#)) provided an overview and update of this program, which includes “high responsibility” opportunities such as Resident Assistants, Orientation Mentors, and Academic Mentors. These positions are quite competitive, with separate application processes that include an essay-style application, a resume, and one, or several, interviews. Taken collectively, the program provides opportunities for over fifty students in any given year.

We designed these positions to respond to several University-Wide Learning Goals, particularly goals one, two, three, four, six and seven:

- Interacting competently in intercultural situations (Intercultural Competencies).
- Engaging with international and civic issues (International Engagement).
- Acting in a socially responsible manner (Social Responsibility).
- Applying skills of inquiry, analysis, and critical thinking (Intellectual Development).
- Creating original and innovative works, ideas and solutions (Creativity).
- Demonstrating holistic personal development and intercultural maturity (Holistic Student Development).

Each of these leadership positions involves a significant training component before the formal start of the semester ([3.4.3](#)). We have combined training for these leaders to some degree, which has helped us create a “leadership intervention team” that is particularly helpful for incoming students. Future goals, provided we can ensure more funding and resources, would be to establish a “Mentor Academy” and to pursue Mentor certification through organizations such as the National Tutoring Association and the National Mentoring Resource Center.

Supporting Students in a Global Context: Financial Aid

At Franklin, students need to deal with unique expenses that naturally come with studying internationally. Financial Aid comes under the purview of the Office of Enrollment Management. Responding to Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) feedback about students' desire for more financial aid assistance, the department has hired a full-time Financial Aid Officer, who can respond to student questions about finances before, during, and after the admissions process.

The Admissions Office, in cooperation with the Financial Aid Office, promotes affordability and accessibility through generous scholarships and financial aid (FAFSA and institutional) for all students, regardless of their nationality. 86% of incoming students receive financial aid every semester. Applicants are automatically considered for merit-awards (in the form of scholarships) during the application review process. Merit-award amounts are based on the applicants' academic performance throughout high school (GPA) and other standard criteria; they range from CHF 5,000 to CHF 28,500 p.a. The University continues to intensify its efforts with a 40% increase in need and merit based awards since 2010 (see Table 2.2).

Franklin provides information about financial aid throughout the enrollment process through many venues, including monthly webinars, Skype consultations, the SLATE matriculation portal, and one-to-one consultations with Admissions Counselors, the Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Management, and the Director of Financial Aid. Students (prospective and current) have the possibility to book one-to-one consultations through the dedicated portal on our website in order to receive guidance on how to fill out the FAFSA and institutional financial aid application forms and to understand the different resources available ([2.7.3](#)). These efforts seem to be paying off, as students report being more satisfied in recent SSI reports.

Supporting Students in a Global Context: The Role of the Registrar

The Registrar's Office supports students by overseeing all of Franklin's policies and procedures regarding: evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits; credits awarded through experiential learning; prior non-academic learning; competency-based assessment; and other alternative learning approaches. The Office is currently staffed by one full-time Registrar and one part-time assistant. The Registrar reports directly to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs and is a member of the President's larger leadership team. As articulated in its 2017-2018 Assessment Report ([4.6.7](#)), the Registrar's mission is to:

- Provide efficient services related to class scheduling and registration, academic advising and graduation; transcripts and enrollment letters. Producing the Academic Catalog and managing online services.
- Ensure that academic policies, regulations, and procedures are implemented fairly and consistently and that such policies are communicated effectively.
- Maintain accurate academic records; providing data to staff and faculty as an aid in critical decision-making processes and with the development of academic policy and procedures that effectively serve our students.

As a service department, the Registrar's Office provides direct support to a number of constituencies both on and off campus, including students, their parents, alumni, faculty, leadership, administrative staff, external accreditors and assessors, and the international community at large. Specifically, the Registrar coordinates and/or manages the following activities and areas:

- Management of Academic Data and Reporting.
- Coordination of Professor Advising and Registration.
- Verification of curricular requirements for every student, including fulfilling core curriculum, prerequisites, major and minor requirements, and minimum GPA requirements.
- Review of requests for AP credit, transfer credit, internship credit, course substitution credit, independent study, auditing, and other types of learning;
- Compiling of Academic Catalog and Online Services.
- Management of Classroom Space.
- Participation in meetings dealing with students at risk or other students with special needs, including graduation candidates.
- Administration of Academic Policies and Standards.
- Workshops with faculty and/or staff dealing with Registrar-related activities;
- Coordination of FERPA Policies and their Enforcement.
- Coordination of Commencement.
- Coordination of US credit and European credit equivalencies (ECTS).
- Establishment of Academic Calendars.
- Participation in staff development with respect to updates and training for software systems affecting Registrar activities.

The Registrar's Office is a busy place. For example, during the 2017-2018 academic year, the Registrar's Office responded to 878 requests for transcripts alone. In addition, 2017-2018 data

suggests its increasing role of simply answering face-to-face questions; accurate and up-to-date academic advising, particularly for graduation candidates and students at academic risk, has thus become an integral part of the office ([4.6.8](#)). As we expand our Graduate Programs, Franklin will need to devote more resources to Registrar activities to ensure that the Office can continue to fulfill its many tasks effectively.

Ensuring Confidentiality of Student Information and Records

Franklin complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), only releasing student information to third parties including parents—apart from specific, allowed exceptions—with the student’s written consent. (See Franklin’s website ([4.3.1](#)) for these written policies).

We keep student hardcopy files in a secure location, with access limited to school officials responsible for working with the information. Access to electronic records is also limited to Franklin employees who have a legitimate reason to see the records. For example, advisors have access to their advisees’ transcripts, but not to those of other students. Franklin utilizes a secure transcript system (Ellucian eScrip-Safe) for sending out electronic transcripts on the written request of the student.

In addition, since we are located in Europe, Franklin follows the strict new European-wide protocol ensuring privacy and security of all personal records. This protocol, The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), went into force on May 25, 2018 and covers data protection for all individuals within the European Union (EU) and for individuals within the European Economic Area (EEA). The GDPR also addresses sending personal data outside the EU and EEA areas. Before this law went into effect, Franklin completely reviewed its data protection practices for all members of the Franklin community (students and employees), nominated several Data Protection Officers, and created a task force to handle data protection issues. Through this dedicated work, Franklin is now compliant with GDPR, which strengthens our already strong confidentiality network.

Third-Party Providers

Food Service

Franklin’s food service provider, Fox Food FUSion, is our primary third-party provider of services for Franklin students. This company offers regional and international specialties in the North Campus Dining Hall and the on-campus Grotto every day, and also provides catering for special events. Students use their ID cards to access their meal plans. The OSL dedicates a staff

member who serves as liaison to Fox Food FUSion and who also meets regularly with an SGA representative and a company representative to discuss on-campus food issues, student requests, and menu changes.

Franklin assesses food services through these on-going meetings as well as through the SSI administered during the fall semester. In our 2015 Periodic Review Report, we reported significant dissatisfaction with food services. After changing food service providers in January 2016, and following a period of adjustment, we are happy to report more satisfaction with food services in recent SSI reports. Given increased student attention around the world to well-being, food cultures, and ethical eating—which at Franklin can translate to academic courses focusing on ethics and the environment or food studies—and the Sustainability Club’s work to coordinate a composting program, these improved results show our commitment to integrate many aspects of Franklin student life under a wide support umbrella that includes vetted third-party providers.

Safety and Security

In December 2017, after our previous security company stopped operations, Franklin contracted security guards from Gruppo Sicurezza SA (GSS), who maintain a high level of surveillance on campus in the evenings. The GSS security guards submit a nightly report to the Dean of Student Life and Engagement. These reports include safety and maintenance issues identified during their rounds of campus. These reports are reviewed daily and are shared with a variety of Franklin staff including custodians, Physical Plant (Maintenance), VP of Finance and Administration, and other key staff members for information sharing and action.

The local police, fire department and ambulance services are also very responsive in regard to Franklin emergencies and communication. Swiss Police, Ambulance, and Fire Brigade have three-digit phone numbers for dialing quickly in emergencies.

Providing students with a safe environment in which to live and learn, and keeping students, parents, and employees well informed about campus security are among our top priorities. As part of the Orientation program, Franklin staff present information about campus emergency procedures and provide students with hand-outs listing the numbers to call in case of emergency. There is always a Franklin Resident Assistant and Office of Student Life professional staff member on call 24/7. In addition, managing emergency response and protocol is an integral part of Resident Assistant training each semester. Another safety related support program is the Campus Safety Managers - these are trained students available to walk students between campus buildings between 10:30p.m. and 1:30a.m.

In the last few years, Office of Student Life has incorporated photos of the GSS security guards and Franklin custodial and maintenance staff in response to students expressing concerns about identifying guards during their nightly rounds and being informed about the Franklin staff members who enter student rooms for maintenance-related issues. We have found that by incorporating these photos and information in the orientation program, students are now aware of who the guards and other Franklin staff are and their roles in supporting the campus.

These security measures, which include an easier process for students to inform us of a safety issue, have improved perceptions of safety on campus among students. Whereas we reported that safety and security as an SSI challenge in our 2015 PRR, recent SSI data in fall 2018 lists safety as a strength. However, this can fluctuate based on incidents that might occur close to the time that the survey is administered. Our Campus Crime Statistics Charts contain campus crime statistics for 2016 to 2018, and 2011 to 2015 ([2.6.5](#)). It can be seen here that Franklin University Switzerland is exceptionally safe.

Supporting Students in a Global Context: Preparation for Life After Franklin

Career Services

Franklin has been working diligently to establish a more developed Career Services Office. Career Services has not always scored well in the SSI, and in response to this feedback, we have now included creating a comprehensive Career Center in our 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, where we specifically note that we wish to “increase the support for student professional development and career preparation”.

Since 2010, we have already made considerable improvements to what we offer with respect to Career Services. The major additions include:

- Title and position change for Assistant Dean of Students, who has now become Assistant Dean of Student Life and Career Services.
- Creation of a Career Services Moodle site called the FUS Career Navigator, with multiple links to career advice, job opportunities, data bases, and other career-related information, both for the US and for Europe and the rest of the world ([4.1.8](#)).
- Coordination of numerous workshops throughout the Fall and Spring semester, twelve and six respectively on average, often with invited speakers, who provide students with hands-on practical tips for writing a resume, creating a personal statement, or surviving an interview ([4.1.9](#)).

- One-on-one meetings with the Assistant Dean of Student Life and Career Services and/or with the Director of the Writing and Learning Center to draft, review and/or revise career-related documents, including personal statements for graduate school; Mock interview appointments and Myers-Briggs Type Inventory testing on demand.
- Access to an Alumni/Advancement data bank of alumni career volunteers who help current students connect with previous students who are now engaged professionally in any number of fields ([4.1.10](#)); Creation of an Alumni Council Networking Organization for Internships.
- Participation in Evisors for alumni and current students, an online platform that connects alumni, students, and experts in a variety of fields for resume review, mock interviews, and networking.

Conclusion

Franklin is justifiably proud of its holistic and compassionate support system, and we can fairly say that every aspect of the Franklin experience prioritizes helping students achieve goals unique to an international education. Franklin embraces its role as an important educational stepping-stone to help students develop from the awkward and often shy teenagers they are when they arrive to the self-confident and self-assured emerging adults they become by the time they leave, having grown academically and socially as global citizens. They can now navigate Lugano and the world, contributing effectively, no matter where they find themselves.

Strengths Connected to Standard IV Criteria

- Franklin's Office of Student Life works to ensure that all Franklin students receive the support they need, including a comprehensive orientation program that prepares students for an international experience; housing services; visa and permits services; coordination of student government; and support for athletics and other co-curricular activities. (Criteria 1 c.; Criteria 4)
- The Library and the Writing and Learning Center provide strong co-curricular support to students from their first day on campus until graduation. (Criteria 1)
- The Admissions' and Registrar's offices provide comprehensive services at all stages of a Franklin student's career, including placement levels, advising, degree planning, information on Financial Aid, and support for degree completion. These offices take care of transfer credit and other alternative credits, and they keep all records safe and confidential. (Criteria 1 a., 1 b.; Criteria 2, Criteria 3)

Challenges Connected to Standard IV Criteria

- Evolving student needs and challenges. As seen across higher education, student needs have gradually increased and evolved—especially in the areas of mental health and general well-being. These contemporary needs require Franklin to find the necessary resources to support our students effectively, especially within our international setting.
- Switzerland’s changing visa policies have become considerably more complicated over the years, which takes up more resources. For example, the Center for Intercultural Engagement and Learning Opportunities (CIELO) has now been folded into the Office of Student Life (OSL) in order to do more with fewer resources.
- Limited resources—not only in terms of funding, but also in terms of staff—hinders our ability to evolve, particularly in OSL.

Standard IV: Next Steps

- Collaborate more fully with academic units, particularly the Writing and Learning Center, to establish stronger ties between academic and co-curricular support. Existing collaboration can be strengthened, including developing common support and possibly mutual conference participation. We have the potential to do this via the GLAA, the Global Liberal Arts Alliance. We are also members of AMICAL, another international consortium of liberal arts institutions, and recently sent (May 2019) a staff-faculty team to Beirut for a conference on the Digital Humanities. Franklin is collaborating with NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) and EucA (European University College Association) to host the European Conference for Professional Development in Student Affairs & Services, October 28-30, 2019.
- Forge more contacts with student support services at other international colleges and universities located in Europe, possibly through the auspices of GLAA or AMICAL or other collaborations. These contacts will allow co-curricular support staff to share ideas with colleagues working under similar conditions.
- Increase assessment efforts and professional staff development in co-curricular support, not only by reserving time to analyze the data that we already collect, but also by brainstorming how we can improve assessment practices in general, particularly with learning how to use direct measures of assessment.
- Increase staff support in the areas where we need it most, particularly well-being, counseling, and Accessibility Services, all of which are understaffed.

Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations Relevant to Standard IV

- Reviewers recommended that “Franklin immediately proceed with the reevaluation of staffing requirements within OSL and use the findings to organize and staff OSL.” Following a re-evaluation of the staffing requirements and focusing on each member’s strengths and potential, Franklin finalized a re-organization of the office in Fall 2018. The re-organization will be duly assessed in the early part of Spring 2020.

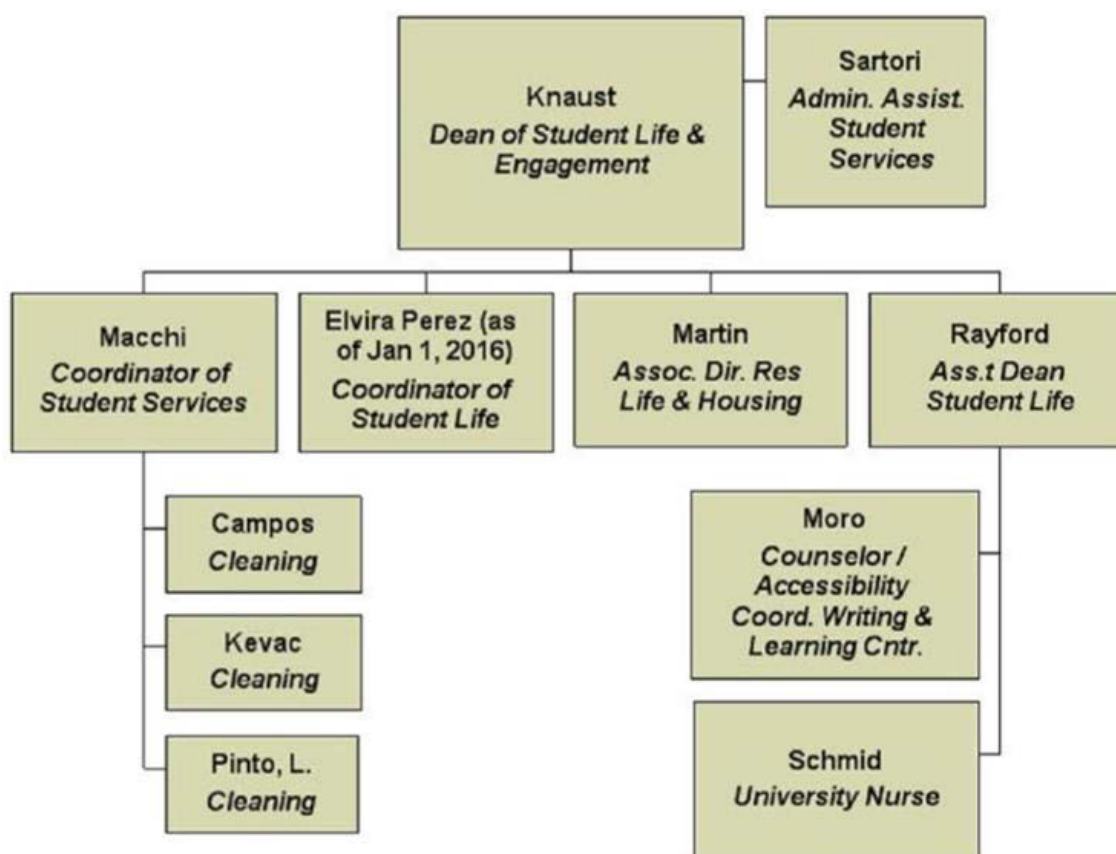


Figure 4.4: Student Life and Engagement Organizational Chart (2015-2016).

