The Institutional Effectiveness process for The Art Institutes is a comprehensive system of planning and evaluation encompassing all major aspects of the institution. A detailed description of the process is contained in The Art Institutes: Institutional Effectiveness Process.

The central component of the Institutional Effectiveness process is a continuous improvement cycle. An Institutional Effectiveness report is completed by all departments of the institution on an annual basis. Educational programs, administrative and educational support areas use the Institutional Effectiveness form to develop a plan for assessment of departmental goals. The Institutional Effectiveness plan is composed of the area mission statement, goals, assessment tools, criteria for success, assessment findings, and use of results. At the beginning of each assessment cycle, the department reviews the unit mission, reviews the mission in relation to the institutional mission, determines departmental goals appropriate for the function of the area, and determines the level of accomplishment that will be considered successful for each assessment tool. During the assessment cycle, the department collects and analyzes data and determines the degree to which each goal has been accomplished. Final analysis results in development of plans on how the results will be used to improve educational programs and services. Educational program goals will almost exclusively focus on desired student learning outcomes, whereas administrative and educational support areas will contain operational and/or outcome-based goals. Completed Institutional Effectiveness reports for each campus are compiled and referred to as the Institutional Effectiveness report. These reports are available in the president’s office of each campus. The office of institutional effectiveness and research evaluates the reports submitted for completeness, analysis of mission completion, and review of budgetary impact. The Institutional Effectiveness reports from all campuses are used to determine the degree of accomplishment of the institutional mission. Completion of the Institutional Effectiveness report is immediately followed by development of a plan for the next planning and assessment cycle.