



## Overview

### INSTITUTION:

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY  
WWW.OLLUSA.EDU

### PROFILE:

Our Lady of the Lake is a private, independent, Catholic university with a total student population of approximately 3,000. Its lakeside main campus, located in San Antonio, Texas, together with the *Weekend College* campuses in Houston, offer bachelor's degrees in 58 areas of study, master's in 48 areas and 2 doctoral degree programs. This offering includes 5 dual-language undergraduate programs.

### CHALLENGE:

To identify and adopt an institution-wide solution to manage the planning and evaluation initiative, as well as a repository for record-keeping and documentation related to accreditation requirements.

### SOLUTION:

TracDat by Nuventive presents a complete solution to manage the entire assessment process, including improving organizational alignment by linking course and program objectives that support the strategic plan and mission, and to store, manage and report the documentation critical for successful accreditation.

## TracDat Energizes Institution-Wide Planning and Evaluation at Our Lady of the Lake University

*"TracDat has not only proved to be an effective platform for our planning, assessment, and reporting needs, but has also helped energize the planning and evaluation efforts across the institution."*

*-Dr. Howard Benoist, Executive Vice President and Chief Planning Officer*

Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU), established in 1895, has a rich history and a deep connection to San Antonio, Texas. OLLU is listed as one of the nation's top Western Master's universities in U.S. News & World Report's annual ranking of American colleges and universities, as well as a national ranking in the top 100 colleges for Hispanics by The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine.

Our Lady of the Lake strives for excellence in education and understands that the key to maintaining the desired level of the effectiveness of both student services and its outcomes-oriented curriculum is the commitment to continuous improvement, resulting in the achievement of measured progress towards the institution's mission

### Accepting the Challenge

Following The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) review in the Fall of 2002, Our Lady of the Lake's accreditation was reaffirmed. However, the SACS review stated that improvement was needed in the areas of planning, assessment, and evaluation and effectiveness procedures. As a result, OLLU took immediate action on planning by appointing a full-time Chief Planning Officer as well as strengthening the Effectiveness Office. But the specification and particularly, the documentation of planning and assessment activities and systems needed a considerable amount of improvement on both the academic and administrative sides.

The university began a review of its unit planning and assessment efforts to ensure consistency and to develop critical elements such as unit objectives, assessment measures and criteria for evaluation, for each program. While undertaking this effort, it became increasingly apparent that managing the entire institutional planning and assessment process, including establishing, documenting and sharing the practices as well as utilizing the critical data, would present a formidable challenge.

### Shared Technology Enhances Concerted Effort

As part of the initial response to the SACS reaffirmation review and comments, Our Lady of the Lake University also undertook a search to identify a solution that could support the management of the institution-wide planning and assessment initiative,

## TRACDAT BENEFITS:

- ✓ Supporting documents and evidence linked to the plan
- ✓ Systematic approach establishes a common understanding and language
- ✓ Define and align goals among all levels of the institution and external accrediting agencies
- ✓ Accessibility to develop, review and revise assessment plan from any Web browser
- ✓ Robust reporting
- ✓ Real time visibility into the assessment process
- ✓ Integrate new strategies for continuous improvement
- ✓ Monitor and report on progress

## COMMENTS:

*“Because the system works well and its value is evident to the campus users, they are more receptive to the university’s efforts to improve unit plans (...) and the evaluation and documentation of results.”*

*“TracDat’s systematic approach has made it an agent for improvement in the areas of planning and evaluation.”*

Dr. Howard Benoist, Executive Vice President and Chief Planning Officer

and include its acquisition under a related Federal Title V grant. OLLU’s extensive search resulted in the discovery and selection of TracDat by Nuventive, an enterprise planning and assessment solution, which was subsequently obtained under the grant.

OLLU achieved considerable progress by the time TracDat was implemented. “While we were doing a good deal of planning and evaluation at the institutional and unit level, we did not have effective procedures for documenting, correlating and reporting these efforts,” said Dr. Howard Benoist, Executive Vice President and Chief Planning Officer.

TracDat offers a systematic approach to implementation and management of the entire assessment process and establishes a shared understanding of methodology and terminology. It enables sharing of successful assessment techniques and best practices within the institution. TracDat’s valuable reporting capabilities illustrate the alignment between course objectives and the program and institutional objectives, as well as demonstrate how assessment results are being used to improve programs and show continuous improvement and student achievement.

### Dual Benefits

TracDat provides two main benefits to Our Lady of the Lake. The first is that it operates as an institution-wide solution that streamlines a cumbersome manual process and establishes consistent methodology for implementing, updating, documenting, and reporting on planning, assessment and institutional effectiveness. The university now has an efficient, electronic process for tracking university-wide and program-specific objectives, assessment procedures, assessment results, and use of those results to improve institutional effectiveness.

Secondly, the TracDat implementation process heightened the awareness and importance of planning and evaluation and the need to document efforts in these areas at all levels of the institution. “TracDat’s systematic approach has made it an agent for improvement in the areas of planning and evaluation,” stated Dr. Benoist.

“TracDat has not only proved to be an effective platform for our planning, assessment, and reporting needs, but has also helped energize the planning and evaluation efforts across the institution. Because the system works well and its value is evident to the campus users, they are more receptive to the university’s efforts to improve unit plans and the evaluation and documentation of results,” explained Dr. Benoist. “We have implemented TracDat for academic and administrative units throughout the institution with successful results.”

Nuventive  
9800 B McKnight Road  
Suite 255  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Phone: +1 412 847 0280  
Toll Free: 1 877 366 8700  
Fax: +1 412 847 0285  
Email: info@nuventive.com