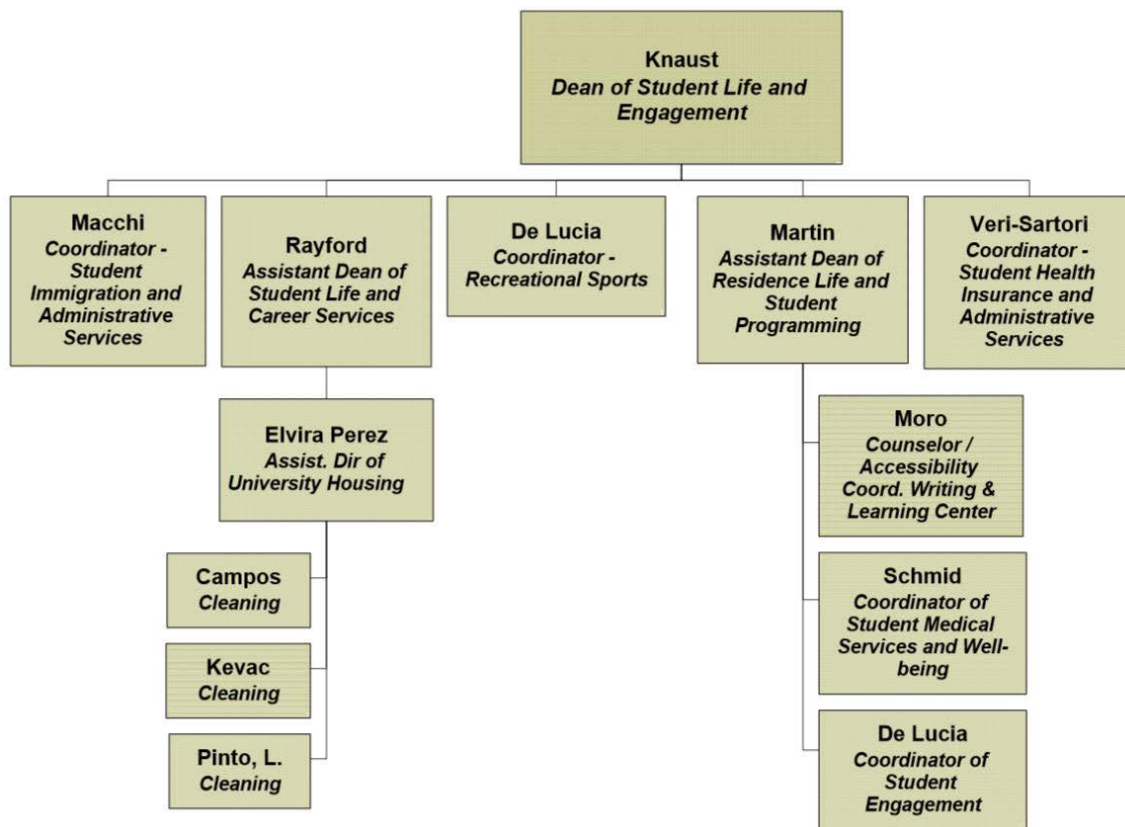


Figure 4.4: Student Life and Engagement Organizational Chart (2019-2020).

Evidence Inventory Relevant to Standard IV

- 2011-2014 and 2015-2018 Campus Crime Statistics Charts
- 2015 Periodic Review Report
- 2016 Capstone Assessment Report
- 2017 Al-Banawi Scholarship Agreement
- 2017 Italian Studies MAP
- 2017-2018 LLLS Survey and Results
- 2017-2018 Registrar Assessment and Data
- 2018 Accessibility Services Report
- 2018 AYF Assessment
- 2018 Counselor Assessment Report
- 2018 Language Tutoring Program Assessment Report
- 2018 Orientation Feedback Report
- 2018-2018 Student Code of Conduct
- 2018-2019 Al-Banawi Scholarship Report
- 2018-2023 Strategic Plan
- 2019 AM Training Schedule
- 2019 Annual Assessment Report for Accessibility Services
- 2019 Course Assessment Reports
- 2019 Health Services Survey
- 2019 Student and Parent Orientation Programs
- Fall 2019 Career Services events
- FUS Website
- Library Services Departmental Plan
- LLLS Application and Acceptance forms
- LLLS Student, Faculty, and Staff manuals
- Office of Student Life Mission Statement
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory

Chapter Five

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Introduction

In line with the core of our mission, Franklin dedicates extensive resources to prepare our students to be leaders in global change. In order to fully realize this goal, Franklin continues to strengthen a culture of evidence-based assessment, and we have developed and deployed honed instruments for evaluating and improving effectiveness at all levels of our institution. Through the diligent work of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, we use an integrated system of tools and processes for educational effectiveness assessment and the evaluation of student learning outcomes. (See also [Chapter 6: “Institutional Assessment”](#)).

As shown in Chapter 1—and referenced throughout this report—Franklin developed University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes in 2013 to highlight and emphasize our goals and to provide specific guidance in all aspects of developing, assessing, and improving the comprehensive Franklin experience. They are worth repeating here as foundational guidelines for Franklin’s evolving assessment practices ([1.3.2](#)):

Franklin’s university-wide learning goals articulate the competencies, skills and stage of development that all Franklin students should reach by the end of their university career, regardless of their specific area of study. Through engaging in the curricular and co-curricular life of the university, Franklin students will be capable of:

1. Interacting competently in intercultural situations (Intercultural Competencies).
2. Engaging with international and civic issues (International Engagement).
3. Acting in a socially responsible manner (Social Responsibility).
4. Applying skills of inquiry, analysis and critical thinking (Intellectual Development).
5. Engaging knowledgably in debates about the natural world (Scientific Literacy).
6. Creating original and innovative works, ideas and solutions (Creativity).
7. Demonstrating holistic personal development and intercultural maturity (Holistic Student Development).
8. Using effective oral communication skills in English (Oral Communication).
9. Using effective writing skills in English (Writing Competencies).
10. Using a language other than English capably (Language Competencies).
11. Applying functional mathematical skills (Mathematical Competencies).
12. Handling information adequately (Information Literacy).

13. Using information technology adequately for scholarly and professional work (General IT Competency).

Franklin's educational effectiveness efforts aim to ensure that our students are fulfilling these outcomes while also pinpointing ways the university—at both the granular and big-picture levels—can continue to improve in delivering on its mission. (See also [Chapter 3: "Assessment-Based Curriculum Revision."](#))

Key Tools of Assessment

- Course Assessment Plans (CAPs): Assessment reports from individual professors about their courses, since at least 2010.
- Major Assessment Plans (MAPs): Assessment reports from academic departments about their majors, since at least 2010.
- Departmental Assessment Plans (DAP) and/or Departmental Plans: Assessment reports from non-academic or academic support departments such as the Library, WLC, OSL, Registrar, etc. since at least 2010.
- The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC), which guides assessment related to student learning outcomes and compiles students surveys. The committee also initiates cross-curriculum reports such as Academic Travel and First Year Seminar.
- Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), a third-party provider in use since at least 2010.
- Lodestone Safety International, a third-party provider, which has provided staff and faculty workshops and written feedback reports to assess safety issues during Academic Travel.
- EvaluationKit (EKIT), which provides us with online student course evaluations and allows us to create targeted surveys for specific sets of courses (e.g. First Year Seminar, Academic Travel, etc.).
- Intercultural Diversity Inventory (IDI): a third-party provider for intercultural competency measures. (See also [Chapter 4](#)).
- Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) Value Rubrics: since 2018, use of these rubrics to assess student work and thus use direct measures of assessment.

- Focus groups, used especially by the Office of Student Life (see also [Chapter 4: “The Role of the Office of Student Life”](#)).
- Franklin’s Alumni Survey, in use since at least 2010.

The Role of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC)

Since 2014, the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC) has been the primary body responsible for assessing student learning outcomes. Until 2012, this committee included only full-time faculty members, as well as the Dean of Academic Affairs ex-officio and non-voting. Starting in 2014, Franklin decided to make this committee more inclusive by transforming it into a university-wide committee. Current membership includes three voting faculty members, one voting staff member, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment, ex-officio, and the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs, who remains ex-officio and non-voting. For confidentiality reasons, there is no student representation on the actual committee itself. The chair is chosen annually from among the committee’s own members ([3.8.9](#)).

The committee’s current mandate is to collect and review assessment documents produced by faculty or staff that involve student learning, as well as to make recommendations, where needed, to individual faculty and staff members or departments to assist them with assessment strategies. The SLOAC also spearheads or writes assessment reports that concern aspects of the curriculum that affect all degree programs, such as:

1. An assessment of the Capstone component required for all majors ([5.2.1](#)).
2. An assessment of our First Year Seminar program (FYS), a main component of our First Year Experience and an integral part of our core curriculum ([3.8.10](#)).
3. An assessment of our three-credit Academic Travel (AT) Program. (See also [Chapter 3](#) for a description of the evolution of the AT program).

The SLOAC ensures that all assessment reports at the curriculum, major, program, and course level, as well as meeting minutes, are stored on the committee’s Moodle site and made available to all Franklin faculty. The same information is available to faculty and staff via the internal drive (m-drive). These structural changes in committee organization and in disseminating the information have helped make more visible the work produced by SLOAC, as well as by individual faculty and staff members. This work also serves to give Franklin’s University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) a larger, co-curricular focus.

SLOAC assessment reports have emphasized the need for clarity and visibility of information, recommending where appropriate that degree programs articulate more explicit and clear learning outcomes to help students understand the mission and purpose of the majors. For example, the 2016 Capstone Assessment report ([5.2.1](#)) specifically recommends that departments revisit and revise as necessary their catalog and website descriptions of capstone courses for their respective majors. This recommendation emerged from a SLOAC student survey clearly showing that students had been confused about how to find their capstone course and what purpose it serves. SLOAC has also asked departments to consider more closely how the capstone fits into their respective majors and how their capstone experience helps meet the criteria for the university-wide SLOs.

The SLOAC Moodle site has also been revised to include numerous resources designed to help faculty with assessment, and the chair of SLOAC provides a short committee report during every faculty meeting. With these structures more firmly set into place, and with the Franklin community more familiar with assessment vocabulary and terminology in general, assessing learning outcomes to improve educational effectiveness has led to a new awareness about assessment culture on campus, as well as a new focus on clear and specific student learning outcomes at the institution and degree/program/course levels.

Strengthening a Culture of Assessment

Franklin has put more emphasis on assessment as part of other evaluative processes. During annual faculty evaluations, for example, the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs now specifically asks professors about assessment activities during her one-on-one meeting with each full-time faculty member. The Curriculum Committee also now requires that authors of course, minor, and major proposals have carried out some preliminary assessment—such as how the course fills a specific major gap, or how CAPS made it clear that something in the major was missing, and what SLOs are covered by the course or minor—to justify the need for the curricular change in line with University-wide SLOs ([5.2.2](#)).

The Franklin community as a whole has also incorporated assessment more organically into the culture. For example, responding to MSCHE feedback, Franklin began offering pedagogical workshops for faculty each August and January that focus on practical assessment activities, such as how to integrate direct assessment of student learning into assessment reports. Regular assessment updates also take place in monthly faculty and staff meetings, which serve as focal points for developments, questions, and sharing news.

Major assessment plans, which are partially based on individual course assessment plans for each course in the major, offer departments the opportunity to revise where needed their student learning outcomes for each major they offer. Nonetheless, developing a culture of deep and direct assessment of majors among faculty is an ongoing process, and we know that creating effective MAPS is one key area that continues to need improvement. Current discussions involve several ideas, including the need to bring in an outside consultant and to organize a “hands-on” workshop in which faculty actually start to produce a MAP.

Faculty have requested more specific guidelines for these assessment procedures, and while we have wanted to give them freedom in this area, we recognize that a template provides ease of use. A template more in line with the recent DAPS (including the DAP for WLC) will be shared with faculty in fall 2019.

Developing Assessment to Make Learning Outcomes More Visible

Since 2015, and thanks to the above developments, we’ve made progress in clarifying how assessment works within the Franklin community. Our focus had previously been on integrating and strengthening assessment practices internally, but we also knew we needed to make student learning outcomes at the degree and program level more visible externally.

Franklin’s catalog serves as the main source for this visibility; it is revised and republished every two years—both in hard copy and on our website in PDF form. The latest catalogue covers 2018-2020, and went through a thorough review of every aspect of our academic offerings. The work done in Marketing has also contributed to making student learning outcomes more visible by prioritizing website development and the information available there. This revised website makes it easier for current and prospective students to find relevant information about programs, departments, and many other facets of Franklin.

In trying to create a more inclusive assessment culture, we have also worked hard since 2015 to correlate assessment activities. Part of this systemization process has involved creating databases to store assessment reports; they are now found (since 2014) on the SLOAC Moodle site, and include all reports compiled since 2009.

Assessing the Academic Curriculum

(See also [Chapter 3: “Assessment-Based Curriculum Revision.”](#))

Franklin’s 2015 Periodic Review Report articulated nine assessment projects Franklin had undertaken since 2010:

1. University-wide Student Learning Outcomes.
2. Academic Travel and three-credit travel courses.
3. Student writing across the curriculum and a new writing requirement.
4. Information Literacy.
5. Computer Literacy.
6. Student Leadership programs.
7. Course Assessment Plans, Major Assessment Plans and Administrative Department Assessment Plans.
8. Graduate Studies and The Taylor Institute.
9. Institutional assessment.

Table 5.1 in the evidence inventory provides an overview of these assessment practices ([3.8.11](#)).

Franklin has effectively integrated assessment practices into the academic curriculum and we have become more adept at closing the assessment loop. We are using data-driven assessment reports to support curricular changes that will improve student learning. These reports not only provide evidence for the need for changes, but also recommendations about how to effectively implement those reforms.

Writing Program Assessment

Franklin’s assessment of its core writing program—and particularly the First Year Composition course—provides a good example of our improved assessment practices. In our 2015 PRR, we described our initial assessment of the first-year writing course in 2012-2013:

This study carried out by SLOAC in the spring of 2012 assessed whether Franklin students were meeting expectations for writing skills upon completion of their first year. Using a common rubric, three independent scorers rated sixteen randomly selected final research papers from ENG 100. Although half of the papers examined were found not to meet academic research expectations, all but one of the students in the study successfully passed ENG 100, primarily because the research paper was only worth 20 percent of the final grade. These results ([3.8.12](#)) suggested that completion of the

required ENG 100 writing course was not enough to help students become proficient academic writers of English. The results of the spring 2012 assessment of first-year writing (Appendix 4-E) helped contribute to ongoing faculty discussions and led to the creation of a task force to address the writing requirement at Franklin.

We noted specifically that one course usually taken in a student's incoming year could not fulfill a goal designed to be met at graduation.

Following this assessment, Franklin designed an entirely new writing program – the Academic Literacies Program (ALP). No longer based on a single course, the new writing program now includes twelve credits of writing or writing intensive courses, all part of the core curriculum (see [Chapter 3](#) for a full description of core curriculum requirements). These credits usually begin with a basic introductory writing course (now WTG 150) and end with the student's capstone course requirements in the major. Along the way, students are expected to take one or two writing intensive courses in their specific disciplines.

Since 2016, the ALP has completed three different assessment reports to evaluate the educational effectiveness of different components of the program:

- 2016 ALP Writing Course Assessment ([3.8.13](#))
- 2017 ALP EAP Course Assessment ([3.8.14](#))
- 2019 ALP Writing Intensive Course Assessment ([3.8.15](#))

These significant assessment reports (20-30 pages each) include data from various sources including direct assessment of student projects. They have given us valuable feedback and confirmed that the new writing program at Franklin has been a welcome addition to the curriculum, supporting the mission and helping students meet university-wide learning outcome number nine on written communication.

