



# ANNUAL REPORT

# Division of Student and Alumni Affairs



2016-17



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## Dear USF Community:

Welcome to the fourth annual Student & Alumni Affairs Annual Report!

The academic year of 2016–2017 was a busy and productive one for the many departments that make up the Division of Student & Alumni Affairs. Before I get too far into this introduction, I want to affirm that the successes that have resulted from the past year are due to the tireless work of the directors in the division and their support teams. Like many small institutions, our individual departments are small, and our folks wear multiple hats and juggle multiple priorities. At the end of the day, their passion for doing good work for our students continues to impress everyone at the university.



**Damon M. Sloan**

Vice President of Student & Alumni Affairs and  
Dean of Students

You'll notice in the following pages that our strategic plan (our OGSM) is a tool for evaluating and achieving our learning outcomes. The division has made a commitment to advance our guiding principles of enhancing the student experience, continuously improving student satisfaction, and assessing outside-the-classroom learning. Fortunately, the areas of the university strategic plan that involve our division are a natural fit with assessment. For example, when we effectively retain and graduate students, we are doing so through providing support and improving the learning experience. When we increase student satisfaction of residence hall living, we are also enhancing the student experience.

The numbers show our progress. Student satisfaction is high as measured by the Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Educational Benchmarking, Inc. survey. The Career Success Center, Academic Resource Center, and Academic Advising Center have helped a record number of students. Our athletic program finished 10th in the nation in the Learfield Director's Cup standings, shattering a previous high mark of 23rd. I may be burying the lead here, as of this writing, we are set to achieve an 80%+ fall to fall first year to sophomore retention rate, two years in a row, for the first time since the institution has begun collecting data. This achievement would not be possible without each team member's individual commitment to our strategic plan.

The University of St. Francis continues to be a place where students gain valuable competencies outside the classroom. Like Francis and Clare, our patron saints, our students are "doers." We are a welcoming community of learners who provide a strong ethic of care so our students can succeed. I am proud of the work accomplished in the last year, and I invite you to read the report and enjoy the great work of our valued administrators and staff.

Sincerely,

*Damon M. Sloan*

# Academic Advising

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OBJECTIVES, GOALS,  
STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:

A TOOL TO ACHIEVE

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Advising Center had 2,178 “touch points” with students—a 10% increase over the 2015–2016 school year. These touch points include general advising meetings, new student registration programs (for new first year and transfer students), registrations for new students in all areas including graduate, and meeting with students who are having difficulty in their classes.

The Advising Center continued its outreach to faculty—meeting with the entire Natural Science Department for advising training. During this session, the faculty advisors learned about the Appreciative Advising Model and how to best integrate it into practice while working with their students and advisees. In addition, this model was also introduced to new and existing Foundations I faculty (our first year experience course). Our Foundations I faculty serve as the advisor for the first year students in their course.

In addition, the Advising Center continues to see growth in their objective to develop a clear degree plan which is used to navigate towards graduation and help incoming students understand articulation, evaluation and the advising process. During the 2016–2017 school year, 78% of students strongly agreed and 22% agreed that they had an understanding and development of a clear degree plan which is used to navigate towards graduation after they met with someone on the advising staff. This was an increase over the previous year, where only 74% strongly agreed and 24% agreed. The Advising Center also evaluated student understanding of articulation, evaluation of credits and the registration process. The results from the advising survey indicate, 89% of students Strongly Agree that they understood how their credits transferred, which was a 10% increase over the previous year. In addition, 76% of students strongly agreed that they understood their registration process for future semesters.

A significant change for the Advising Center was their collaboration with the Academic Resource Center. Members of the advising staff went through cross-training with the department and started seeing students for ACAF 098 Academic Coaching course. This course requires students to meet with an assigned Academic Coach once a week and is designed to help our students on academic probation with study skills, time management, organization and more so they can be successful not just for the semester, but for the rest of their college career.

As a goal for the 2017–2018 school year, the Advising Center also plans to re-establish a taskforce to improve advising around campus by gathering interested faculty members and conducting valuable training sessions on topics that are pertinent to today's students.

