

# Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness Annual Report 2020-2021

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Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

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## Overview

This report, produced annually, summarizes FIT's assessment efforts and the use of results for evidence-based decision making. It focuses on activities led or managed by The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE), which include academic program review, administrative program review, assessment of program learning outcomes and general education outcomes, and surveys used for assessment. It highlights key findings and examples of changes made or planned based on assessment findings.

In 2020-2021, FIT operated remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This was challenging and stressful for faculty, staff, and students. Assessment continued during this period, helping FIT demonstrate the continuation of strong learning during the pandemic. Some assessment activities were postponed, due to the circumstances of the pandemic and increased faculty workload.

Assessment of educational effectiveness and, more broadly, institutional effectiveness, are key criteria for receiving reaccreditation by Middle States in spring 2022. The self-study provides strong evidence that FIT has integrated regular assessment practices into operations and uses findings in decision-making.

### Highlights

- FIT held its first virtual program reviews due to the continuing remote operations.
- The Institutional Assessment Plan, called Assessment at FIT: An Overview, was completed to provide detailed information to support the MSCHE self-study. This document outlines assessment practices across all areas of FIT.
- For the third year, academic programs submitted the annual reports documenting assessment of student learning in November 2020. Due to the pandemic's effect on spring 2020, when student work is usually assessed, many programs were unable to complete the reports.
- Three general education assessment projects were completed; they find that learning remained strong during remote operations.

## 1. Academic Program Review

By March 2020, reviews for both Advertising and Digital Design and Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing had been scheduled, but had to be postponed due to the rapid move to remote operations. In fall 2020, programs undergoing review were given a choice of having virtual site visits in fall 2020, or waiting until spring 2021 for the chance of an on-site visit. When FIT determined that remote operations would continue in spring 2021, virtual visits were planned. In addition to ADD and CFM, Entrepreneurship and Global Fashion Management hosted virtual visits.

Overall, virtual visits were successful. They were easier to schedule and it was easier to recruit desirable reviewers without the need for travel. Something was lost in not having in-person interactions or the ability for reviewers to see certain spaces. However, the visits were acceptable and could be considered an option in the future.

Wrap-up discussions after reviews sometimes take place in the subsequent academic year, since program chairs need time to review the report and discuss it with their faculty. With the added faculty workload of the pandemic, a few wrap-up discussions took longer to schedule than usual.

### Academic Program Reviews: Status, 2020-2021:

Program	Status of Review
Art Market (MA)	Wrap-up discussion from spring 2020 was delayed until fall 2020 due to changes in SGS leadership; the discussion took place in November 2020.
Interior Design (AAS, BFA)	Wrap-up discussion from the CIDA visit in October 2019 took place in December 2020.
Graphic Design (BFA)	Site visit took place in February 2020. Wrap-up discussion took place in December 2020.
Visual Presentation and Exhibition Design (BFA)	Site visit took place in February 2020. Wrap-up discussion took place in February 2021.
Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing (BS)	Site visit took place virtually in March 2021. Wrap-up discussion took place in April 2021.
Global Fashion Management (MPS)	Site visit took place virtually in March 2021. Wrap-up discussion took place in April 2021.
Advertising and Digital Design (BFA)	Site visit took place virtually in April 2021 and the reviewers' report was received in the summer. A wrap-up meeting will be schedule in mid-to-late Fall 2021 semester.
Entrepreneurship (BS)	Site visit took place virtually in May 2021 and the reviewers' report has been received. Wrap-up meeting will be schedule in mid-to-late Fall 2021 semester.

## Assessment Methods for Academic Program Reviews

**Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing:** CFM systematically reviews student learning outcomes with multiple measures as required for ACBSP accreditation. Faculty apply rubrics to capstone projects, assess knowledge of core business knowledge through the Peregrine business exam, and gather feedback about student impressions of their learning from exit surveys. In addition, industry professionals use rubrics to grade students on their final presentations. After reviewing recent rubrics as well as Peregrine results, faculty determined that improvement was needed in knowledge of business finance, as well as statistics and quantitative research. Instructors in the capstone introduced more business finance content into the course. In addition, the program worked with the math department to add a new class in data analytics.