What remains to be assessed is the final part of Franklin's writing requirement, which is the Capstone, Thesis or Internship projects of seniors in the majors. This assessment project, while it can be guided by ALP, would ideally take place in the majors themselves, with professors in those departments using the same AACU Value Rubric that we used in the 2016 Writing Course Assessment. In this way, it should be possible to chart longitudinal changes up the curriculum as students move from general composition courses to more specialized disciplinary courses in their majors and concluding with their final written project. We will discuss this opportunity with the Office of Academic Affairs in the near future and determine when and how to organize a workshop that would introduce the final assessment piece to all departments.

Assessment of Math Course Sequencing

Several of our Math faculty have conducted a recent assessment of our traditional Math course sequencing ([3.8.16](#)). The assessment sought to answer the following questions:

- How useful is our math placement test, taken during orientation, in predicting math ability?
- How helpful is MAT 102, a Pre-Algebra course that does not satisfy our core requirement in quantitative reasoning, for preparing students to take MAT 103, a College Algebra course that does satisfy our core curriculum requirement in quantitative reasoning?
- How helpful is taking MAT 103 before taking MAT 200 and/or MAT 201? (Calculus and Introduction to Statistics respectively).

The analysis was based on data provided by the Academic Affairs Analyst, using enrollment and grade data for every student taking any MAT class between Fall 2013 and Summer 2018. The assessment showed the following results:

- Students who scored lower in the math placement test and did not reach the MAT 103 level on the test did better in MAT 103 if they took MAT 102 as a preparation course beforehand, as recommended. The effect, however, was small.
- Students who did not reach the MAT 200 level on the placement test did slightly better in MAT 200 if they took MAT 103 beforehand, as recommended. The effect, however, was very small and not statistically significant.
- Students who did not reach the MAT 201 level on the placement test performed about the same in MAT 201 whether or not they took MAT 103 beforehand, as is recommended. The reason might be that those placing directly into the course were better prepared because they had a slightly higher placement score than the others.

Overall, taking the lower class first, as recommended, does not help as much as the assessment team would have expected or wished. Faculty teaching Math courses met to discuss these issues, and they decided to modify the content of MAT 103 slightly to better prepare students for MAT 200 or 201. They have also introduced an adaptive learning system, Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS), in the MAT 103 courses in an effort to improve the students' algebraic skills. These online exercises offer more practice opportunities and immediate feedback for struggling students.

Transitioning to Online Course Evaluations

In Spring 2016—after numerous meetings and demonstrations by several different online evaluation providers—Franklin piloted an online version of student course evaluations using EvaluationKIT, which could be administered through our MOODLE course management system. Several factors spurred our switch from handwritten course evaluations to online course evaluations. Collecting handwritten evaluations by student volunteers proved inefficient, and the student comments needed to be typed by an outside source to ensure confidentiality. Online evaluations could be more efficient, more flexible in timing, and also provide the opportunity to create targeted questions designed by the professor, department, or program on an as-needed basis.

The decision to pilot this system went through normal approval channels, starting with the Academic Affairs Analyst, who coordinated the process, moving through SLOAC for its recommendation, and finally to Faculty Assembly, who approved the pilot program. Faculty did express concerns that they had not been consulted enough prior to the decision; they also had concerns with reliability of online evaluation data, the impact of the online medium itself, and student response rates. Taking these issues into account, the faculty and VP Dean agreed to pilot EKIT using the same questions as those found in the handwritten versions, so as to make a reliable comparison possible. Faculty received instructions on how to set up the online evaluation, and the system was launched for all Spring 2016 courses.

Shortly after faculty received their results, SLOAC devised a short online survey to assess faculty satisfaction of the new system ([5.5.1](#)). Of 49 faculty receiving the evaluation, 37 responded, giving a strong response rate of 77%. Although concerns remain about the use of online evaluations among faculty—along with a more fundamental debate about the efficacy and reliability of student evaluations in general—our survey confirmed that most faculty were satisfied with the new system.

The following suggestions coming out of the SLOAC report for further use of the online version, have been implemented or addressed:

- Educate students more during class about the role of these evaluations;
- Encourage professors to reserve some class time for all students to complete the evaluations;
- Encourage professors to ask additional questions about their courses;

- Review the actual questions on the evaluation form, many of which caused concern among professors;
- Provide some training for professors, perhaps during a faculty workshop, on how to best set up the evaluations to meet their needs;
- Provide professors with a clear explanation of how these evaluations will be used to assess their own performance;
- Make sure faculty have a voice in how evaluations are conducted on campus;
- Report problems with the reports generated by EKIT to the Academic Affairs Analyst and assess whether EKIT is the best solution among possible online evaluation systems after further experience.

Since the faculty approval of EKIT in Fall 2016, we have used targeted questions to ask students about several programs, including writing and W-labeled courses, Academic Travel, and First Year Seminar. The data from these targeted questions has already been found useful for many assessment projects, such as the SLOAC three-credit Academic Travel assessment, the FYS assessment, and the W-course assessments.

Assessment of Franklin's Co-Curricular Programs

(See also [Chapter 4: "Support of the Student Experience"](#)).

Transforming the SLOAC to a university-wide committee has helped broaden our assessment of learning effectiveness to include programs and activities that are not academic in the strict sense of the term, but that support the academic environment. Co-curricular programs—as described in Chapters 3 and 4—work hand-in-hand with academic programs to create the full Franklin experience.

Table 5.2 in the evidence inventory summarizes assessments of co-curricular activities since 2015 and the co-curricular changes that have occurred as a result of assessment ([4.6.9](#)).

Assessment in the Writing and Learning Center

Assessment of Writing and Learning Center programs serves as a pertinent example of how Franklin values co-curricular programs, and how we focus assessment on these activities to improve educational effectiveness. In our 2015 PRR, we described the trend toward increased student usage in the WLC and how that increase, while positive, was creating problems in terms of space. In response to this analysis, Library and WLC staff submitted a targeted proposal to a donor to create a Learning Commons that would, in essence, merge two adjoining spaces—

one underused (library) and the other overused (WLC). The donor agreed to sponsor the proposed changes in the fall of 2015. This donation enabled us to create the Fowler Learning Commons, named in recognition of the donor's generosity.

The Learning Commons has become a popular student space on Franklin's North Campus, where the majority of classes take place. We have created a quiet space for individual study, a separate area for tutoring and group projects, and a lounge where students can simply relax between classes. A 2016 survey of student satisfaction of the Learning Commons revealed that the vast majority of respondents were very happy with the changes. We have addressed their only complaint by adding more recharging stations for their own computers, as well as responded to their request to redistribute the number of computers available for use in the quiet and talking spaces respectively. The Learning Commons has allowed the WLC to increase its tutoring offerings and has also helped make the space more democratic because it is more accessible for the campus community at large.

See also [Chapter 4: "Assessment of Peer Tutoring"](#) for further discussion of student support services and their assessment.

Office of Student Life Assessment Practices

The Office of Student Life (OSL) has increased its attention to assessment, as it is a vital process for this important sector of the Franklin experience (see also [Chapter 4](#)). The OSL launched participant surveys of the new student orientation, for example, which helped OSL staff identify gaps in new students' knowledge. So, in August 2016, the OSL added a new session that focused on living in Switzerland as a constructive member of the community; this part of orientation has been refined each year since 2016. These new sessions are designed to help students understand the cultural and social values of our region and how one can be an effective member of this intercultural community.

Other components of the orientation program have been reconsidered each year based on responses to surveys that we have designed, as well as from SSI and feedback collected from student-staff focus groups. Two focus groups held in Fall 2018 have helped staff begin planning for upcoming programs in the OSL to support students' transition to our unique university setting.

As noted in Chapter 4, the OSL developed Franklin's Life-Long-Learning-Scholarship (LLLS) program to provide rich professional development opportunities for students. In 2016 and each subsequent year, the Dean of Student Life and Engagement began conducting a series of focus groups and student surveys to understand students' experiences and needs. The Dean also

organized annual focus groups with faculty and staff to determine the effectiveness of the program and expand the depth and breadth of student learning.

By analyzing the qualitative data collected from these assessment activities, the OSL has developed specific learning outcomes for the overall student experience, which can now be found on the first page of the Student Handbook ([4.1.6](#)). Also, the project proposal process now requires that specific learning outcomes be incorporated for each scholarship. The OSL also created a handbook for faculty and staff overseeing scholars' projects to ensure that specific learning components have been incorporated into each scholarship opportunity ([4.4.5](#)). Finally, the OSL created a correlative student handbook to explain the procedures and expectations to student scholars in the program ([4.4.3](#)).

Evaluation of Franklin's Assessment Practices

Since 2015, Franklin has greatly improved its assessment structures. We know, however, that a robust assessment culture is only as strong as the ongoing evaluation of that culture. At this meta-level of assessment, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment, in collaboration with SLOAC, has collectively worked towards assessing and revising our current assessment practices.

Our main goal has been to get more buy-in on the part of faculty and staff on the benefits of assessment. In an effort to facilitate broad participation, we have tried to simplify templates and guidelines across the board, for both faculty and staff, so as to encourage more engagement in writing assessment reports. For example, the SLOAC now uses a template for program assessment that consists of four clear parts:

1. Program Background and Assessment Questions.
2. Data Collected.
3. Results and Discussion.
4. Follow-Up Activities.

Likewise, the template that we now use for staff-run departments, such as the Registrar's Office, to report on their academic year and create goals for the following year has been simplified and includes four basic parts:

1. The mission of the department and how the department contributes to the overall mission of the university.
2. Learning outcomes if appropriate.
3. Assessment of the fulfillment of goals for the current academic year.

4. Goals for the next academic year and Budget Priorities.

This type of annual report, which is usually written up in June or July, helps us link fall budget requests for the coming academic year to a departmental assessment report.

In response to MSCHE feedback, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment and SLOAC have collectively considered opening a discussion with faculty to rethink the way we ask faculty members to assess majors. We currently use MAPs and CAPs for individual courses, but these processes involve significantly more than articulating a plan. Currently, we essentially leave it up to departments to write a document, with SLOAC providing a template for both MAPs and CAPs. It would be useful to consider whether SLOAC or the Office of Institutional Assessment should come up with a series of guided questions in the form of an annual report on the major. We also seek to help faculty link CAPS and MAPS together in order to have a better overall picture of how the curriculum of each major is developing.

Such a move would mean modifying the current template for MAPs. At present, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment and SLOAC are working on possible ways to modify the template or perhaps how to set up a new process of assessing the majors. The aim of these revisions is to make this process easier and more effective for faculty to undertake annually.

The SLOAC will also try to find a way to more fully involve adjuncts in the assessment process. Adjuncts do not generally write CAPs, which means that the numerous courses they teach are not getting assessed in this way. We are considering revision of the current syllabus template such that assessment activities are built in. In this way, assessment itself will become more visible across the curriculum.

Conclusion

Robust assessment practices are essential to the successful completion of Franklin's first institutional priority: "to enhance integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs". We understand that assessment processes also serve our third institutional priority: "to foster institutional sustainability and innovation". Only through effective assessment—and the continual evaluation of those assessment practices—can these institutional priorities be accomplished. In this way, our ongoing efforts to improve assessment practices also support the new 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. As this chapter shows, over the last decade, Franklin has devoted much time, energy, and resources to develop strong and visible assessment practices, as well as to strengthen our overall culture of assessment. In particular,

we are now doing a much better job of “closing the loop,” using assessment results to make recommendations that lead to positive change.

Strengths Connected to Standard V

- Franklin has developed mission-driven, University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes to foster assessment across the curriculum, as well as Student Learning Outcomes at the degree/program level. (Criteria 1)
- The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee now coordinates and supports assessment efforts in both curricular and co-curricular programs. (Criteria 2)
- Franklin has created a stronger culture of assessment university-wide, and has become more adept at using data to “close the loop” and create effective changes. (Criteria 3; see also Chapter 1, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Chapter 6 for evidence of this culture of assessment)

Challenges Connected to Standard V

- An ongoing challenge to a culture of assessment is ensuring faculty and staff buy-in to any new processes. We also need to include adjuncts more fully in assessment practices.
- With a limited pool of resources, Franklin must determine how to best use the resources we have for effective assessment.

Standard V: Next Steps

- Continue to devote resources to Assessment. With upcoming retirements on the horizon, Franklin will have the opportunity to consider how to allocate resources for assessment and how to align Swiss and US accreditation requirements in regard to assessment practices.
- Continue to organize workshops on assessment to help faculty and staff involved with educational effectiveness with their own individual assessment endeavors. The goal here is to get faculty and staff more invested in the benefits of assessment and how it can actually work to improve majors, programs and even courses. A particular aim would be to discuss how to use direct measures of assessment more effectively, how to think about targets or goals behind the assessment, as well as follow up activities.

Evidence Inventory Relevant to Standard V

- 2015 Periodic Review Report
- 2016 ALP Assessment
- 2016 Capstone Assessment Report
- 2016 Evaluation KIT Assessment
- 2016 Student Satisfaction Folwer Learning Commons
- 2017 ALP Assessment
- 2019 ALP Assessment
- 2019 FYS Assessment
- 2019 Course Assessment Reports
- 2019 Math Assessment
- Faculty Manual
- Faculty Workshop Agendas
- LLLS students, faculty, and staff manuals
- Moodle Access Instructions for SLOAC site
- OSL Learning Outcomes
- Student Handbook



Chapter Six

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1, Franklin undertook an extensive collaborative process to create a solid, forward-thinking mission that guides the university's planning processes. Emerging from that mission, Franklin's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan (SP) is predicated on three primary goals, worth repeating here as a foundation for our discussion of Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement:

1. Support academic excellence by enhancing integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs.
2. Implement Strategic Enrollment Management by developing one-, three-, and five- year enrollment plans to meet the academic, net revenue, and learning community needs of the University.
3. Foster institutional sustainability and innovation by developing plans and initiatives that address current and future institutional needs.

Franklin's planning processes seek to implement these goals, allocating resources in line with these priorities, and the strategic plan identifies time-frames for specific actions that will lead to the achievement of each strategic goal. MSCHE feedback in 2010 noted Franklin's flexibility in operations, enabling the University to respond promptly and efficiently to unanticipated or adverse conditions. At the same time, reviewers of our 2015 Periodic Review Report (PRR) recommended that planning be more fully integrated into our initial budget allocation process. Now that we have finalized a new strategic plan, with identified ownership for each goal and a progress time-frame, Franklin can be more strategic through intentional planning, while still remaining flexible and adaptive to situations that might surface in the next five years.

In the relatively short time since the 2018-2023 SP has been guiding our operations, two of Franklin's institutional priorities have spurred significant results in the area of institutional planning and resource allocation:

1. Implement Strategic Enrollment Management:

- Franklin invested resources into PowerFAIDS (2014-2015, an integrated financial aid database) and SLATE (2014-2015, an Admissions CRM), and also hired a Programmer Analyst (September 2015), whose profile and expertise will help Franklin regain ground and compete more effectively in Admissions and Financial Aid.
- Franklin implemented a discount for students who possess the Swiss Matura or Swiss high school diploma in 2016-2017 (later extended to EEU nationals) to increase recruitment of Swiss and European students.

2. Foster institutional sustainability and innovation:

- Franklin has added its signature Academic Travel program to its summer offerings, including travel and coursework in Morocco (CLCS), New Zealand (ENV and LIT), and Kenya (POL), thus providing short-term opportunities for experiential, onsite learning.
- Franklin created its first study abroad opportunity: the Zurich Program, a study abroad hub in the German part of Switzerland scheduled to launch in Fall 2020.
- Franklin hired a Dean of Executive Education and Global Outreach (Fall 2018), which will enable Franklin to partner with other institutions (initially in Switzerland and Asia) to offer innovative programming that produces new revenue streams.
- Franklin developed new partnerships with prestigious institutions, such as Emerson College in Boston ([4.1.11](#)). As quoted on the Emerson website: “Emerson has announced a new Global Bachelor of Arts degree program in International and Political Communication with Franklin University Switzerland, as part of its Global Portals initiative focused on intercontinental education, scholarship, and collaboration.” We have also partnered with the College of Charleston in South Carolina, and Chapman University in California. These programs increase visibility as well as opportunities for student exchange and new student enrollments.

Franklin’s Financial Health

References available in the evidence inventory ([6.7.1](#); [6.7.2](#); [6.7.3](#); [6.7.4](#); [6.7.5](#)).