## Professional Development

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Attended the NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) Region V Conference in Chicago, March 2017

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Remained as part of the Planning Committee for the Joliet Chamber of Commerce's Community Leadership School

**OBJECTIVES, GOALS,  
STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:**

**A TOOL TO ACHIEVE  
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**A sample of average grades of students who attended Supplemental Instruction; to non-attendees are:**

Physiology	3.16 / 2.74
Math	3.67 / 2.50
Chemistry	3.50 / 2.56

**Professional Development**

Attended the NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) Region V Conference in Chicago, March 2017

Remained as part of the Planning Committee for the Joliet Chamber of Commerce’s Community Leadership School

**Certification Levels for Tutors**

*Spring 2017*

Active tutors	41
Certified Level 1	13
Certified Level 2	14
Certified Level 3	8
Less than 10 hours	6

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) relocated Science Tutoring to the Academic Resource Center. This has helped bring more awareness to the Academic Resource Center since students have a singular location for assistance, and it has also helped tutors connect with one another, facilitating the tutor to tutor referral process.

The ARC improved usage of by-appointment-tutoring in a number of areas by creating business cards for its by-appointment-tutors and having the tutors visit as many classes as possible to introduce themselves.

During the spring semester, the ARC discontinued using Smarthinking, an online writing assistance platform used by our online students. Instead, the ARC implemented its own model for online writing assistance utilizing our own student tutors, rather than outsourcing to a different company. Feedback from students has been positive.

The ARC implemented a new class model for our ACAF 100—Academic Achievement Seminar course. This model has shifted from less individual work to more of a group format to design and present inquiry projects.

The ARC renewed its accreditation from the College Reading and Learning Association to certify its tutors in all three levels of tutoring (Tutor, Advanced Tutor, Master Tutor). All tutors are required to participate in ten hours of training per calendar year, but they can choose to participate in more to expedite certifications. To become certified at each level, a tutor must participate in ten hours of training and log 50 contact hours with a student.

The Office of Disability Services, with the assistance of USF’s Financial Aid Services Office, designed a Reduced Course Load Policy. Students who require a reduced course load, less than 12 credit hours, as an appropriate accommodation due to their disability, may initiate the Reduced Course Load procedure. A reduced course load is considered due to a disability creating significant impact on the student’s time, attention, and focus that could otherwise be dedicated to academics.

Due in part to the increase in students enrolled in our ACAF 098 Academic Coaching course, the ARC collaborated with the Academic Advising Center to cross train on how to work with students who struggle with time management, study skills, test skills, etc.

The ARC proposed to the academic deans a new model for the Academic Dismissal Appeal Process. All students who academically appeal their dismissal must meet with their dean before a decision can be made for readmittance. For this new process, students are required to fill out an online form based on the Academic Coaching Registration form, which would inform the deans of a student’s outside commitments and challenges, strengths and weaknesses, future planning (goals), and a reflection of their academic past. The deans use this information to better inform their decisions prior to meeting with a student for their academic dismissal appeal.

# Alumni and Family Relations

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The Alumni & Family Relations Office had a strong focus on ensuring alumni feel connected to USF through a streamlined communication plan, alumni network/group organization and several new programs this year.

## OBJECTIVES, GOALS,

## STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:

## A TOOL TO ACHIEVE

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our office saw a need to incorporate other university and department sponsored events into our newly streamlined communication plan. We no longer send eblasts to alumni for a solo event, rather incorporate all events into a monthly events and programs eblast, which also includes upcoming events, time appropriate programs, a featured benefit, and links to our web and social media pages. We now work with Hootsuite, an online platform that organizes all of our social media pages together. This allows us to respond faster and post relevant stories immediately across multiple social media pages all at once. Additionally, we contracted Constant Contact for our electronic communication which allows us to better personalize our messages, provides open rate metrics, and we can more efficiently schedule our communication pieces for the forthcoming months.

Previously, our alumni networks and groups were meeting on different days, at different times, in different months throughout the year. We worked to create pre-determined alumni network meeting days four times a year. This scheduling allows our alumni to plan ahead and become more regular members incorporating all meetings into their calendars once a year. What's more, in order to bridge the gap between students and alumni, we now invite students to their respective alumni network meetings. This allows them to connect with these groups early and often and more importantly, directly connect with alumni in their field of study. Many students joined us this past year and we anticipate even more in the coming year. Some of our networks began co-sponsoring events with student clubs bringing both groups together at these events as well.

We launched our Alumni Success Stories Program that identified 350 prominent alumni who we connected with, updated employment information for, and featured them on our new web page. This program not only allows us to build relationships with our alumni, but we can also highlight prominent alumni by college to help the admissions team with recruitment. This is an ongoing program in which we collaborate with different colleges and do much online research to identify strong candidates. Self-submissions are also accepted.