**Advertising and Digital Design:** Several faculty members assessed senior projects with rubrics. Students met or exceed faculty expectations in all areas, although faculty think there is room for improvement in several areas.

**Entrepreneurship:** The program assesses program learning outcomes using rubrics in key classes such as EP 452 and EP 321. Students have been meeting expectations. Formative assessment is also given by faculty and in some cases professional industry critics.

**Global Fashion Marketing:** Capstone projects are assessed with a rubric. The rubric stresses breadth and depth of primary and secondary resources as well as original research questions. The vast majority of students met the goals. For those that do not meet objectives, the problem often stems from lack of familiarity with the research process and a struggle to analyze and edit data. Due to this issue, the capstone project has been divided into more manageable segments.

### Action Plan Highlights:

**Graphic Design:** The program seeks to increase its public profile by designing a GD website and organizing a speaker series open to the public. The program will increase the breadth of several projects to include specific contemporary contexts or formats/media.

**VPED:** VPED is seeking to change its name to Spatial Experience Design. It also plans to modify VP 301, DE 216, and VP 311. In addition, it is pursuing changes in the modern language general education requirement, in addition to the internship program. The chair will work with FIT Space Planning regarding optimization of studio, workshop, and storage space.

**CFM:** The program will revise several courses and offer new courses in color cosmetics, beauty entrepreneurship, and health and wellness. In addition, the department plans to develop online courses and increase independent study opportunities for highly motivated students. The department is considering a “lab fee” policy and is also working with admissions regarding increased departmental input.

**GFM:** GFM seeks to increase class size and recruit more professionally experienced students by contacting HR departments within industry. The program has added four additional credits to the capstone thesis in order to increase ideation and research time. In addition, the program is adding a leadership course and updating supply chain content in courses. Finally, the program

will engage adjuncts in conversations about the overall program to ensure a broad view of the curriculum and avoid content overlap.

**Entrepreneurship** and **Advertising and Digital Design** action plans will be finalized in fall 2021.

**Academic Program Review in Progress or to begin in 2021-2022:**

<b>Academic Program</b>	<b>Status</b>
Film and Media AAS, BFA	Self-study drafted; ready to select reviewers and schedule visit for 2021-22.
Production Management AAS, BS	Self-study drafted; ready to select reviewers and schedule visit for 2021-22.
Direct and Interactive Marketing BS	Self-study drafted; ready to select reviewers and schedule visit for 2021-22.
Fashion Design AAS, BFA	Self-study is in progress. Visit planned for spring 2022 or fall 2022.
Illustration AAS, BFA	To begin self-study in spring 2022 for fall 2022 site visit.
International Trade and Marketing BS	To begin self-study in fall 2021.

Film and Media, Production Management, and Direct and Interactive Marketing began writing self-studies in 2020-21 with the aim of hosting site visits in fall 2021. The review for fashion design has been delayed several times due to changes in leadership as well as the pandemic. The program made a lot of progress in 2020-21, as faculty revised learning outcomes, created a new curriculum map, revised assessment rubrics, and created a new assessment plan. The self-study is partially drafted as well. Although there is a new chair this fall (Mary Wilson), the review and site visit should proceed this spring, or next fall at the latest. The Illustration (AAS/BFA) program and International Trade and Marketing will begin self-studies this year, with site visits expected in fall 2022.

Earlier this year, the Executive Director of Assessment calculated the amount of time between site visits for all academic program reviews since 2012. While reviews are supposed to occur on a 7-year cycle, many are delayed for various reasons, so that the average length between reviews is 8.5 years and a few reviews are a decade apart. This information was presented to Jack Oliva and Yasemin Jones, as well as the academic deans; Calvin Williamson, current Senate Faculty President, and Sarah Blazer, Chair of the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee in a memo proposing a return to the “five-year review” cycle. The review cycle will be changed to a scheduled expectation of five years, so that even if there are occasional delays, seven years should be the longest gap between reviews. It will take several years to get the schedule back on track to this timeframe, due to the backlog.