One of Franklin’s significant challenges over the years has been achieving long-term financial stability. While we’ve seen a number of years with minimal surpluses, fiscal year 2018-2019 proved to be the most difficult; Franklin suffered a loss of over CHF 700,000 mainly due to a decline in FTE coupled with an increase in scholarships and discounts needed to retain or acquire students. FTE for academic year 2018-2019 fell to just below 300 from 325 in the

previous year, bringing Total Revenues down by CHF 1.7 million. Total scholarships and financial aid increased by CHF 150,000, reaching a total of CHF 4.8 million during 2018-2019 while FTE had decreased by 25 students. Also, as noted in Franklin's Statement of Financial Position, Restricted Net Assets increased by \$500,000 due to continued contributions, however a decline in Unrestricted Net Assets by nearly \$2.4 million resulted in Total Net Assets decreasing by nearly \$2 million.

Based on audited accounts, the US Department of Education (DOE) calculates an index based on the Financial Responsibility Test to verify whether an institution is on a financially healthy track. For fiscal year end June 30, 2015 Franklin's index fell below the pass zone at a score of 1.18. Therefore, Franklin obtained the required letter of credit to safeguard against financial difficulty. Since year end June 30, 2015 Franklin's indices have grown to over 1.6, which is within the pass zone range. Franklin also performs these calculations throughout the year based on budget and forecast results to monitor the financial health of the institution.

Along with the Financial Responsibility Test, improvements in Franklin's cash flow also indicate a trend of firmer policies in financial planning. As indicated by the graph of Average Month End Cash Balances spanning from 1997 to 2019, the past ten years have seen average cash balances over the CHF 4,000,000 mark (Figure 6.1). These factors demonstrate to the DOE that we are reaching our objectives with regards to a healthy cash flow. The decline noted in 2019 is in line with the losses incurred.

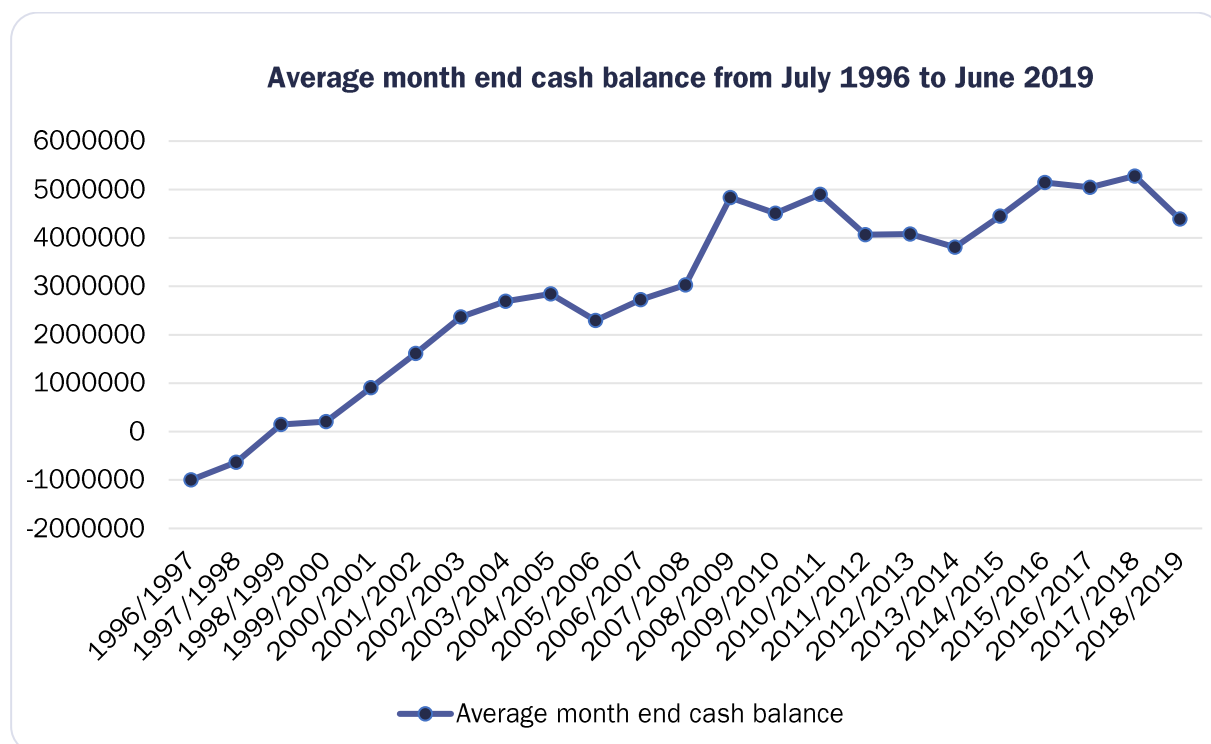


Figure 6.1: Average Month End Cash Balance from July 1996 to June 2019.

Along with the audit reports of independent audit firms, these calculations give a safe indicator of where the institution should be financially. Franklin's June 30, 2018 financial statements yielded an index of 1.6, which confirmed Franklin to be in an acceptable financial position. However, due to the financial loss in fiscal year 2018-2019 the index has fallen below 1.0. We have been in communication with the DOE and have recently submitted the required documentation ([6.8.1](#)). We anticipate needing to open another letter of credit, but await their decision due by early Spring.

Franklin also has external challenges, such as accounting and reporting requirements both on the Swiss statutory and US GAAP levels. Having the guidance and support of the audit firms and their resources has assisted administration through the years in understanding and adapting to such requirements.

Our most recent analysis of financial results – including financial statements, cash flow, receivables, fixed assets, net surplus comparison, gifts, and grants –shows that Franklin's recent set-back has had an impact on available resources, which makes increase in student enrollment, diversification of revenue streams, and successful advancement efforts critical priorities for the university. Tuition and fees remain the major component of Franklin's total revenues, consistently making up over 66% of total revenues on a ten year average (Figure 6.2). Franklin has been addressing various programs with external institutions to provide for additional revenue bases as well as new market demands (see [Chapter 3](#)).

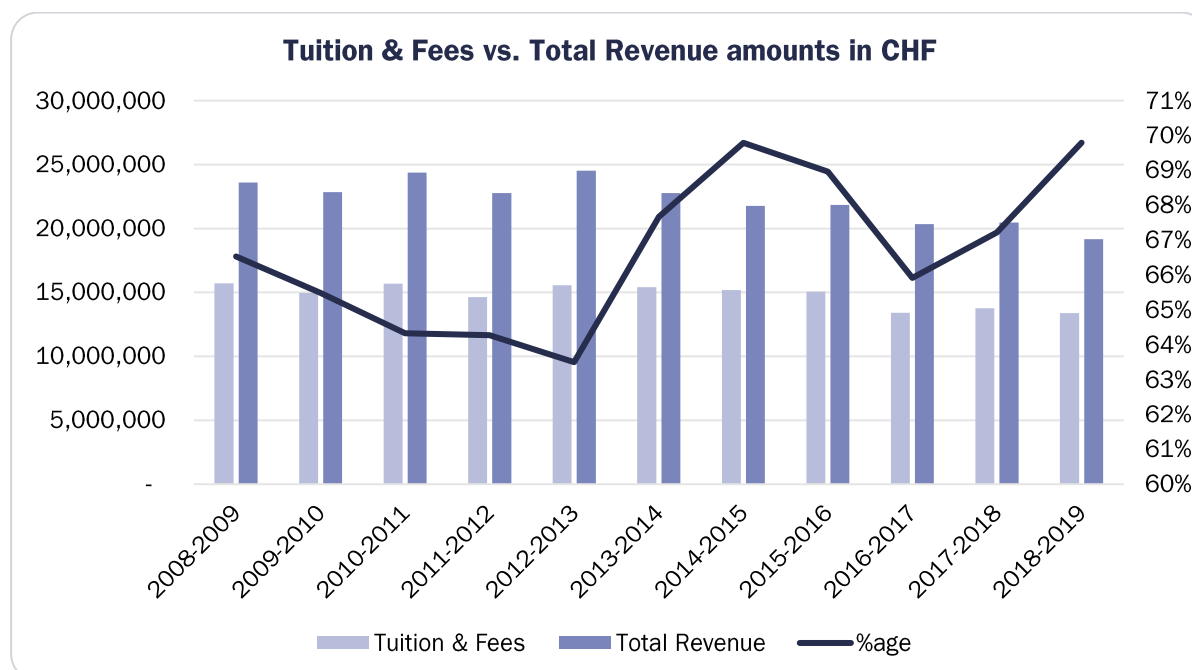


Figure 6.2: Tuition and Fees vs. Revenue Amounts in CHF.

Role of the Board of Trustees in Franklin's Financial Health

Final institutional authority at Franklin is vested in the Board of Trustees (BOT). The Board has fiduciary responsibility for the University; as articulated in its original by-laws, the BOT is engaged in “establishing and reviewing the educational programs of the University” and “authorizing tuition and fees,” as well as other responsibilities central to the overall functioning and visioning of the University ([6.5.1](#)).

Each year, Board members receive a copy of Vital Signs ([2.8.1](#)), which is a compendium of institutional research results. The President gives presentations to update the Board about the state of the University, and he gives year-end summaries at Board meetings held in February, May and November.

The BOT, in the course of their review of the bylaws and operational procedures, has recently (Fall 2017) implemented a best practice in board governance, splitting the Finance and Audit Committee into two separate committees: one to focus on the University's finances and long-range financial plans, and the other to focus more on risk management, internal and external audits, financial compliance and accounting, and reporting oversight.

Financial Planning and Budgeting

Since Franklin still remains heavily dependent upon tuition, financial stability continues to be at the core of both the day-to-day and long-term focus of the BOT and the Administration; these two governing bodies are in constant contact to monitor and evaluate the University's financial health in relation to the strategic plan.

Though financial planning in recent years has been affected by challenges in enrollment numbers, Franklin had been able to show a surplus, albeit modest, for each of the last five years (and 19 times over the last 20 years) through 2017-2018. We can attribute this result to substantial cuts in the budget, a shared fiscal discipline, effective negotiations with suppliers, and partnerships with other institutions.

The investments made for future growth, coupled with a decline in enrollment, contributed to the significant deficit Franklin experienced for FY 2018-2019. In fact, the addition of the Executive Education area as well as promotion of the revised MSIM program, but also the implementation of sizeable scholarships for EU citizens, are focused on retention and enrollment of students (EEU scholarships), on the consolidation of our offering at the master level, and on the creation of much needed additional revenue streams.

During 2019 we have invested significant time and resources in positioning FUS as a credible supplier of Executive Education and a reliable partner for employers. Using the MSIM as a program to attract global thought leaders, business leaders and executives to our University as guest speakers, associate professors, and seminar participants, has proved to be a winning strategy. We have established strong partnerships with the United Nations and Deloitte who are now hiring our graduate students for internships and jobs. We have hosted global leaders such as Paul Polman (ex CEO of Unilever) and Kate Raworth (author of Doughnut Economics) to run very successful seminars ([3.6.3](#)).

This new repositioning has allowed us to propose our University as a reliable partner for new Undergraduate and Graduate agreements with prestigious American universities. In particular, we are in the process of concluding partnerships with the Pratt Institute, the New School, SUNY Cobleskill, and NYLS (New York Law School) to start a new January term from 2021 that will offer a unique experience around Climate Action and the Sustainable Development Goals in collaboration with UNITAR, our consolidated partner in Switzerland. Beside the January term we have also agreed on promoting our full MSIM in Responsible Management for Climate Action to selected highly qualified students from these institutions and offer them endowed partial scholarships. This should translate into the recruitment of an additional five to ten students annually for our Master programs.

This new repositioning has also allowed us to attract university partners in Asia to plan and develop two new EMBA programs, one launching in Spring 2020 in Seoul in South Korea and one planned for Spring 2021 in Shenzhen in China. The delivery model allows us to leverage our intellectual property, keeping our costs slim, and generating net per student revenues of around \$4,000 per enrolled student. We aim to enroll fifteen students in 2020 and thirty-five students in 2021 between the two programs.

Finally, we have also been able to secure a prestigious partnership with Babson College in Boston to launch a Family Business MBA with a Babson module embedded that will be launched in Spring 2021. We aim to enroll an additional fifteen students for this program for the first cohort.

The budget numbers for FY 2019-2020 show a further decline in the number of FTE students (286 vs 300 last year), due to the last-minute shrinkage of the Study Abroad contingent and a significant increase of financial aid (+2M over last year's amount). However, through our advancement efforts, Franklin received a \$2,000,000 unrestricted donation, recurring as of FY 2019-2020 to provide relief to the budget, and especially to our scholarship challenges. This income helps the university avoid cuts that could damage operations, while giving depth to our

cash flow, allowing time necessary to work on the institution's infrastructure and priorities before the FY2020-2021 year.

Franklin is currently finalizing the budget for FY 2020-2021 and evaluating new strategies in Marketing and Financial Aid ([6.3.1](#)). As we aim to determine a reasonable and comfortable budget base, we analyze various scenarios to consider options and create as flexible a budget as possible. Consistently throughout the fiscal year, administration closely monitors projections and adjusts the budget in accordance with final FTEs after census in the Fall and Spring semesters. The renewal of the \$2,000,000 donation from the prior year will provide further strength to operations.

Along with Financial Aid, the most significant expenditure is salaries and related payroll costs. In analyzing the faculty and staff per student ratios the trend has been an overall decrease in the number of students to faculty and students to staff ratios ([6.4.2](#)). When working on budget streamlining, consideration is taken to preserve faculty and staff positions. There has not been any need as of yet for layoffs but there has been restructuring of positions and departments so as to not impact the budget negatively, especially when some positions become vacated. When there is a change in staff, consideration is given to staffing needs to fulfill increased regulatory requirements and increased needs for student support services.

The Budget and Priorities Committee convenes throughout the year. The members of the Committee see these meetings as a chance to bring to light, analyze, and prioritize ideas and input from the different constituencies (Faculty Assembly and Staff Meeting): the frequency and the depth of the conversations help Franklin formulate budget priorities to further Franklin's strategic plan.

Every year, in conjunction with the audit period, the Vice President for Finance and Administration revises and extends the five year business plan, the most recent version of which has been shared with the auditors and with our bank in October 2019.

Institutional Budget Process Guided by the Strategic Plan

Franklin's budgeting and planning processes provide for improvements on many fronts, such as academic programs, student services, facilities, and infrastructure. We budget investments taking into consideration academic and support needs as well as the strategic plan and mission. During all phases of the budget process, we consider immediate and long-term needs for resources as outlined in the strategic plan, as well as respecting the multi-cultural environment at Franklin as defined in its mission. Our current budget process sufficiently

addresses the needs of a university of this size by being simplified, having major expenditures that are fixed and stable, direct feedback to and from the Department Heads, and the flexibility of making adjustments periodically to ensure a healthy financial outcome. We assess significant expenditures carefully so as to accommodate future growth, especially in large investments.

Franklin's budget process is documented in Chapter 4 of the Staff Handbook ([6.3.2](#)). Franklin continues to follow a "zero-base budgeting" model in which departments propose all items for the next budget year, giving rationale and justifications. These budget proposals, along with course enrollment projections and other predictors of revenue in the coming year, are gathered by the Office of Finance and Administration, which begins to generate iterations of the budget to the President. Revenue parameters are established in agreement with the President and the Board and are based upon data from projections obtained from the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management ([6.3.3](#)).

Franklin instituted a simplified process during the 2005-2006 budget cycle, so as to avoid burdening the areas with a complex bureaucratic system. We document and issue budget guidelines during the month of October for the next fiscal year budget requests. Department Heads are then given a month to document, via simplified templates, standardized budget requests. Department Heads must also obtain approval of their final budget requests from supervisors prior to submission.

All budget requests are then submitted, evaluated, and inputted to prepare a first draft of the budget. Since the process is a simple one, administration can provide timely feedback to the department heads when discussing discrepancies. Significant requests are highlighted for discussion where there may be a deviance with Franklin's mission and/or the strategic plan. During the budget process, the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs is responsible for ascertaining that requests involving current and new academic programs justify financial resources that will directly benefit such programs and the institution.

Admissions and Enrollment Management looks to invest resources for expanding enrollment not just for the fiscal year under preparation, but on a long-term basis as well. Consideration is given to new markets as well as growth in all the steps of the admissions funnel. Likewise, Facilities Management ensures that financial resources requested and employed will benefit the institution on a long-term basis. For significant items, we encourage Department Heads to obtain several estimates from vendors in order to reasonably calculate costs. Historical accounts data for each individual area is generated after each fiscal audit and available for the individual departments in a folder accessible only to the Department Heads on the shared drive. Actual vs. Budget reports and detail transaction reports are generated monthly and available in

the respective folders on a shared drive throughout the fiscal year for the individual areas so that such data can be helpful in performing accurate calculations and estimates.