## Professional Development

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Webinar: "Strategically Managing Alumni Chapters"

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Conference: ACI (Associated Colleges of Illinois) Advancement Conference



Some of our newer programs began taking off such as our Saints Sweethearts, which identifies our married alumni couples, and shares their story of how they met and the USF bond between them. We highlight them on our web page, but more importantly on social media, where we attract much attention to these posts and university social media pages. Our Education Alumni Alliance (EAA) (AKA Teacher Request Form) has, in its short existence, had a strong impact on alumni classrooms. This program allows alumni to bring their classrooms to the university for campus tours and spend time with the admissions team as well as allows them to request admissions posters, alumni pennants, pencils, and other materials for their classrooms. We are also able to send USF marketing materials home with their students. EAA gets USF into local and nationwide classrooms as early as kindergarten up through high school.

It's been a busy year in the Alumni & Family Relations Office and we are excited to continuously improve our processes and strategize more creative ways to engage our alumni and students so they feel connected to their alma mater.

### USF Athletics Lands Highest-Ever Finish with No. 10 Ranking in Learfield Cup Standings

Landing 11 bids to NAIA National Championship events amongst its 22 teams during the 2016-17 season earned University of St. Francis its highest-ever finish in the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup NAIA standings. The Saints bested their previous mark of 24th place set two years ago by earning a No. 10 billing this season.

"This is a tremendous accomplishment for all of our programs," said USF director of athletics Dave Laketa. "It speaks very highly of the work that our 440-plus student-athletes and all of our coaches have put in not only this past year, but over the past four-to-five years in terms of student-athletes preparing themselves to compete at an elite level and coaches recruiting top-caliber students both in the classroom and on the playing field to get us to this point.

"And, most importantly, we did it without lessening our academic standards. At the end of the spring semester, our student-athletes boasted a cumulative 3.15 grade point average."

The top 10 finish continued a rapid progression in the Learfield Sports Directors' Cup standings for the athletic department over the past eight years. It marked the seventh time during that span that USF improved over the previous season. Last year, St. Francis gained a 37th-place slot.

The Saints earned their 560.25-point total with four top 10 finishes—men's cross country (2nd), women's basketball (3rd), women's indoor track & field (4th), women's outdoor track & field (8th—and 11th-place finishes from softball and men's indoor track & field, a 17th-place showing from women's volleyball and a No. 21 finish from women's cross country. USF also scored in men's outdoor track & field.

The Learfield Sports Directors' Cup was developed as a joint effort between the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) and USA Today. Points are awarded based on each institution's finish at national championship events in up to 12 sports—six women's and six men's.



## 2016-17 Accomplishments (\* signifies a new record for the department)

### Budget development

- Set a school record with 445 student-athletes in the program this past fall\*
- Added the sport of dance to the list of sports sponsored bringing the total number to a school-record 22 sports\*
- Raised over \$70,000 in fundraising in 2016-17\*
- Set an attendance record for Brown & Gold Night dinner fundraiser with 900 in attendance, exceeding the previous record of 740\*

### Awards/honors

- Athletic department finished 10th in the NAIA Learfield Cup standings\*
- Athletic department finished 2nd in the CCAC All-Sports Cup standings
- 11 of 22 teams advanced to NAIA national tournaments
- 27 NAIA All-America selections
- 115 Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference All-Conference selections
- 12 Mid-States Football Association All-Conference selections
- 5 Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference Coaches of the Year
- 3 Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference Players/Pitchers/Performers of the Year

### Team success

- National championship appearance: Women's Basketball: Semifinalist\*
- National championship appearance: Men's Cross Country: 2nd in the nation
- National championship appearance: Women's Cross Country: 21st in the nation
- National championship appearance: Softball: Opening Round
- National championship appearance: Men's Indoor T&F: 11th in the nation\*
- National championship appearance: Women's Indoor T&F: 4th in the nation\*
- National championship appearance: Men's Outdoor T&F: 61st in the nation
- National championship appearance: Women's Outdoor T&F: 8th in the nation\*
- National championship appearance: Women's Volleyball: Tied for 17th in the nation
- NAIA invitational championship appearance: Men's Bowling: 14th in the nation
- NAIA invitational championship appearance: Women's Bowling: 1st in the nation\*

### Academic achievement among student-athletes

- 18 of 20 sports named NAIA Scholar Teams (20 of 22 teams if one includes bowling)
- 3.14 cumulative grade point average for 445 student-athletes in Fall, 2016
- 3.15 cumulative grade point average for 423 student-athletes in Spring, 2017
- 4 CoSIDA College Division Academic All-America selections
- 47 NAIA Scholar-Athletes
- 90 Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference All-Academic selections
- 19 Mid-States Football Association All-Academic selections

### Champions of Character in the Department

- All student-athletes completed both the NAIA Champions of Character Live 5 and myPlaybook courses for their respective year in the program as well as the myPlaybook course on sexual assault awareness.