## 2. Administrative Review and Assessment

Only one administrative program completed program review in the past year; the Office of International Programs hosted a virtual site visit in March and a wrap-up discussion was held in April. Reviews for two EMSS programs, Student Life and Athletics & Recreation, were postponed since in-person visits are essential for those areas.

Now that only units in EMSS and Academic Affairs go through this process, there are fewer reviews each year.

### Administrative Reviews for 2021-2022

Division	Office	Status of Review
EMSS	Student Life	Self-study drafted; ready to select reviewers and schedule visit.
EMSS	Athletics and Recreation	Self-study in progress.
Academic Affairs	Grants	Self-study in progress.
Academic Affairs	Presidential Scholars	Self-study process was launched in spring 2020 but delayed due to Covid pandemic. It will be restarted in fall 2021 with a visit planned for spring 2022.

**Assessment Methods, Office of International Programs:** OIP conducts surveys on a variety of issues to assess satisfaction and inform decision making. Diversity and Inclusion in Study Abroad was evaluated through a survey and focus groups. Every three years, both faculty and students are surveyed regarding satisfaction, and occasional surveys ask students about interest in study abroad. In addition, students on short-term programs fill out evaluations. An internal audit examined agreements, finances and budget, risk management, and travel policies. The office has recently developed learning outcomes for study abroad programs.

**Action Plan Highlights, Office of International Programs:** OIP plans to update its strategic plan, conduct a review of campuses abroad, increase FIT programs and collaborations with Politecnico di Milano and Polimoda, expand COIL, and incentive faculty to internationalize their classroom and the curriculum, as well as several other items.

## 3. General Education Assessment

Assessment of general education continued during remote operations. The Written Communication and Mathematics assessment projects, delayed by Covid from spring 2020 resumed, assessing student work in fall 2020. Wrap-up discussions were held in spring 2021.

Three assessment projects scheduled for 2020-21 proceeded; faculty coordinators met with IRE’s Executive Director and the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee in fall 2020 (virtually) and conducted assessments in spring 2021. They will complete and present reports in fall 2021.

**General Education Assessments In-Progress or Completed, 2020-2021:**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Status of Review</b>
The Arts	The coordinator presented the report to the Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee (FSAAC) in fall 2020 and the wrap-up meeting was held in February, 2021.
Written Communication	Student work was assessed in fall 2020. The report was written and presented to FSAAC, and the wrap-up discussion was held, in spring 2021.
Mathematics	Student work was assessed in fall 2020. The report was written and presented to FSAAC, and the wrap-up discussion was held, in spring 2021.
Western Civilization	Assessment conducted in spring 2021. Wrap-up phase will occur in fall 2021.
Other World Civilizations	Assessment conducted in spring 2021. Wrap-up phase will occur in fall 2021.
Modern Languages	Assessment conducted in spring 2021. Wrap-up phase will occur in fall 2021.

**Assessment Methods and Results, 2020-2021**

**The Arts**

**Brief Summary of Assessment Method:** The assessment project included 46% of all G6 The Arts courses (12 of 26 courses) offered in Spring 2020 and 30% of all G6 The Arts sections (13 of 44 sections), with courses from English and Communication Studies; Film, Media and Performing Arts; History of Art; and Modern Language and Cultures, taught by full-time and adjunct faculty. Faculty evaluated their students’ learning applying the G6 The Arts Interdisciplinary Scoring Rubric and also answered a series of questions regarding their experiences teaching The Arts. Faculty discussed student learning in The Arts at a series of meetings as well.