Based on the outcome of the first draft of the budget, when necessary, Department Heads are asked to re-evaluate certain expenses which appear to be excessive or unreasonable, or not in line with the University's mission and strategic plan. They may be asked to phase in certain projects over a number of fiscal years if the expenditure is beyond the means of the University in that particular fiscal budget. Department Heads seek solutions and discuss the possibility of reducing requested expenses with their staff so as to involve them in the planning and goals.

The budget is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at its spring meeting, though the budget is often needed to be refined further as enrollment projections and other factors become clear. The year-end process culminates with sign-off of the independent auditors, issuance of the annual report, and other required filings. While that completes the statutory requirements for closing the year, the fiscal results of operations continue to be reviewed and analyzed to provide input into the next budget and planning cycle, which is already underway.

Many of the major fixed costs of the University are foreseeable. Salaries are defined for the entire fiscal year. Mortgage interest and residence rents are set in contracts that span a number of years, reducing the risk of any unbudgeted increases. Costs involving Academic Travel for programs run on an annual basis are closely calculated and depend largely on the number of students on any particular trip. Challenges to our planning involve changes in pricing from vendors, unexpected travel costs prior to, or during, Academic Travel programs, and any significant investment costs that need to be revisited due to unforeseen circumstances.

Forecasts are updated monthly throughout the fiscal year to ensure that resources and spending are on track with budget decisions and Franklin's strategic goals. So far, Franklin has a track record of being able to make good decisions in difficult circumstances, thanks to the work of the many individuals who keep working on how best to respond to these challenges over time.

Audits

References available in the evidence inventory ([6.7.1](#); [6.7.2](#); [6.7.3](#); [6.7.4](#); [6.7.5](#)).

Franklin University undergoes several audits conducted by three outside independent audit firms. The audit of Franklin University Switzerland, Inc., the US based entity, is conducted by an independent CPA firm in New York, Funaro & Co. The Swiss statutory audit, as well as the operative standalone accounts and the combined audits, both in accordance with US GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles), are performed by KPMG Lugano in conjunction with

KPMG Zurich. The Independent Standard Compliance Attestation Report is conducted by Wheeler, Wolfenden and Dwares in Wilmington, Delaware. KPMG Lugano also issues a Comprehensive Report which addresses any internal control concerns.

Throughout the years, Franklin has fully cooperated with these auditing firms. Internal controls support a system where financial data is reliable and accurate; there have been no significant findings, nor adjustments to the accounting records, for a number of years. Only minor internal control issues have been noted in the Comprehensive Report, mainly regarding the lack of a fixed asset inventory directly linked to the accounting records. Currently, Franklin is working on a complete and comprehensive fixed asset inventory linked to the accounting records.

Regaining a Focus on Institutional Assessment

Franklin is committed to on-going, collaborative, and evidence-based planning and evaluation processes that result in measurable improvements. In order to ensure institutional effectiveness, Franklin engages in:

- Strategic planning, with bi-annual updates provided to President and Board of Trustees (see [Chapter 1](#)).
- Budget review and resource allocation, throughout the year.
- Annual administrative reviews (with an informal mid-cycle review).
- Annual Faculty reviews (see [Chapter 3](#)).
- Comprehensive educational effectiveness assessment (See [Chapters 3](#) and [5](#)).
- Annual review of compliance with US and Swiss regulations / requirements.
- Annual Departmental Plans or Departmental Assessment Plans (DAPs).
- Periodic (three year) review and update of the Staff Handbook.
- Periodic (one year) review and update of the Student Handbook.
- Annual issuance of the Vital Signs Fact Book.
- Annual audits, including one on Internal Controls and Risk Assessment.
- Submission of 5-year business plans to auditors and banks, annually revised/updated.

Franklin is in the midst of recovering from a lack of staffing in the area of Institutional Assessment. In 2012 our then Coordinator of Institutional Assessment resigned, with no assisting staff to pick up where he had left off. This position remained unfilled for several years, which meant that during this time, even though data was being collected by the Academic Affairs

Analyst, we had little coordination of assessment at the institutional level. The Student Learning Outcomes Committee (SLOAC) focuses on student learning assessment (see also [Chapter 5: Assessment](#)), but we still needed a correlative focus on broader institutional assessment practices. In 2015, the Director of the Library returned from a leave of absence and agreed to take on the additional task of institutional assessment; the title of this position is now The Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment.

This development has not only made it possible to prioritize institutional assessment, it has also given our assessment practices a more defined and visible profile within the university community. The Dean promotes the adoption of assessment techniques to inform decision-making by both academic and non-academic departments, primarily through encouraging the analysis and utilization of the annual Ruffalo-Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), and the development of departmental plans or Departmental Assessment Plans (DAPs).

Tools for Institutional Assessment

Franklin believes a strong culture of institutional renewal must necessarily be based on committed leadership, shared understandings among all units, clear communications, and opportunities to participate from conception to completion. We use the following tools to accomplish those goals.

College Employee Satisfaction Survey

In Fall 2018, Franklin conducted for the first time the College Employee Satisfaction Survey for faculty and staff. This survey (conducted by Ruffalo Noel Levitz) garnered a participation rate near 80% (also facilitated by the translation into Italian of the entire survey by the Office of Finance and Administration). The results have been compiled into a spreadsheet ([6.2.1](#)) that is available to all employees via Moodle, and a presentation on the results and how to interpret the spreadsheet was given at the February 2019 staff meeting ([6.2.2](#)). At the same staff meeting, the employees voted on how to address the results as the next step, using a community consultation method called “Open Space Technology.” While overall we saw positive results, Franklin needs to invest more resources to foster shared understanding across the university ([6.2.3](#)). In his “State of the University” address on September 4th, 2019 President Warden informed faculty and staff that the Cabinet is working on the next steps, preparing a response, and organizing further conversations with staff and faculty.

Roundtables

Franklin’s president conducts annual Roundtables to solicit input on employee satisfaction across the university. Several initiatives emerged from these meetings, many of which were

implemented shortly thereafter. For example, after the 2015 roundtable, Franklin increased funds to the staff development fund, created the possibility of flexible workdays, and revised the family leave policy.

Departmental Assessment Plans (DAPs), Annual Reports, and Departmental Plans

Similar to the CAPs and MAPs described in Chapter 5, the Departmental Assessment Plan (DAP) is an assessment conducted at the departmental level. Most recently, departments have been preparing Annual Reports or Departmental Plans that closely align activity with the Institutional Priorities of the strategic plan. (See the Evidence Inventory for the most recent DAPs and Annual Departmental Plans [\(6.9.5\)](#)).

Vital Signs Fact Book

The Vital Signs Fact Book [\(2.8.1\)](#) compiles data from many sources into a single document for easy distribution of important data points. It is usually over 100 pages long, and is updated annually in May. The President, the Board of Trustees, and the President's extended Cabinet all have access to Vital Signs.

Assessing the Utilization of Institutional Resources

Franklin uses a wide range of strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of the institutional resources required to support its mission and goals. In addition to the DAPs produced by some non-teaching departments, Franklin organizes several occasions for assessing the efficient utilization of institutional resources. These efforts are community-wide (annual Ruffalo Noel Levitz SSI), leadership-based (monthly review of departmental/area statements), team/committee-wide (an annual Administrative Retreat of the Cabinet to review the fiscal year just closed), and on an individual basis (annual Performance Evaluation process, with an informal review at mid-cycle in January).

Emergent situations sometimes make us aware that we could do a better job in some areas; at that point, a discussion takes place at the Cabinet level after which responsibilities are assigned and individuals/teams charged to come back with proposals or ideas to be discussed before a final position is taken.

Franklin has assessed and documented students' experiences with institutional resources through the Student Satisfactory Inventory (SSI) since 2005 (see also Chapters 3, 4, and 5). This survey allows Franklin to assess the level of self-reported student satisfaction with our physical and technical infrastructures by using questions such as: "The physical and technical infrastructure is adequate to support institutional operations wherever and however programs

are delivered.” Analyzing the SSI since 2015 ([6.8.1](#)), we can see how we have assessed Franklin’s commitment to students with disabilities; campus safety; intramural activities; computer labs; and the student center, among other topics related to the institutional resources. Responses indicate that our physical and technical infrastructures have improved significantly from the student perspective.

Franklin has taken significant actions in response to these assessments, such as the hire of a Coordinator of Recreational Sports, technological updates in the Computer Labs, replacement of the cameras monitoring the Kaletsch Campus parking lot, and the plans for a full-fledged Student Center in the construction project about to begin. (See [“Facilities Master Plan”](#) later in this chapter.) We also recently installed solar panels on top of the New Residences. These solar panels, for which the Senior Class of 2018 donated CHF 6,200, are the result of a contract negotiated with the local energy supplier. This sustainable approach to renewable energy comes at no cost to Franklin thanks to a 20-year leasing of the infrastructure which will produce circa 45.6 kWp per year (to cover 29% of the total annual consumption of electricity in the New Residences).

Enrollment and Marketing Assessment and Initiatives

Enrollment Management and Marketing—an office created in 2017, headed by a Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing—responds in part to 2010 MSCHE feedback, where the team noted that “a thorough enrollment management plan with key strategies for the recruitment of prospective students with an eye toward the numerous perspectives that target populations of students would be valuable.” In the area of Enrollment Management and Marketing, reviewers recommended specific areas in need of assessment, specifically:

- Increase student enrollment.
- Diversify sources of income.
- Increase operational efficiency.
- Raise university visibility through marketing.

The new department merged what were previously two separate offices, Admissions and Marketing, and aimed to provide a comprehensive approach to enrollment management. In July 2019, following the departure of Franklin’s VP of Enrollment Management and Marketing, Franklin decided to implement a new organizational framework based on the synergies of two distinct departments: Enrollment Management ([6.5.2](#)) and Marketing ([6.5.3](#)). Thus, the position of VP of Enrollment Management and Marketing has been discontinued and will not be filled.

This team has considerably revitalized our student recruitment and admissions activities over the last several years. However, one aspect that has not changed over the years is our dedicated Admissions team, now eight staff members in total (including the Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Management and the Director of Financial Aid: seven full-time and two part-time members), located both in Switzerland and in various places in the US. They spend countless hours traveling the world to college fairs and other venues dedicated to higher education. They also participate in key higher education conferences such as IACAC (International Association for College Admission Counseling), NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling), NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Advisers), EAIE (European Association for International Education), CIS (Council of International Schools) Global Admissions Forums, and post-secondary admissions institutes as speakers and panelists.

The Admissions team also organize events on campus to bring prospective students, families, guidance counselors, and independent educational advisors from all over the world to Franklin. A typical Admissions day on campus generally includes visiting a class, a campus tour with peer ambassadors, meeting with admissions officers, having lunch with students and/or faculty, and participation in any other campus event. Off-campus events include but are not limited to Information Sessions, admitted student receptions with alumni and parents, school counselor brunches, and receptions for guidance counselors held during conferences. The Admissions team has recently implemented a highly interactive online chat allowing group chats with prospective students on www.fus.edu as well as Unibuddy chat, allowing prospects to interact with current students in several majors and from different backgrounds.

Major student-support improvements within the new organizational structure include:

- Move to applications through the CommonApp.
- Subscription to SLATE Admissions platform with links from the Franklin website for more effective admission outreach and management.
- Redesign of the website with more clarity and transparency for viewers about admission requirements, tuition and fees, academic programs, and financial aid.
- Inclusion of new features on the website such as video stories of current students.

The Reviewers' Report responding to our 2015 PRR also recommended that Franklin assess the effectiveness of the university's enrollment initiatives. Internally, Franklin is leveraging the data available in our admissions Student Relationship Manager (SRM), SLATE, which currently has three years of applicant records. During his tenure, the VP for Enrollment Management & Marketing extracted from these a variety of reports, including:

- Multiyear comparisons of inquiries over time
- Multiyear comparisons of applicants over time
- Multiyear comparisons of enrollees over time
- Effectiveness of purchased lists
- Specific marketing efforts and their effectiveness

Franklin measures performance against time-based goals and then makes adjustments to address any weaknesses. For example, the 2018 year-over-year report showed that the number of prospects was too low to support the university's enrollment goal, and this data led to an informed decision to purchase more names of prospective students for marketing outreach.

Other data gathering and assessment efforts help Franklin allocate admission counselor and IT resources, design recruitment strategies, plan staff training, and identify areas for improvement. Decisions based on this data analysis have already led to changes in marketing and financial aid. For example, an assessment of the university's website performance found that we saw a significant drop in visitors in 2016. A review of historical and current data determined that in certain countries and sub regions, the university was effectively invisible to search engines. With the help of an outside vendor, the marketing team was able to implement a search engine optimization strategy to reverse the situation, and establish a system of consistent reassessment and adjustment to maintain the website's visibility ([6.9.2](#)).

An annual average of nearly CHF 300,000 is budgeted and expended on all marketing related initiatives (Figure 6.3). Although it is a modest budget, planning involves the best use of Franklin's website and the many resources available in the US and foreign markets.

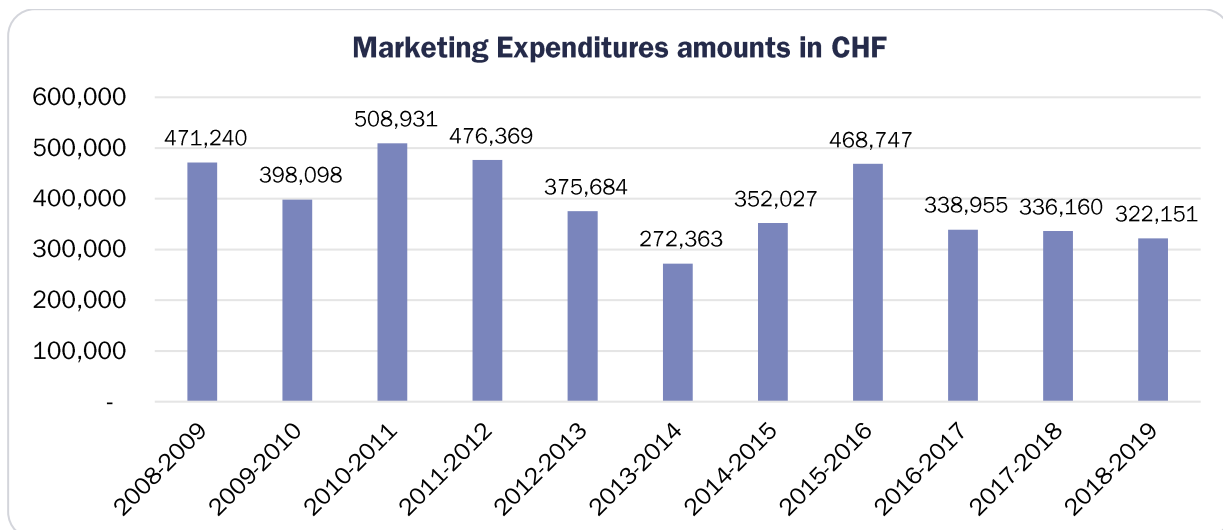


Figure 6.3: Marketing Expenditures (2008-2019).

Financial Aid

Franklin's financial aid policy has changed frequently over the past six years, going from awarding specific amounts based on grades and/or income to percentage-based awards driven mainly by GPA. Moving forward, we would like to combine the best of these various awarding methods by using academic performance to award merit but using EFC and differing percentages of need when awarding need-based aid.

Following the launch of the special EU/EEA tuition discount initiative launched in January 2019, we have seen that the number of enrolled students from this region has doubled from 2017. This tuition discount makes Franklin more competitive in the European student market, helping the institution become more accessible to students from Switzerland as well as neighboring countries, where we have intensified our student recruitment efforts.

The EU / EEA discount amounts to CHF 24,100, resulting in a discount rate of approximately 50%.

Maximum total combined award (need-based and merit-based) is currently set at US tuition = \$40,000 / CH tuition = CHF 45,000. Franklin's Financial Aid policy contemplates leaving discretionary funds in reserve to allow for some deviations based on conversations with families as well as financial documentation.

General guidelines for merit awards (based on academic performance: i.e. final GPA and results obtained throughout high school / college if applicable, rigor of academic curriculum and test scores when available). Merit-award amounts recommended as per the guidelines below are discussed during Admissions Committee reviews.