In fiscal year 2016, the Career Success Center (CSC) focused on four areas: Mission, 4-Year Plan, Outreach, and Professional Development.

**OBJECTIVES, GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:** Career Management is one of the most sought-after skills by employers (NACE Outcomes 2016). Career Management includes selecting a major, understanding career paths, participation in experiential learning and co-curricular programming and career readiness. To best meet the needs of our students and alumni, the CSC defined an internal mission as follows:

**A TOOL TO ACHIEVE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The University of St. Francis Career Success Center is committed to providing superior service to our students and alumni through career readiness education, resources, and advice for our clients so that they can:

- Explore majors and careers that have purpose and where individuals can contribute to the world through work and service
- Ascertain the competitive advantage over other candidates in resume, interviewing skills, and experience
- Leverage technology, networking, experiential learning and University of St. Francis partnerships to increase options for employment
- Participate in internships and co-curricular programming that provide practical, marketable skills
- Pursue post-graduate plans for graduate/professional school or employment that align with their Franciscan values

## Professional Development

100% of team members completed diversity training.

Our Career Advisor earned the Global Career Development Facilitator Certification.

We then published a 4-year plan to help students manage their careers by intention.

The CSC has a philosophy that students who understand themselves (i.e., interests, personality, and strengths) will be able to choose a vocation purposefully. Because of this philosophy, the Strong Interest Inventory is part of the Foundations course as a required assignment for all first year students. Following the assignment, first year students received a debriefing video explaining the results and how to utilize the information provided in career and major search. To close the loop, the Major Fair held in the fall, allowed first year students to visit faculty and learn about curriculum and career paths. The 4-year plan also encourages co-curricular activities, internships and job search practices.

Reaching out to students and employers, the CSC held record numbers for FY16. The CSC serviced 1,718 client interactions. Services ranged from resume reviews, cover letter assistance, career advice, mock interview preparation and graduate school options. The CSC provided classroom workshops on topics such as LinkedIn, Using the Job Boards, Communication Skills, Resume Writing Tips and Professionalism in the Workplace. To help students gain competitive advantage, the CSC assisted in locating and developing internships for students in the CAS and COBHA colleges. There were 134 students placed into internships. Our employment partners recruited students for full-time, part-time and internship positions. In fact, 79 employers recruited on our campus last year and 800 positions were posted on the job boards.

OBJECTIVES, GOALS,  
STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:  
A TOOL TO ACHIEVE  
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our outcome statements are as follow:

1. The USF community displays new behaviors that focus on wellness.
2. Students utilize information gained from seminars, groups, and sessions to form new thinking patterns.
3. Students become motivated to work on their personal and academic goals.
4. Students continue to learn new information and behaviors to challenge their personal growth.

Counseling Center (CC) measured the effectiveness of clinical interventions by offering a pre/post survey for groups and presentations. Additionally, utilizing the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS-62) data demonstrated a decrease from the base measure during the academic year. The results demonstrated success. The 270 unique new clients and the 82 returning clients reported having acquired skills, techniques and knowledge to address their personal and academic challenges. The success is evident via direct and indirect measures.

**Client Satisfaction**

A client satisfaction survey was administered during the academic year. Several clients elected to continue their counseling services. The results of the survey show the CC was successful in its overall mission of providing counseling assistance to the USF community.

CC plays an integral role in student retention. The clients who completed the satisfaction survey were asked about their intent of leaving USF.

**My Experience in counseling has positively affected the chance that I will remain at USF**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
4	14	22	33	293	65

**Wellness Center**

The USF Wellness Center that serves our student community had a very positive year. The staff at the Wellness Center continue to provide stellar services to our students. This year, 719 students were provided medical care due to illness and injuries, 30 Flu vaccines, 54 TDaP, 3 MMR, 96 TB, 30 Meningitis, 48 referrals to an N.P., and 2 referrals to M.D.