**Brief Summary of Assessment Findings:** Student work assessed applying the G6 The Arts Interdisciplinary Scoring Rubric evidenced a mean response of 3.4 to 3.5 out of 4 across 4 learning objectives, with the majority of students “Exceeding” and “Meeting” expectations. Qualitative analysis of the varied assignments used for G6 The Arts assessment revealed an emphasis on student agency (allowing students to shape projects, select topics, and direct focus) and a modeling of critical thinking through well-crafted directions, leading questions, and

scaffolded assignments. These aspects of assignment design support students in achieving their best work. Qualitative analysis of faculty members' teaching experiences in G6 The Arts revealed emphasis on genre and medium, collaboration among students, and ethical understanding as emergent themes important to G6 The Arts instruction. One area of challenge in G6 The Arts relates to students with insufficient historical, political, philosophical and/or sociological background to perform sophisticated analysis of works of art within their contexts.

**Action Plan:** Departments to review their courses and curricula certified as meeting The Arts; Departments to remind faculty teaching G6 courses of learning outcomes. Liberal arts faculty plan to organize an event or interdisciplinary student exhibition in The Arts pending funding.

### Written Communication

**Brief Summary of Assessment Method:** Instructors assessed the final draft of a research-based assignment from a random sample of students enrolled in EN 121, EN 362, and ES 129. Faculty teaching the courses also submitted the relevant assignment instructions/handout. Samples were anonymized and coded, and twelve instructors participated in a norming session to discuss scoring standards using the existing rubric. These instructors came from all three G1 courses assessed and represent both full-time and part-time faculty. Once faculty had completed norming, faculty scored the samples using a rubric, as well as providing an overall score. In addition, students taking a G1 course were surveyed regarding their impressions of learning. Participating faculty met to discuss results and develop recommendations

**Brief Summary of Assessment Findings:** Students in EN 121: English Composition showed a consistent performance with a slight improvement when compared against the results of the 2016 cycle of G1 writing assessment. Faculty expect to see even more improvement when classes are in person. Scores in EN 362, the requirement for the Presidential Scholars, declined. Faculty reports from recent years had noted this, observing variability in student preparedness in the course, and a newly developed course to replace in Fall 2021 has already been passed. Notably, the Content category represents the lowest score for each of the three courses and overall. These results may indicate that students are often able to correctly cite and quote sources but may struggle to use source material in ways that are meaningful to their own purpose or argument. Additional findings from the student survey showed a need for greater consistency in genres taught, though students indicate overall satisfaction with G1 instruction and content.

**Action Plan:** In addition to some recently completed actions, the department will plan faculty development programming to address current needs in relation to writing pedagogy. They will also update the writing rubric to clarify research writing expectations in order to achieve greater consistency among courses.



## Mathematics

**Brief Summary of Assessment Method:** In order to evaluate the effect of going remote, the department decided to compare final exam scores from Fall 2019 to those from Fall 2020. Mathematics instructors were asked to self-report if they were giving identical final exams in those two semesters. Two instructors offered final exam scores from a total of seven sections. In addition, all data from the MA 080 sections on the Hawkes Learning platform could be compared, 19 sections in all.

**Brief Summary of Assessment Findings:** For the most part, the FIT students learning mathematics remotely performed similarly in their final exams as the students who met with their classes in person a year before. The only potential difference found in this study occurred in the Math Emporium final exams where the remote sections scored slightly higher on average but had more variance in the scores. The average time spent working through the Hawkes curriculum was similar between fall 2019 (48 hours) and fall 2020 (47 hours).

Some remote students may have been tempted to get help that was not allowed during the course. It would be fairly easy to use internet searches and online calculators to get through most of the curriculum since there no one is watching you in person. However, the Honorlock proctoring system is designed to prevent the usage of help during the final exam. Even though students were warned about the strictness of the proctoring system, this may explain some of the low outliers from Fall 2020; a student might not have been truly prepared for the final exam although they were able to get through the Hawkes curriculum.

**Action Plan:** Since remote teaching technologies provide some benefits, the department will seek to promote them even when in-person instruction returns. It will encourage instructors to record their lessons and post them, organizing a workshop with CET for support. In addition, the department will explore making online tutoring a part of office hours.

### **General Education Assessments Scheduled for 2021-2022:**

Two projects were delayed until 2021-22: oral communication, because it is preferable to assess speaking skills in-person, and critical thinking, to spread out the assessment projects given Covid delays. In addition, assessments will be conducted for the social sciences and the natural sciences.