High School GPA	Merit Awards Amount \$	Merit Awards Amount CHF
3.8-4.0	\$ 22,000.00	24,500.00 CHF
3.5-3.79	\$ 18,000.00	22,500.00 CHF
3.4-3.49	\$ 16,000.00	20,500.00 CHF
3.0-3.39	\$ 12,000.00	18,500.00 CHF

Table 6.1: Recommended merit-award amounts.

Discretionary leadership awards based on the students' leadership skills (extra-curricular activities, evidence of community projects, teamwork, interpersonal skills, and exceptional motivation) are also available (up to \$5,000).

Franklin also grants merit-awards to transfer students, abiding by the same parameters used for our regular freshmen BA students. These generous merit awards for transfer students who complete their degree in two years on average make the institution more competitive locally and also in the US, where many institutions offer lower amounts to this student population. We are working closely with community colleges in key markets to promote this initiative, among others aimed at increasing our transfer student population.

Students applying for admission by Franklin's early application/priority deadline (December 1st) are also eligible to participate in our Honors Program Scholarship event, held every year in February. Selected students are invited to campus and have the opportunity to be interviewed by the Director of the Honors Program and the honors society students. Every year Franklin selects two recipients of the Honors Program Grant, amounting to an additional CHF 5'000 (on top of their need and merit based award granted at the time they are admitted (mid-December). Every year, approximately 60% of the students who participate in the Honors Program Scholarship event, held over two days on campus, decide to enroll, indicating that this event as well as the additional grant are an effective yielding tool.

Financial Aid Effectiveness Assessment

With the help of an outside vendor (Ruffalo Noel Levitz), the university was able to assess the effectiveness of past financial aid expenditures and evaluate the applicant pool on a range of metrics to build a model to use when allocating awards. As a result of this 2018 analysis, Franklin has modified its financial aid awarding methodology ([6.9.3](#)). The new approach initiated in Fall 2017 by Franklin's VP for Enrollment Management and Marketing has now been tested, assessed, and deemed sub-optimal for a school of Franklin's size. As a consequence, Franklin decided to adopt a model developed internally (with the continued awarding of generous merit-

based scholarships, as well as need-based financial aid), allocating the resources initially assigned to external consultants (Ruffalo Noel Levitz) to additional recruitment and off-campus outreach efforts, as well as yielding activities, with the goal of increasing the number of enrolled students and improving aggregate net revenue.

The Office of Admissions also uses an in-house survey of admitted applicants who did not enroll to determine the causes of the yield rate. This data has identified the cost of attendance and the scholarships and other aid that is offered as the main reason for applicants choosing a different institution ([6.8.2](#)), and this has informed decisions about how to allocate resources (more financial aid, new EU/EEA tuition discount and the implementation of leadership awards).

The survey conducted with students who declined our offer of admission for Fall 2019 indicated that 37.8% of students considered their financial aid award inadequate, and this was an extremely important factor in their decision not to join Franklin; the fact that they received a better financial aid package from another institution was an extremely important factor for approximately 25% of the respondents. In addition to requesting even more opportunities for interaction with faculty and current students, financial aid is consistently identified as one of the key factors affecting enrollment yield. 37% of the respondents indicated that they would have appreciated to receive their financial aid award earlier in the process. This was a crucial factor in previous years as well, resulting in the decision to start communicating financial aid decisions shortly after the annual Board of Trustees meeting taking place in November during which tuition fees are discussed and changes approved.

This survey (conducted since 2017) also shows the list of institutions where respondents decide to enroll. Despite not showing a consistent pattern over the years, we can observe that certain type of institutions belonging to the American Universities Abroad network are usually the choice for students looking for a comparable liberal arts model in Europe. Institutions like the American University of Paris, Richmond – the American University of London and John Cabot in Rome are consistently mentioned by students who decide not to enroll, either in our survey or through conversations with the Admissions team. Many of our admitted students (particularly those applying for the Honors Program Scholarship Event) also receive offers at highly ranked liberal arts colleges in the U.S and decide to enroll at those intuitions, a decision which in many cases is also influenced by the distance factor and students wanting to stay closer to home.

Communicating Assessment and Resource Allocation

Franklin has been making stronger efforts to communicate assessment results within the campus community. The President communicated assessment results at the annual faculty/staff meeting in September 2018.

In developing our new SP, Franklin incorporated relevant assessment results while also gathering input from all sectors of the Franklin community. For example, a report on Information Technology Strategic Initiatives (2017 – 2018) is incorporated very clearly into the SP ([6.6.1](#)). Both faculty and staff representatives were involved in the steering committee and working groups, and students also had an opportunity to discuss the SP at the town hall meeting in December 2017.

Human Resources

Individuals and teams are the foundation of Franklin's success. We use effective hiring practices to employ staff dedicated to Franklin's mission, and we strive to create working conditions that support optimal performance. Despite a decline in student enrollment numbers of the last six years, Franklin has not had to deploy layoffs motivated by financial constraints; a close look at statistics included in Vital Signs statistics will confirm that, despite the loss of students, the number of employees has remained essentially the same.

Making Franklin a good place to work is an ongoing effort: we put into place strong policies and procedures necessary to ensure a safe, organized, and non-discriminatory workplace. The Administration plays a key role in maintaining the highest standards of consistency, working as a team towards common goals, a shared sense of identity, and a respect for different roles/responsibilities. Franklin prioritizes a safe, sustainable, and nondiscriminatory work environment for all members of the community.

Recent Changes in Administrative Structures

In the last few years—as the result of strong pressures stemming from budgeting and internal assessment—Franklin has implemented several changes to optimize our administrative structures:

- Re-organization of the Office of Student Life (see also [Chapter 4](#)).
- Re-design of our graduate program's (MSIM) administrative structure (moved under the umbrella of Academic Affairs) to more efficiently respond to the needs of our prospective students.

- Creation of the Enrollment Management & Marketing Department (inclusive of Communications, Public Relations, Financial Aid, Admissions and Marketing) and subsequent re-assessment (elimination of the Communications and Public Relations components in favor of a more Marketing-oriented approach).
- Implementation of a formal onboarding protocol to welcome new employees.

Responsibilities and Assessment of Performance

Franklin documents clear job descriptions and responsibilities for each position held at the University ([6.5.4](#)). As part of the hiring process, candidates receive these job descriptions and reporting obligations to ensure clear understanding of the responsibilities prior to signing a contract. The Staff Handbook is periodically updated (with the input of both the President's Cabinet and of the Staff at large) and shared with all Staff on an accessible drive for easy reference.

Annual Staff reviews take place at the end of the fiscal year, during the month of June. In this open process, evaluation forms are sent to each employee; the department head reviews the responses and reflects with the employee on the accomplishments of the past year and may review some areas where improvement can be made. Once the face-to-face (or SKYPE for those working in the States) meeting is completed, the evaluations are signed and submitted to the Vice President for Finance and Administration as well as to the President.

The evaluation form itself takes advantage of several conversations at Cabinet level and input from Staff members over the last few years, showing an intentional focus on opportunities for professional development (suggested or recommended by either the Staff member or the supervisor). All these elements, along with the elimination of ratings in 2015, aim at making the annual review a more engaging, developmental, and forward-looking process. In 2018, Franklin included the mission on the form itself, a dedicated field aimed at linking performance to Franklin's core values and goals ([6.8.3](#)). Supervisors are asked to highlight the importance of the mission when meeting with their employees.

As per standard and best practice, Franklin also holds mid-year performance assessments during the month of January. The goal is to reflect on the work/projects of the prior year, to proactively identify any issues, assess progress towards our goals for the year, and ensure that we are working effectively within the designated timeframe.

Staff Committees

The Administrative Committee of the Pension Fund/Occupational Pension Scheme is made up of an equal number of elected employer and employee representatives. This committee is responsible for looking after the interests of the pension fund and members from an administrative perspective. In 2017, the Committee and the institution's brokerage firm negotiated a new pension fund contract (2018-2022) after gathering, reviewing, and evaluating offers from four pension fund providers.

The new contract contains significant improvements, such as increased risk coverage, the cost of which has been taken over by Franklin. The actual percentage of cost sharing will be 61% covered by the institution and 39% by the employee (vs the previous 60/40 split). Swiss Life was invited to campus in November 2017 to provide individual consultation to staff and faculty.

The Faculty Personnel Committee reviews candidates for appointment, re-appointment, and promotion, as well as reviewing Faculty Development Funds, the salary scale, and the faculty evaluation process. Meetings are held on a regular basis (weekly or bi-weekly) and minutes are posted on a shared drive for consultation by the faculty.

Franklin also appointed an Ombudsperson in 2016 to serve as a designated neutral party to provide assistance in the handling of conflicts between employees.

Challenges to Administrative Staffing

Due to limited resources, several areas of Franklin administration are not optimally staffed. Human Resources management can be particularly challenging for Franklin, given that we have employees both in Switzerland and in the United States, and therefore are required to comply with nuanced employment regulations in both countries. Also, as most Franklin employees are not Swiss, employee visas and work requirements require additional resources and attention. Currently the Vice President for Finance and Administration oversees human resources policy, maintains the staff handbook (2.9.1), executes hiring contracts, works through grievance issues, and covers other human resources tasks. Franklin does not yet have an administrator in place whose sole role is managing human resources due to several factors, including increasingly complicated permit/hiring processes. Feedback from staff and faculty suggests that we should continue to look into the possibility of hiring in the area of human resources management.

Other key areas—such as information technology, marketing, student financial aid, and campus security—are either lacking needed personnel or need to use remote employees to provide

these services. For example, the Director of Financial Aid lives in the US so she can interface more easily with the US-based student population who are eligible for US financial aid. Likewise, a long-term contract employee provides the bulk of our web marketing and has done so for years. He works closely with the Director of Marketing here on campus and, like the Director of Financial Aid, travels to Lugano several times a year. This hybrid model has proven quite effective.

Three full-time employees staff the Information Technology area for both students and staff. On a daily basis, this arrangement works well, and students, faculty, and staff benefit from close and personal attention to their needs. Nonetheless, because some critical duties are performed by a single employee with no trained backup, the institution remains vulnerable should a key employee leave or fall ill. Additionally, as students' computer needs increase, they have increasing expectations for better technology services, which the University may not be able to provide and maintain with current staffing levels.

Salaries

As with most universities, Franklin suffered from declining enrollment numbers following the financial crisis of 2008. Being primarily tuition dependent, this led to a decline in income, which in turn led to a long period during which salaries were frozen. Some relief arose when the generosity of one of our trustees, and former Chairman of the Board, enabled the payment of bonuses in 2017 and 2018. This was subsequently followed by the allocation of a 2% increase for staff in August 2018, and the implementation of a faculty salary scale. The Strategic Plan 2018-2023 has identified the creation of a “structured, merit-based system that would allow a periodical recalibration of the salary levels (thereby ensuring flexibility, salary competitiveness, performance reward and career development) in combination with intermediate increases for selected milestones for seniority of service” as one of the important goals of the institutional priority “Foster institutional sustainability and innovation.”

Results from the recent *College Employee Satisfaction Survey* indicate relative dissatisfaction (compared to other institutions that have participated in the survey) about the fairness of salary levels. Employees also gave a relatively low score in response to the statement “The employee benefits available to me are valuable” ([6.2.1](#)). It may be appropriate to review employment terms, conditions, and benefits to establish that we are matching those available at comparable institutions and highlight the range of benefits we provide.

Facilities

As described in the Introduction to this report, Franklin is located in Sorengo, Switzerland, approximately three kilometers north of the center of Lugano. The University has two campuses: Kaletsch Campus and North Campus, both located on the same main road, via Ponte Tresa, and is contained on a total of 25,000 square meters located on a hillside. While addressing the many technical needs of maintaining a campus such as ours, Franklin also strives to maintain an environment in harmony with the beautiful surroundings of the region and its architectural heritage ([6.6.2](#)).

Franklin currently has an FTE of about 300 students, a total faculty count of 47, and employs approximately 59 staff and administrators on campus. The average classroom size is 15. We maintain eight student residences, all within easy walking distance of both campuses.

Kaletsch Campus consists of six classrooms, faculty offices, administrative offices, a Conference Room, an Auditorium, a Library, a Computer Lab, and an Art Studio. This campus is bordered by a protected wooded area with a natural water stream and vegetation. The main villa is a 100+ year old building which was extended in the second half of the 20th century. This campus also includes the Grotto dining facilities, and the Panera residence apartments.

North Campus consists of five classrooms, a science lab, faculty offices, administrative offices, a Conference Room, the Fowler Learning Commons (Library and Writing & Learning Center), the Graphic Design Lab, an Electronic Classroom, the Athletic Center, and the Dining Hall. This campus is composed of the original Villa built in the early part of the 20th century, an academic building housing classrooms and offices built in the middle of the 1980's (expanded in 2005), and the Leonardo da Vinci residence hall built in the middle of the 1980's.

The Panera residence apartments are located adjacent to Kaletsch Campus, while the Leonardo da Vinci residence hall is adjacent to the North Campus. A new residence hall was recently constructed in 2009 and one in 2010 located across the street from Kaletsch Campus. The remainder of the residence halls are all within walking distance.

The Role of the Physical Plant

The mission of Franklin's Physical Plant is to guarantee a service of continuous maintenance, security, and the preservation of the integrity and value of the campus and its surroundings. The Physical Plant strives to provide support and services taking into consideration the following aspects:

- Maintain consistency in the planning and execution of maintenance, as well as consistency in maintaining a signature aesthetics throughout the campus.
- Balance and strive for an optimal use of campus facilities.
- Obtain and upgrade tools and equipment in order to meet the needs of the institution.
- Perform effective maintenance services to avoid repeated repairs, and seek long-term solutions.
- Ensure a safe environment for the faculty, staff and students, as well as security of the institution's assets.

Given the relatively good state of our buildings—most of which were built in the last forty years—as well as the limited numbers of facilities, each annual budget cycle allows for deferred maintenance priorities to be addressed in the following year, but also enables Franklin to intervene, either directly or through landlords, in case of extraordinary maintenance issues.

Safety

(see also [Chapter 4: “Support of the Student Experience”](#)).

In recent years, Franklin has made various investments to enhance the safety of the community, such as improvements to external lighting along walkways, illuminated fire escape signs, emergency exit doors, indoor and outdoor surveillance cameras, and the installation of fire detection and alarm systems. (See also the Franklin web page on security ([2.2.4](#)). These investments come, at least in part, out of an assessment completed by a designated safety and security task force ([6.9.4](#)).

Road safety between the two campuses and the residences is adequate, considering that both campuses are located on a high traffic road. Most residences are reachable by crossing at the most two roads, otherwise students and staff can use sidewalks. When Franklin acquired the North Campus in 2004, we created a footpath between the campus and two of the residences to facilitate pedestrian safety.

Fire detection alarm systems are installed in the Kaletsch Campus Villa, the North Campus Villa, academic building and cafeteria, as well as in the Leonardo da Vinci, Airone, Alba, New A, and New B residence halls. Between 2010 and 2012, Franklin finalized evacuation plans for all of the residence halls and for both campuses. More recently, in Spring 2018 we held fire drills on both campuses, extending such drills to the residence halls in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, but also making these drills a cyclical task to be performed each semester.

Franklin also complies with applicable environmental protection and quality standards. We have various maintenance service contracts with heating specialists for annual checkups of the systems in order to verify compliance in accordance with pollution control criteria.

See also [Chapter 4: “Safety and Security”](#) for a discussion of how we ensure student safety and security on campus.

The Role of Information Technology Services (ITS)

The Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) serves as a functional backbone supporting Franklin’s mission. Technology pervades nearly every aspect of Franklin life: from instructional classroom learning and office administration, to student communication with far-flung friends and family. Franklin strives to ensure we evolve alongside emerging technologies, while aligning any technological improvements to the SP. The department’s mission statement—“Provide, facilitate, and maintain uninterrupted, simplified, and reliable access to cost-efficient IT resources for the University’s administrative and academic employees, students, and guests”—acts as a guide to ensure that each improvement or innovation begins with the identification of a need or deficiency, and is then concluded with an assessment of results.

ITS always strives to deliver on the promises implied in the mission statement, remaining agile enough to adapt to changes brought forth by driving factors in the Franklin environment. These are the factors essentially responsible for instigating changes in the technologies used across all areas of the university:

- Classroom instructional technology.
- Tools for academic research.
- Helpdesk and Assistance.
- Administrative Applications.
- Information and Network Security.
- Support Infrastructure.
- Industry or provider trends.