**Professional Development**

September 30, 2016

Ethical Dilemmas and Decision Making in Behavioral Health: How to Practice in a Safe and Ethical Way

October 7, 2016

Internal Family Systems Therapy (IFS): A Revolutionary & Transformative Treatment of PTSD, Anxiety

February 17, 2017

Chicago School - Ethical Lens in Supervision

OBJECTIVES, GOALS,  
STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:

A TOOL TO ACHIEVE  
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

One of the objectives Residence Education and Student Life focused on in 2016–2017 is helping students build meaningful relationships while creating an interdependent support system. Our goals in this area includes increasing the number of peer leader connections to students and increasing the number of persistent students. To achieve these goals we worked with the Resident Assistants to focus their efforts on relationship building with their residents. The RAs completed over 3,000 logged intentional interactions with their students. This was an increase from 2015–2016. Also through the Educational Benchmark Institute Survey completed in Spring of 2017, we were able to identify several other successes towards this objective. Spring 2017 residents indicated they were satisfied with their student staff at a statistically significant higher than our peers which included Baldwin-Wallace College, Carroll University, Elmhurst College, John Carroll University, Benedictine College and Saint Leo University. Residents also indicated they were more satisfied with their learning connected to personal interactions. In this area we were ranked 8th out of the 262 universities which administered the survey. Also, our residents' opinions of their overall learning during their residential experience was significantly higher than our peer institutions as listed above. In this area, we were ranked 8th out of 262 other institutions.

## Professional Development

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Attended the Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers Conference

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Advised the Illinois Residence Hall Association executive board

One department objective that Student Life focused on was helping students to integrate knowledge, ideas and experiences to create self-understanding and personal growth. Within this area the goal of building communities with students was a goal which was achieved. Student Life specifically created marketing materials to share with students on how they can create their own club at both the involvement fair and the Student Government Association meetings. Through this effort two new clubs were created. In addition, Student Life worked to bring more Greek Life organizations to campus. This included engaging with two sororities and one fraternity. Two of those organizations moved forward with completing an organization application and one of those two will begin the colonization process this fall. Lastly, within the Student Life area through orientation the orientation survey 85% of the first year class indicated that as a result of orientation they understood their academic expectations and their responsibilities as a student. We are using this information as a base line to help us continue to build on the goal of helping students with self-understanding.

OBJECTIVES, GOALS,  
STRATEGIES, AND MEASURES:

A TOOL TO ACHIEVE  
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

In 2016–2017 academic year a new Director was hired for the Safety & Security Office. In this new role the director began by completing analysis of the department training and processes. Every security officer and dispatcher have been assessed to capture their knowledge of best practices. A tabletop exercise with a majority of the staff present was conducted during the summer of 2017. The security officers and dispatchers were given an example of a violent situation requiring their actual response. This assessment exercise led to a change in procedure including clarifying each employee’s role in various situations. This also led to more training with each shift to ensure proper response and application of procedures .

The campus-wide Crises Management Team including the Dean of Students, Mission Integration, Office of Institutional Diversity, Athletics, Maintenance, Residence Education and Information Technology went through a tabletop exercise. This group identified areas of opportunity for improvement within response of the Safety & Security Office. From this exercise the process by which communication flows from Safety Officers to Dispatch Officers and Joliet Police Department, as needed, has been improved. Also, steps are being taken to update the Active Shooter Policy, Emergency Operations Manual and Violent Active Threat Response Manual. These changes will be put to the test in a large scale practice in summer of 2018. All agencies who would normally respond to a violent event will be on campus to assess responses.

Another area of improvement which was analyzed in 2016–2017 was the current parking process including signage. In reviewing direct feedback from Joliet emergency personnel and current staff, it was determined that identifying all USF parking lots with more detailed signage is necessary. In 2016–2017 the updated signage was developed. Currently, Marketing is designing the signage which will be installed this academic year.

Presently, Safety & Security Office has 134 cameras in strategic locations necessary to combat criminal behavior on campus. In 2016–2017 academic year Safety and Security collaborated with Joliet Police Department on three separate incidents, where USF was able to provide them footage. The JPD was able to apprehend suspects with the support of the Safety and Security Office. The department is focusing on identifying new areas and installing cameras to capture events allowing proper prosecution and aid in deterring future crimes. To assess where new cameras are needed, the department reviewed past criminal behavior, high foot traffic areas and specific requests. This ultimately improved communication between JPD and USF Safety & Security Office. Also, this creates a safer environment for students and employees.

## Professional Development

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July 2017

Attended Title IX Training  
Aurora University  
Aurora, IL

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June 2017

First Aid/CPR/Narcan Certification  
USF  
Joliet, IL

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July 2017

Tabletop Exercise violent active  
threat exercise  
USF  
Joliet, IL

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August 2017

Crises Management in the  
Median Seminar  
Argonne National Laboratories  
Darien, IL





UNIVERSITY OF  
**ST FRANCIS**

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JOLIET, ILLINOIS