The SUNY Board of Trustees is expected to pass new General Education requirements by the end of June 2021. Projects next year may be structured to look forward and look at how the new learning outcomes are taught and at student achievement.

## 4. Assessment of Student Learning in Programs

Assessment of program learning outcomes was disrupted in this past year due to the Covid pandemic. The annual assessment reports due in November 2020 are based on assessment conducted during the previous academic year, and most programs assess student capstone work during the spring. Therefore, some of the customary assessment practices may not have been possible. Programs were given the option of providing a narrative report summarizing faculty reflects on the effect of the shift to remote instruction on student learning instead of the usual template, which asks for direct assessment of student learning outcomes, and several programs chose this option. However, many programs did not submit reports in the fall 2020, as teaching remotely continued to be time consuming and challenging for all.

As a reminder, the seven B&T programs (Fashion Business Management, Advertising and Marketing Communications, International Trade and Marketing, Home Products Development, Production Management, Textile Development and Marketing, and Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing report through the ACBSP accreditation structure. Interior Design, in the School of Art & Design, reports through CIDA accreditation.

The chart on the following page summarizes assessment methods, findings, and use of evidence from programs that submitted PLO assessment reports in 2020.

Program Learning Outcomes, 2019-2020 Assessment; Report due November 2020

Program Name	School	Degrees	Report Status	Methods used	Findings/Proposed improvements from Assessment/past use of results
Footwear and Accessories Design	A&D	AAS, BFA	Submitted	Reflection, assessment of student work in several courses	Senior BFA students presented strong senior thesis projects and portfolios despite the circumstances. The program made several changes for the fall 2020 semester as a result of the student Covid survey in spring 2020, including faculty training, and adjustments to projects, deadlines and rubrics.
Advertising Design	A&D	BFA	Data reported in Academic Program Review	Five ADD faculty assessed the senior projects using a rubric.	While student scores were sufficient to meet the learning outcomes, faculty would like scores to be higher to exceed the criteria.
Art History and Museum Professions	LIB	BS	Submitted	Reflection, evaluation of capstone projects with rubric	Expansion of co-curricular aspects of program has increased professional knowledge and leadership in students. Assessment revealed that digital presentation skills need strengthening, and is developing a new courses on "Digital Art History" that emphasizes these skills.
Entrepreneurship	B&T	BS	Submitted	Assessment of projects in two courses, using rubrics	Students met expectations and strengths and weaknesses were consistent with faculty expectations. Results in a few areas were lower due to the disruptions of the pandemic.
Film and Media	LIB	AAS, BS	Submitted	Rotating AAS and BS degree assessment; this year, learning outcomes in the AAS were evaluated. Assessment of exam essays using rubric.	Students exceeded faculty expectations in use of analytical terms and use of knowledge of cinema history in analyzing films. Program will continue to support this learning by further coordination of multiple sections on Introduction to Film and increasing focus on writing and speaking about film.
Global Fashion Management	Grad	MPS	Submitted	Reflection on student learning	Learning outcomes in the international seminar courses, which rely on in-person, multicultural teamwork, were impacted, since remote interactions did not provide the same level of immersion as the in-person international work. Learning in other courses has remained strong.

Illustration	A&D	AAS, BFA	Submitted	Reflection on student learning	Faculty have been archiving samples of student work for future review. Remote teaching has compromised the one-on-one faculty-student experience; hands-on instruction is better than virtual for some aspects of teaching. Nevertheless, faculty see some potentialities of blended classrooms in certain limited areas of teaching which may be explored in the future. Program continues to work on maintaining and building student drawing skills throughout the BFA. Based on past assessments, the program has improved color mixing as this faculty skill group has met more frequently and faculty have shared methods with each other.
Jewelry Design	A&D	AAS	Submitted	Reflection on student learning.	Remote learning impacted various courses differently. Design and CAD courses were able to transition with little difficulty. Fabrication courses were the most difficult to translate; nevertheless, jewelry students were able to craft successful pieces. As a whole, faculty become more digitally savvy, and found a capacity for flexibility and creative solutions.
Technical Design	B&T	BS	Submitted	Reflection on student learning	Students struggle most with knowledge of fabric properties; TD program is working with TDM department to make curricular changes in Textile Science course that supports TD students. Improvements made in software proficiency with addition of Leo Stream technology.