In its decision-making processes, ITS solicits input from the community via information sharing at staff meetings, direct recruitment of main contributors, satisfaction surveys, and other input-gathering forms disseminated via web forms. Also, as the ITS staff become more acquainted with new and improved technologies, they bring stakeholders and relevant parties on board for in-depth exploration and eventual trial of new technology. For example, by working in close alignment with the faculty computing committee, ITS obtains input and requests for

enhancements throughout the academic year, but particularly around budget requisition deadlines.

In alignment with Franklin's procedures, ITS seeks to maximize returns on investments by making planned upgrades to hardware and software. On occasion, more effective tools become available—either through changes of terms, a reduction in price, multi-year agreements, or cloud subscriptions. ITS strives to implement these changes within the means of the University, without compromising the department's or Franklin's mission.

Future Growth and Expansion

To fully accomplish its mission, Franklin needs to expand the campus to support the specific strategic goal of increasing student numbers to 350 students. For this reason, Franklin has been planning the construction of a third building on plots 87-642-643-644-645 in Sorengo, plots that were partially developed between 2008 and 2010.

This transformative and ambitious new chapter for Franklin and in our community will create a facility that not only fulfills our current needs, but also provides much-needed spaces that support student life and learning, thus enhancing our campus in order to fully uphold the University's mission well into the future ([6.6.3](#)).

An anonymous donor has invested \$4 million in this project: this gift is the largest single gift in the school's history. It will enable us to move forward to complete our campus and to successfully advance our capital campaign, whose goal is to raise \$8 million. At the time of this report, over \$5.5 million has been raised to that end.

The project (Phase 3) has been approved by Franklin's Board of Trustees as well as by the Comune of Sorengo. It combines two architectural blocks that will have different functions, creating independent but interconnected spaces. The façade of the building evokes the fore edge of a book, thus symbolizing education and learning. The main block will provide four floors of residences that can accommodate 69 students; below it will be the evocative, sinuous ground floor that includes a student center and office spaces. There will also be two levels of underground parking. The adjoining oval building (the "tower") will include classroom spaces and a fitness center.

With a start date of end May 2019, the completion of this project will offer Franklin students a dynamic destination, and the new state-of-the-art building is scheduled to open in the fall of 2021.

Cost and Financing

According to one of the most reputable and expert Swiss consulting firms in the sector, the Real Value for all properties Franklin owns, as of 2018-2019, is roughly estimated at approx. CHF 56,000,000. Even using very conservative parameters, the indicative Market Value is roughly estimated at approx. CHF 45,800,000, which would grow to approx. CHF 67,000,000 as soon as the new building is completed.

Of this amount, the indicative Market Value for the complex built on plots 87-642-643-644-645 would be approx. CHF 34,000,000. Based on the above-mentioned assets, the investment in Phase 3 provides the sound completion of a long-outstanding self-investment (our own buildings are the ones generating the most revenues). The bank has been in close contact over the years and has reiterated (and approved) the financing of Phase 3 under quite favorable conditions for Franklin.

During the past years, the net fixed assets to debt ratio has decreased due to a slower investment in fixed assets, although the positive side is that debt has consistently been reduced thanks to debt repayment in accordance to the mortgage contracts with the bank (Figure 6.4). Depreciation has been greater than the growth on investments in fixed assets, mainly due to budget constraints as well as planning for future capital investments such as the upcoming building project.

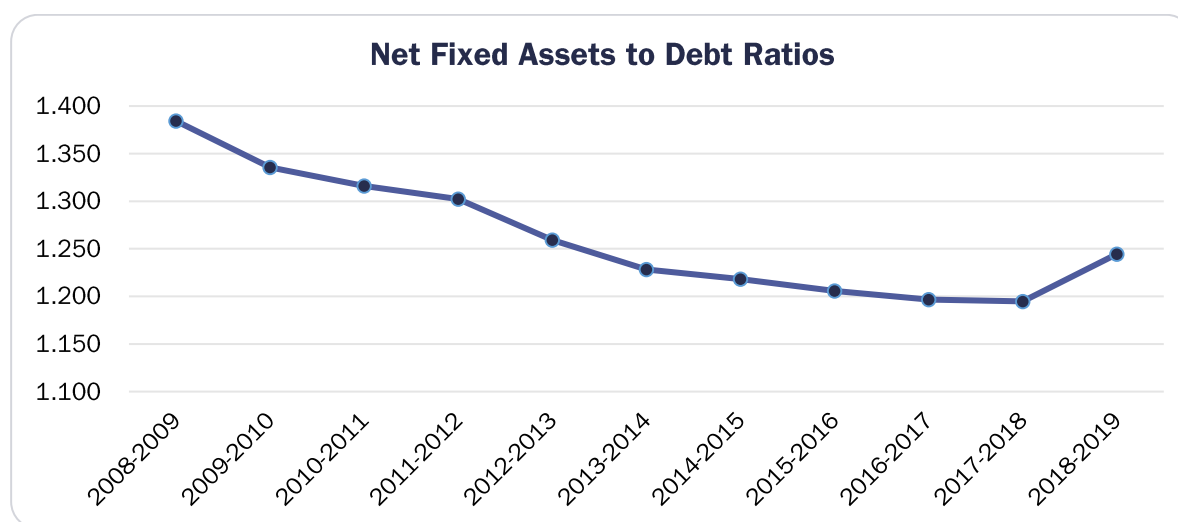


Figure 6.4: Net Fixed Assets to Debt Ratios (2008-2019).

The Draft Facilities Master Plan

Franklin's draft Facilities Master Plan—the first of its kind at Franklin—was created collaboratively by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Director of Physical Plant ([6.6.4](#)). This document reflects the priorities and collective considerations based on the

assessed needs of the staff, faculty, and students. Franklin performed a comprehensive analysis of current facilities and synthesized the needs and desires of the various campus constituencies. Its strategic goals are:

- Create a setting which reflects campus priorities while maintaining the esthetics of the campus in accordance with its surroundings.
- Maintain a campus which optimizes its functional space achieved by analyzing space that is both over and under-utilized, making the campus a well-organized and accessible one.
- Look to accommodate growth in a manner that reinforces institutional values.
- Achieve a student friendly environment that instills pride.
- Achieve a sense of community within the campus, the surrounding area and the region.
- Define the extent, quality and potential of our current instructional, study, recreational and residential facilities by identifying opportunities to enhance, maintain, or improve the built environment in a way that facilitates learning and student development, wellness, accessibility, as well as working conditions.
- Provide guidelines for future campus improvements and developments that support the University's academic mission and the institution's aesthetic.
- Identify and prioritize future project requests for capital funding (including built-in funding to keep deferred maintenance at a minimum).
- Allow optimal use of campus facilities and resources in accommodating growth in enrollment and in university programs.
- Develop sustainable and environment-friendly practices (recycling, energy efficiency, health, etc.).
- Address campus safety, including issues of access and circulation.

The entire community has been involved in the process of collecting ideas, raising concerns, and evaluating proposals for space allocations in the new Main Building; this approach will be used going forward not only for the new building, but also for the Facilities Master Plan as a whole.

In fact, many of the ideas and questions raised by the community have been incorporated in the revised floor plans presented to the President and discussed with the architects: such final plans have been placed in a shared folder on the M: drive. This drive is accessible by all Franklin

employees with the aim of keeping all informed about the current plans. This system will also provide us with further opportunities for input and involvement, serving as the “bulletin board” for project updates throughout the planning process, especially now that the executive plans are in the works and that the beginning of the actual construction is just a few months away.

The draft document—while incomplete in its current form—strives to lay a strong foundation for the orderly development and growth of Franklin’s campus over the next five years. We address current campus needs, while building in flexibility to respond to future needs and goals. The new building project will satisfy both academic and student life needs with room for future growth.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates how Franklin has integrated institutional assessment into its regular operations despite its small size and ongoing resource challenges. The recently initiated construction project represents a singular asset in Switzerland where property ownership helps guarantee one’s long term standing in the local community. The new building along with the processes put into place to integrate planning and institutional priorities indicate that the university has taken key steps to invest in the present and future.

Strengths Connected to Standard VI Criteria

- Franklin has improved its overall planning processes and involves the entire community as much as possible. As such, the planning and budgeting processes are now more fully integrated with Franklin’s Institutional Priorities. (Criteria 2, 3)
- Franklin now has a draft Institutional Master Plan to guide further expansion; this plan was created with input from the entire Franklin community. The model of maintenance significantly reduces deferred maintenance, thus avoiding higher costs, asset failure, and in some cases, health and safety implications. (Criteria 6)
- Franklin has strengthened an overall culture of assessment and has put into place effective assessment practices at the institutional level. (Criteria 8; Criteria 9; see also Chapter 5)

Challenges Connected to Standard VI Criteria

- As a tuition-driven institution, Franklin is vulnerable to swings in enrollment, which creates pressures that can translate into scarcity of resources to be distributed equitably.

- The organizational changes in Enrollment Management have had repercussions on how we function and on how we cooperate. We have not been able to pursue more aggressive measures in the face of declining enrollments.

Standard VI: Next Steps

- Work closely with the Vice President for Advancement, develop revenues from donors outside the Board, both for annual fund (priority) and for buildings and grounds.
- Evaluate hiring a Director of Human Resources.
- In connection with the strategic planning effort, the University will create a committee to provide a framework for documenting and updating a comprehensive facilities master plan.
- There remains room for improvement in the selection of assessments that the university has elected to use. For example, we do not currently use the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), but this tool could provide useful information for marketing by identifying the university's value to its graduates.

Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations Relevant to Standard VI

- Readers of the 2015 PRR recommended that “planning be integrated into the initial budget allocation process.” Franklin has addressed MSCHE’s request to better integrate planning and budget: the mission and strategic plan are part of the process, guiding the careful planning for the most efficient use of our resources.
- As noted in Chapter 1, readers recommended that “Franklin clarify goals, objectives, and targets as they pertain to the Office of Advancement, because of the essential element of their work in the diversification of income.” As evidenced in the course of the chapter, Franklin is in a much better position with respect to its advancement efforts. We recently received a large donation of \$4,000,000 for the Capital Campaign as well as an unrestricted donation of \$2,000,000 to provide relief to the budget, and especially to the scholarship challenges: momentum is building around the Advancement team with our 50th Anniversary approaching.
- Readers recommended that “the effectiveness of the enrollment initiatives, especially global partnerships, be closely monitored, so data can facilitate informed decision-making about the continuation, expansion, or elimination of said programs.” Franklin has been using a variety of assessment measures to carry out this kind of evaluation.

Evidence Inventory Relevant to Standard VI

- 2016 Campus Safety Task Force Report
- 2017-2019 Admissions Declined Offers Survey
- 2018 IT Annual Report
- 2019 Financial Aid Model Assessment
- 2019 Website Assessment Presentation
- Blank Performance Review
- Board of Trustees bylaws
- Budget Requests FY2019-2020
- Campus Map
- College Employee Satisfaction Survey
- Department Assessment Plans
- Emerson Program Dual Degree
- Facilities Master Plan Draft (February 2020)
- Financial Statements and Audit Reports (FY 2014 - 2015)
- Financial Statements and Audit Reports (FY 2015 - 2016)
- Financial Statements and Audit Reports (FY 2016 - 2017)
- Financial Statements and Audit Reports (FY 2017 - 2018)
- Financial Statements and Audit Reports (FY 2018 - 2019)
- FUS Website
- Job Descriptions
- Open Space Meeting minutes
- Organization Charts (January 2020)
- Phase 3 Architecture Plans
- Safety and Security Task Force Report
- Staff Handbook
- Staff Meeting minutes
- Vital Signs



Chapter Seven

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

Introduction

Franklin clearly articulates and utilizes a governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision-making by each constituency, including our governing body, administration, faculty, staff, and students. Known since its inception as an institution that fostered faculty participation in governance, Franklin has worked hard to ensure clear channels of communication between all of its constituencies. The give-and-take inherent in these evolving relationships is documented below.

Strengthening Administrative Structures

Dr. P. Gregory Warden began his tenure as President in 2012 after a 17-year-long leadership term from Dr. Erik Nielsen, the longest-serving President of Franklin University. The University's by-laws clearly outline the responsibilities of the President; Franklin's Board of Trustees (BOT) ensures that those responsibilities are enacted effectively.

Franklin employs a comprehensive and experienced administrative staff, with clear reporting lines, and we've created effective structures to implement Franklin's mission and strategic goals. Also, individual departments have undergone restructuring for greater clarity and efficacy of services.

For example, Franklin transformed the President's Cabinet in 2017; this governing board now consists of three Vice Presidents and four Deans. While the Vice President for Finance and Administration has been in place for many years, the position of Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing (VPEM) was restored in 2017 after four years without a VP in this area. In the wake of his recent departure in May 2019, the President and the President's Cabinet agreed that the former structure had proven more sustainable. Thus, in fall 2019, we have returned the earlier structure without the VPEM. The Dean of Academic Affairs was promoted in 2018 to Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs. Finally, in the area of Advancement, the Director of Advancement was recently promoted to Vice President of Advancement in recognition of the university's first true successes in fund raising and in acknowledgement of her ongoing contributions to the initiative to increase institutional partnerships ([7.7.1](#)).

The Deans of Student Life and Engagement; Library Services and Institutional Assessment; Admissions and Enrollment Management; and Executive Education and Global Outreach also serve in the President's Cabinet. Formerly called the Director of Library Services and Institutional Assessment (created in 2015), the position of Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment was renamed in 2018 to recognize this Dean's expanded role for strategic planning and the institutional accreditation process. The Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Management has replaced the Vice President in wake of recent changes. Finally, Franklin hired the Dean of Executive Education and Global Outreach in 2019 to develop international partnerships and build executive education programs.

This restructured President's Cabinet includes a spectrum of representation to allow for important decisions to be made quickly, with informed participation from diverse perspectives and departments. The President's Cabinet normally meets every two weeks; the members advise the President, as well as discuss timely, sometimes sensitive, topics. Minutes are recorded, and the Cabinet posts online summaries to the Franklin internal community once the minutes are approved. Cabinet members also serve as administrative representatives to Board of Trustees' committees, and they regularly attend Board meetings.

Along with restructuring the President's Cabinet, Franklin also created a Leadership Committee, consisting of the President's Cabinet and a number of administrative directors such as the Registrar, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Academic Affairs Analyst. Unlike the President's Cabinet—which functions as the central administrative body for policy decisions—the Leadership Committee primarily meets to enhance communication between departments, review projects, and work through implementation of the goals in the 2018-2023 SP. This committee meets twice each semester and participates in an annual retreat. During the off-campus retreat, the Leadership Committee discusses important strategic issues, reviews progress in meeting the goals of the SP, and deliberates on current university issues. These administrators form a dedicated team of experts in international and intercultural education, with many years of combined service to Franklin.

Assessment of Administration

(See also [Chapters 5](#) and [Chapter 6](#)).

Starting in 2019, Cabinet members document their departments' progress in meeting strategic plan goals, and they produce reports every six months. Also, both faculty and administrators review results from the annual Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) to determine effective departmental improvements. Individual administrators are reviewed on an

annual basis, and changes to job descriptions are noted at this time. Administrators also periodically review and update projects with their supervisors.

A Strong Commitment to Shared Governance

Franklin University follows the model of American higher education governance as articulated by the Association of Governing Boards for Institutions (1998). This model ensures that we make decisions with participation from all constituents: our Board of Trustees, senior administrators, faculty, staff, alumni, and students. Franklin articulates the respective roles and responsibilities of all administrators, faculty, students, and staff in our primary governing and administrative documents: The BOT bylaws ([7.2.1](#)), the Faculty Handbook ([2.9.3](#)), the Student Handbook ([2.9.2](#)), and the Student Government Constitution and Bylaws ([7.1.2](#)). We are also currently working on a single document devoted to shared governance, a draft of which is included here ([7.1.3](#)). In some instances, we also involve members of our larger community, Sorengo (Lugano), when University issues have an impact on our relationship with the city and the local neighborhood.

Franklin's commitment to shared governance is highlighted by activities at the beginning of each academic year. At the start of Fall semester, the President makes a presentation to faculty and staff that includes all data relevant to the state of the institution, including the financial health of the university and projected developments. The President also provides faculty and staff with summaries of issues discussed at Board meetings.

However, this event moves beyond simply communicating information to faculty and staff; Franklin encourages and supports inclusive discussions of the university's challenges and opportunities for the upcoming academic year. This meeting takes the form of break-out workshops and panels that address pressing matters relevant to the university at large. If necessary, task forces then form to deal with specific issues. For example, the staff well-being task force initiated a number of reforms relevant to staff contracts such as dress codes, leave for family members who become ill, and consecutive number of vacation days allowed to be taken together.

Student Participation in Shared Governance

At Franklin we value students in the shared decision-making processes, and we have markedly increased the number of ways to include the student voice in key decisions. As noted in Chapter 4, the formal structure for student representation is the Student Government Association (SGA). Beyond decision making, SGA also designs initiatives and plans programs that address the interests of students and serve in bettering the Franklin University community. Elected by the

student body at large, each member of SGA assumes the duty of representing students' needs and interests in all facets of University life, from academics to student engagement ([7.1.2](#)).

Franklin intends the SGA to be the most effective means of initiating discourse between the collective student body and administrators; the students benefit from representation on a variety of faculty committees, including the Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Assembly. This means that students have a real voice in the development of the curriculum and the University at large. Further, as at most universities, the general assembly holds open weekly meetings to manage various University social events, allocate student funds, and to discuss the refinement of University policies vis-à-vis students' interests. Finally, the president of SGA meets regularly with the VP and Dean of Academic Affairs, the Dean of Student Life and Engagement, and with President Warden. The President also meets with all the officers early in the academic year. SGA thus provides students with an opportunity to develop and enhance their leadership abilities while promoting institutional betterment and innovation.

Faculty Assembly and Leadership

All full-time and part-time faculty are members of the Faculty Assembly. The Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, and on selected occasions the President, also attend the monthly meetings of the Faculty Assembly, chaired by an elected faculty member. A student elected by the SGA also attends, leaving the room when confidential matters are discussed. Policy recommendations are decided by vote of the faculty, and the Faculty Assembly then makes recommendations to the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs. The Faculty Assembly is also responsible for approval of candidates for conferral of degrees.

Faculty Assembly is generally held once a month. An agenda is distributed prior to the meeting and minutes are documented and posted for consultation by all faculty members.

Staff Participation in Shared Governance

Staff participation in shared decision-making and governance is also an important hallmark of Franklin University. As noted earlier in the chapter, at the beginning of each academic year the President includes all faculty and staff in a presentation on the state of the university. In addition, the President provides faculty and staff with summaries of issues discussed at each Board meeting. In addition to attending a monthly staff meeting, chaired by the Vice President for Finance and Administration, staff members also have representation on many University-Wide committees.

University-Wide Committees

With an aim to improve cooperation and transparency, Franklin has created several university-wide committees with cross-membership—including, where appropriate, students, faculty, staff, administration, and members of the BOT.

- **The Student Judicial Board**, first formed in fall 2009, came about in direct response to recommendations by a 2008–2009 Judicial Task Force and to student survey data that suggested general dissatisfaction with the Franklin judicial processes. The Judicial Board is comprised of an 11-person pool made up of two co-chairs (one faculty member and one staff member), four faculty members elected by the Faculty Assembly, and four student members elected by the Student Government Association. From this pool, appeals and hearings will draw a committee of five. The goal is that faculty, staff, and students together serve as a review board on student behavior pertaining to violations of the Code of Conduct in order to provide a fair and impartial review.

Recently, during the 2016-2017 academic year, the Judicial Board structure underwent significant revision. The term of the Faculty Co-Chair of the Judicial Board was changed to two years. Concurrently, the Staff Co-Chair will also serve for two years, with their respective terms starting in alternative years in order to ensure transfer of knowledge for individual processes and hearings. This system guarantees that there is always a Co-Chair with more experience, a change that required a slight modification of the Faculty Handbook. The new structure of the Judicial System and Standards found in the Code of Conduct provides a clearer separation of powers that makes the role of the Office of Student Life (OSL) clearer and focuses the tasks of the Judicial Affairs Officer (Assistant Dean of Student Life and Career Services) on policing, counselling, and enforcement.

This revision was reviewed by the President, the Dean of Student Life and Engagement, and the Assistant Dean of Student Life and Career Services, as well as the most recent Co-Chairs of the Judicial Board. In an open vote, faculty approved the changes unanimously.

- **The Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (SLOAC)** changed its membership structure from a faculty-only committee to a university-wide committee in 2014 (see also [Chapter 5: Assessment](#)). Current volunteer membership includes three faculty members, one staff member from the OSL, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment (ex-officio), and the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs (ex-officio and non-voting). Although some committees have student

representation from the Student Government Association, this committee, for confidentiality reasons, has chosen not to have student representation.

This change in SLOAC membership resulted from discussions about the importance of co-curricular activities in the learning process (see also [Chapter 3](#) and [Chapter 4](#)), and the need to include co-curricular activities in our assessment of student learning outcomes. As a university-wide committee, SLOAC has spearheaded a number of new assessment efforts on campus and works closely with the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment to coordinate assessment of student learning (see also [Chapter 5: Assessment](#)).

- **The Budget and Priorities Committee** (see also [Chapter 6: “Budget”](#)) currently consists of the Vice President for Finance and Administration (Chair, ex-officio, non-voting), the Dean of Admission and Enrollment Management, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment, two faculty members elected from the faculty at large, and one elected staff member. By mid-January each year, the Vice President for Finance and Administration compiles all the individual departmental requests and, having compared estimated expenditure with estimated revenues, begins to prepare reports for meetings with the President, the Cabinet, and the Budget and Priorities Committee. The Cabinet and the Budget and Priorities Committee help in setting criteria for the use of new resources by identifying goals or needs. The Vice President for Finance and Administration, based on the input from the Cabinet and the Budget and Priorities Committee, then puts together a draft of the budget, which he presents to the President.
- **The Committee on Information Technology** consists of volunteer members who are appointed during the initial faculty assembly of each academic year. This committee advises the Director of IT Services and the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs about strategic and long-range planning as well as priorities for academic computing and all other IT needs. Other concerns of the committee include applications of information technology in education, classroom requirements and IT improvements to foster the learning environment.
- **The Advisory Committee for the Library** consists of faculty volunteer members who are elected to the committee at the beginning of each academic year, as well as a student representative nominated by SGA, and library staff. The committee advises the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment on matters related to optimal use of the library as an education resource.

- **The Strategic Planning Task Force** (see also [Chapter 1](#)) met between Spring 2017 and Fall 2018. It consisted of two co-chairs, the Dean of Library Services and Institutional Assessment and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees (BOT), two BOT members, the Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing, the then Director of Admissions, the VP for Finance and Administration, two faculty members, and one staff member.

This task force was charged with the creation of a new five-year strategic plan that would allow Franklin to realize its mission in the current environment. It considered topics, timelines, deliverables, and related variables. The task force consistently sought faculty and staff input via the respective elected members and by making draft versions of the plan available for comment on the internal shared drive. The task force sought student input via a Student Government Association Forum on the strategic plan in December 2017. The 2018-2023 Strategic Plan was approved by the BOT in May 2018, and the Strategic Planning Task Force disbanded in Fall 2018.

We closed the 2018-2019 academic year with an annual BOT-Faculty roundtable and lunch. Overall, these committee processes and working relationships demonstrate a high degree of shared governance among students, staff, faculty, administration, and BOT members.

Role of the Board of Trustees in Shared Governance

Board of Trustee committee members are reappointed annually and have the possibility of identifying their area/s of expertise. Additionally, the faculty representative to the BOT is invited to every meeting, along with President's Cabinet members. The President of the University serves ex-officio as a member of the BOT with the right to vote on all matters, and Board decisions and resolutions are distributed by the President, as he is a full member of the BOT and takes part in every meeting.

The Board is authorized to appoint or remove the President, and it also establishes the annual budget and major budgetary revisions. Members are also asked to promote major fund raising efforts. New Trustees receive an orientation package that contains, among other things, the Association of Governing Boards' list of Independent Board Expectations, the Franklin University, Inc. by-laws, the mission and vision statements, and the goals of the University. These packages are updated regularly.

The by-laws include policy and procedures relating to conflict of interest, self-evaluation, code of conduct, and statements of board responsibilities; they also identify standing committees and their responsibilities. The Board operates according to their by-laws (adopted October 31,

1981; revised in 2004 and in 2009, with the most recent approval of new by-laws in February 2019). In Article 1, Section 2 of those by-laws, Franklin's mission is stated and continually serves as the foundation on which we premise collective decision-making ([7.2.1](#)).

Board of Trustees Reform

In order to improve oversight, support the university mission, and help orchestrate the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, the Board of Trustees recently undertook a reform of its own composition, by-laws, committees, policies, and procedures. The process was guided by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) and ultimately culminated in a new set of by-laws approved at the February 2019 board meeting.

The new by-laws codify the standing committees of the BOT and now include the Executive Committee, the Governance Committee, the Finance Committee, the Presidential Development Committee, the Advancement Committee, and the Enrollment Management Committee. The Audit Committee was added as a best practice, to separate it out from the Finance Committee. All committee charges, membership, and duties are documented in the BOT by-laws. Additional standing and ad hoc committees may be added to the BOT, but each additional committee needs a written statement of purpose and primary function. Board committees actively discuss all matters related to their areas, after which they present their motions or resolutions to the entire Board for a vote by all Board members. The BOT applies a consent agenda at its meetings, thereby allowing time for more efficient in-depth discussions and strategic planning.

The Board reform process also articulated the aspiration to reduce the BOT's size, to internationalize Board participation, and to improve gender representation. Currently the majority of Board members live and work in the United States, while only 50% of the degree-seeking student body are US citizens. The BOT would like its own representation to mirror that of Franklin's student population.

The BOT now carries out a yearly assessment of its activities and contributions to ensure that it continues to demonstrate appropriate oversight of the University, serve the public interest, and support the institution in the fulfillment of specific strategic goals. The BOT demonstrates clear fiduciary responsibility for the Franklin community, and the BOT is ultimately accountable for the academic quality, planning, and fiscal well-being of the institution.

Conclusion

As Franklin has evolved from “college” to “university” status (see Introduction and Chapter 1), our institutional priority to “foster institutional sustainability and innovation by developing plans and initiatives that address current and future institutional needs” remains paramount. In order to support this priority, Franklin has adopted new or revised administrative structures, working committees, and shared governance models to provide a stronger decision-making process, identify necessary resources and support, and ensure focus on strategic goals over the duration of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan.

Strengths Connected to Standard VII Criteria

- Franklin has a strong system of shared governance that includes administration, faculty, staff, and students. Each constituency has clear roles and responsibilities. (Criteria 1)
- Franklin has strong university-wide committees that involve many constituencies in university business. We have created a new Audit Committee and revised our conflict-of-interest documentation. (Criteria 1; Criteria 4)
- Franklin has an active Board of Trustees that oversees the university’s fulfillment of its mission. The BOT recently undertook a reform of its composition, policies, and procedures in line with the evolution of Franklin’s mission and strategic plan. The BOT now conducts regular assessment of its role and activities. (Criteria 2; Criteria 5)

Challenges Connected to Standard VII Criteria

- Currently, the BOT does not represent the diversity reflected in Franklin’s values. The President and Board of Trustees are working on shifting the balance to reflect better the diversity of the institution.

Standard VII: Next Steps

- The President and Board of Trustees are working on shifting the balance to reflect better the diversity of the institution. The VP for Advancement is cultivating potential BOT members from underrepresented populations.

Responses to 2015 PRR Recommendations Relevant to Standard VII

There were no specific recommendations relevant to Standard VII from the 2015 PRR.

Evidence Inventory for Standard VII

- Board of Trustees Bylaws
- Department Assessment Plans
- Job Descriptions
- Faculty Manual
- Organization Charts (February 2020)
- Shared Governance Document (February 2020)
- Staff Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Student Government Association Bylaws
- Summary of Conflict of Interest Statements

Appendix A – Full Evidence Inventory List

- Academic Catalog
- Academic Literacies Program Assessment (2016 - 2019)
- Academic Mentor Training Schedule
- Academic Travel Assessment (2019)
- Academic Year at Franklin Assessment (2018)
- Academic Year at Franklin Report (2018)
- Accessibility Services Assessment (2018)
- Accessibility Services Department Assessment Plan (2018-2019)
- Admissions and Marketing Presentations to the Board of Trustees (2019)
- Admissions Survey
- Admissions Training Manual (2019)
- AI Banawi Report (2018-2019)
- Alumni Survey Results
- Architecture Plans Phase 3
- Audits (2014 - 2019)
- Board of Trustees by-laws
- Budget Request (FY 2019-2020)
- Bylaws Adopted by the Board of Trustees
- Campus Map
- Capstone Assessment Report (2016)
- Career Center Information Email
- Career Navigator on Moodle
- College Employee Satisfaction Survey
- Committee of Graduate Programs charge
- Correspondence with the USDE
- Course Assessment Reports (Fall 2019)
- Course Schedules (Spring 2018 - Fall 2019)
- Crime Statistics (2011-2018)
- Department Assessment Plans
- Description of Program with Emerson College
- Evaluation Toolkit Assessment (2016)
- Executive Education Events (2019)
- Executive Summary of Mental Health Services (2018)
- Facilities Master Plan Draft (February 2020)
- Facts and Figures (FUS Website)
- Faculty Assembly Minutes
- Faculty Innovation (2019)
- Faculty Manual
- Faculty Publications (2014-2019)
- Faculty Search Rubric
- Faculty Workshop Agendas
- Faculty-Trustee Dialogue (2017)
- Fall 2019 Census
- Fall 2019 Syllabi

- FERPA (FUS Website)
- Financial Aid Application (FUS Web)
- Financial Aid Information (FUS Web)
- Financial Aid Model Assessment (2018)
- First Year Seminar Assessment (2019)
- Franklin Career Advisory Network
- Franklin University Switzerland Mission (FUS Website)
- Full-time Faculty CVs
- FUS and AIL Collaboration (FUS Website)
- FUS Fact Sheet
- FUS Power Point Slides for information sessions
- FUS View Book
- FUS Website Assessment (2019)
- Guest Lectures Honors Society (2009 - 2019)
- Health Services (FUS Website)
- Health Services Survey
- Hiring and Promotion Procedure and Employment Contracts
- Hiring Statement (FUS Website)
- Innovation Hub Email
- Institutional Accreditation Guide (AAQ)
- Institutional Federal Compliance Report
- Intercultural Development Inventory for MSIM Program (2018)
- International Management with an Emphasis in Marketing Major Plan
- Internship Program Guide
- IT Annual Report (2018)
- Job Descriptions
- Language Tutoring Assessment Report (2018)
- Lecture Series Promotional Flyers (2018-2019)
- Library Information (FUS Website)
- Library Services Department Assessment Plan (2018-2019)
- Life-Long Scholarship (FUS Website)
- Life-Long Scholarship Data
- Life-Long Scholarship Student Application
- Life-Long Scholarship Supervisor Manual (2019-2020)
- List of Honors Theses (2009 - 2019)
- M. S. in International Management (FUS Website)
- Majors Assessment Plan Italian Studies (2017)
- Math Program Assessment (2019)
- Minor Proposals
- MOU Al Banawi Scholarship (2017-2020)
- MSIM Assessment (2019)
- Office of Student Life Mission
- Open Space Forum (2019)
- Organizational Charts (January 2020)
- Orientation Schedule for Parents (2019)
- Periodic Review Report
- Periodic Review Report Feedback

- Reasonable Accommodations documentation
- Registrar's Office Department Assessment Plan (2017-2018)
- Registrar's Office Visit Report (2017-2018)
- Release from LOC Requirement
- Reviewers Report (2015)
- Safety and Security Information (FUS Website)
- Safety Task Force Report
- Sexual Misconduct on Moodle
- Social Justice and Sustainability Major Plan
- Staff Handbook
- Staff Performance Review
- Strategic Plan (2013 - 2018)
- Strategic Plan (2018-2023)
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Government Associations Constitution
- Student Handbook
- Student Learning Outcomes
- Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee on Moodle
- Student Orientation Program (2019)
- Student Satisfaction Inventory Data Comparison (2016-2018)
- Summary of Cabinet Meeting
- Summary of Conflict of Interest Policy and Confidentiality Statement
- Summary of Conflict of Interest Statements
- Summary of Faculty Course Evaluations (Spring 2018 - Fall 2019)
- Summary of Leadership Committee Meeting
- Swissuniversities (Website)
- Tutte Le Strade (2019)
- USDE Review of Federal Loans (FY 2018-2019)
- Visiting Team Feedback (2010)
- Vital Signs (2019)
- Writing and Learning Center Department Assessment Plan (2018-2019)
- Writing and Learning Center Mission

Appendix B – FUS Self-Study Design