## Sponsor ratings of interns

Students enrolled in placements supported by CIS and enrolled in IC class sections are evaluated by their sponsors on a variety of important professional skills. These ratings serve as an additional indicator regarding student learning at FIT, as all FIT programs emphasize preparing students for professions.

### Sponsor Ratings of Interns (Academic Year) 2020-2021

	Question	N	Avg.	% top 2
Professionalism	Punctuality	479	4.83	97%
	Attendance	479	4.85	98%
	Calls when absent or late	441	4.88	98%
	Adheres to company dress code	332	4.94	100%
Skills	Verbal skills: clear, concise and effective	486	4.72	98%
	Writing skills: clear, concise and effective (if appropriate)	467	4.72	97%
	Presentation skills (if appropriate)	420	4.74	98%
Attitude	Enthusiastic	487	4.80	97%
Responsibility	Does her/his own share of necessary tasks to complete projects	486	4.82	98%
	Uses time effectively	487	4.69	95%
	Meets deadlines	487	4.78	96%
	Assignments are accurate and complete	487	4.74	96%
Team Player	Follows instructions and listens well	487	4.79	97%
	Contributes ideas and effort to the group	472	4.71	97%
	Works well with supervisor and coworkers	485	4.90	99%
	Willingness to help	486	4.91	99%
Initiative	Keeps current on new industry trends and developments in area of work	470	4.70	95%
	Shows resourcefulness in evaluating options and in troubleshooting; thinks through execution and consequences	477	4.68	94%

## 5. Surveys

This year, IRE administered or coordinated 30 surveys, given for a variety of purposes. Selected surveys, particularly those relating to student learning and success, are highlighted below.

Some of the typical spring survey plans were disrupted by the pandemic. IRE usually administers exit surveys to Art & Design students in their 4th and 8th semesters, asking about experiences in their entire program. Since the survey is usually given by faculty in classes, and offers comparative information from year to year, IRE decided not to administer it since it would be difficult to obtain adequate response rates remotely.

## AY2020-2021: Selected Surveys

Survey	Timeframe	Response rate
Grad School Dean's Fellowship Evaluation Form	July 2020	80%
FIT Fall Open Studio Interest	August 2020	57%
NSSE Pulse	October 2020	7%
OIP Stakeholders	October 2020	53%
Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs	October 2020	69%
FIT Foundation Donor Survey	April 2021	4%
Menswear AAS Survey Alumni	March 2021	44%
Current FIT Menswear Students	March 2021	81%
FIT Fashion Design Faculty PLO Survey	March 2021	65%
FIT Fashion Design Student Survey - BFA/Alumni	March 2021	33%
FIT Fashion Design Student Survey – AAS	March 2021	41%

Highlights this year included surveys in support of the Office of International Programs administrative review, which obtained general feedback from OIP stakeholders as well from faculty leading study abroad programs. IRE worked with the Fashion Design department to survey their faculty and students about perceptions of the program and their learning to gather information for revising the program learning outcomes. Menswear students were surveyed about interest in a potential BFA program.

The NSSE Pulse report was designed by the National Survey of Student Engagement, which FIT administers every three years, to gather information on student engagement during the Covid pandemic. As FIT had administered the full NSSE survey a few weeks prior to the pandemic, it was able to compare some of the responses between years. The survey found that most students considered to find their courses quite challenging and that first-year students felt particularly well supported by FIT's services.

## 6. Conclusion

During the pandemic, many forms of assessment continued. Some of these helped FIT make plans during remote operations and better understand the effects upon student learning. This report is provided to the FIT community in order to communicate some of the forms of assessment and types of information available. If anyone would like additional information on any of the assessment projects and surveys mentioned, please contact the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.