

# Standard 6

## Student Services



### **Executive summary:**

The School provides students with the support and services that promote learning for timely completion of their plan of study. Each freshman student has an assigned faculty adviser in the School and an academic coach in the Student Success Center. The School has a student services director who serves as the first contact when students enter the School as freshmen. After the first semester, the student is assigned a faculty adviser who guides the student through registration and our program. There are numerous extracurricular activities in the School, including the award-winning student media, The Maroon, the Shawn M. Donnelley Center for Nonprofit Communications, AAF, PRSSA, NABJ, RTDNA and SPJ. The unit gathers, maintains and analyzes enrollment, retention and graduation rates and publishes that [data](#) on the School's website.

- 1. Complete and attach Table 9 “Student Aid.” (Appendix H)**
- 2. Describe how the unit informs students of the requirements of the degree and the major, advises them on effective and timely ways to meet the requirements, and monitors their compliance with the requirements, including the 72-hour rule. Provide digital files of advising guides, manuals, newsletters or other internal communication with students. Provide a print copy in the workroom. Describe availability and accessibility of faculty to students.**

Each freshman and new student is given the [Student Resource Manual](#), which includes a degree program course listing ([DPCL](#)) describing all required courses and elective opportunities. The student services director speaks to students in the Intro to Mass Communication course, which all entering majors take. Emails are sent on the student listservs, and faculty announce advising dates in their classes. Further, the Student Success Center is staffed with general academic advisers familiar with every program at Loyola and can counsel any student who might be having trouble with their faculty adviser or who have any questions at all.

Full-time faculty advise students, and the student services director serves as a secondary adviser to students. Upon completion of an advising session, the faculty and the student sign the [advising form](#), and a copy is kept in the student file. All faculty hold office hours; faculty email their advisees to have them sign up for appointments during the advising/registration period each semester. Faculty complete a registration advising form during each appointment with a proposed schedule and notes as to completion requirements; each student is given a copy of that form at the conclusion of the advising appointment.

Loyola has an **academic probation program** run by the student services director for students in the School. If a student is placed on probation, he or she meets with the student services director and signs an academic probation contract and then, with the student, comes up with an academic action plan to get off probation. During this meeting, the student services director ascertains why the student is on probation (e.g., academic difficulty, irregular attendance, illness, life issues) and then together they come up with ways to improve the student’s academic performance. The student services director then meets with the student on probation at least once a month to gauge progress.

- 3. Describe the unit’s process for evaluating its advising and counseling services. Include measurements of the accuracy of academic advising, student and faculty opinion of the quality of advising, or other indices of the effectiveness of advising. Discuss the results of these assessments.**

While the School collects no quantitative data on advising and counseling, each student with their adviser completes an advising form before the student registers. The faculty actually must clear the student to be able to register. If the student wishes to have a different faculty member become their adviser, that is allowed. Furthermore, the student services director is always available for advising, too, and students can always access services in the Student Success Center.

**4. Describe student media, student professional organizations or other extracurricular activities and opportunities provided by the unit or the institution that are relevant to the curriculum and develop students' professional and intellectual abilities and interests.**

At Loyola, we believe in educating the whole person through rigorous academic studies and plentiful cultural experiences. We encourage students to immerse themselves in campus life at Loyola by taking advantage of the many opportunities we offer.

Since before its inception as a department and school, the School has provided dynamic and strategic opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. **The Maroon**, Loyola's nearly 100-year-old student newspaper, was named Best College Media Outlet of the Year (four-year) at the 2018 College Media Association Pinnacle Awards. The publication – in its print and online formats – continues to win awards from organizations ranging from the Associated Press Media Editors, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Catholic Press Association, Louisiana Press Association, Columbia Scholastic Press Association, Princeton Review and New Orleans Press Club to the Southeast Journalism Conference. With a staff of more than 50 students from diverse campus majors, The Maroon publishes a weekly newspaper and airs the daily broadcast of "The Maroon Minute," a 1-2 minute news headline video program that has been recognized by the Louisiana/Mississippi Associated Press Media Editors, Society of Professional Journalists Region 12. In all formats news is identified, reported and produced by student staffers. Princeton Review has named the media outlet in the top five in the country.

**The Wolf** is Loyola University New Orleans' student-run magazine. The magazine is published once a month during the school year. Any Loyola student can submit a story or apply to work at The Wolf.

The **Loyola News Service** is a multimedia partnership between the Loyola journalism department and local professional media organizations that began in 2014. Students write news stories, report, shoot and produce news videos and take photographs as part of their classwork at Loyola for the media outlets. Our partners include NOLA.com/Times-Picayune/The New Orleans Advocate, Investigate TV, Uptown Messenger, the Clarion-Herald and more. (See binders with stories in the workroom.)

Loyola is home to chapters of the **Society of Professional Journalists**, the **American Advertising Federation**, the **Public Relations Student Society of America**, the **Radio Television Digital News Association** and a newly-chartered chapter of the **National Association of Black Journalists**. All five organizations have student officers, produce programming for members and network with professionals at local, regional and national meetings.

The **Loyola National Student Advertising Competition team** participates each year in the AAF National Student Advertising Competition through AAF District 7. Loyola student Alexandra Olivier was named the Richard Joel Best Presenter for the 2015 competition.

The **Loyola PRSSA Bateman Team** competes annually in the PRSSA national Bateman case study competition. In 2019 and 2017, the team received honorable mentions; was named to third place in 2014; placed second in 2016; and won first place in 2015, 2013 and 2012. Loyola New Orleans has won more Bateman competitions than any school in the country.

The **Shawn M. Donnelley Center for Nonprofit Communications** links nonprofit organizations needing assistance with their communications with students who can provide such assistance – at no charge to the organization – under faculty supervision. The Donnelley Center has been recognized with Addy awards from the Ad Club of New Orleans and Flambeaux awards from the Public Relations Association of Louisiana – New Orleans chapter. It has also been recognized with a Communicator award by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts.

**Kappa Tau Alpha**, a national college honor society that promotes academic excellence and recognizes scholarship in journalism and mass communication, is known as the Alfred Lorenz Chapter of KTA at Loyola. A student must rank in the top 10% of his/her class, have completed at least five semesters of degree work and nine credit hours of journalism or mass communication courses and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher to be eligible.

Service learning has long been integral to the School as part of the university's Jesuit mission. Several courses have and continue to partner with nonprofit organizations in the community to produce advertising and PR campaigns, logos, brochures and special events plans.

Until 2016, **SMC Networking Night at Loyola** was an annual, student-produced internship fair featuring representatives from 30+ businesses and organizations in the community and 100+ students. Independent Study students interested in special events or members of the event planning class organized the event, which engaged many alumni and invited communication students from seven other colleges and universities in the area. Networking Night has transformed into Networking Day, overseen by the Loyola Career Center, and has nearly doubled the number of organizations participating.

**5. Describe the unit's career counseling and placement strategy for assistance in students' searches for employment. List placement statistics for the three most recent years before the self-study year for which accurate information is available.**

Although the university has no formal placement operation, the School does a number of things to help students obtain employment upon graduation. Students are required to take a one-hour Senior Seminar course in which students complete their digital portfolios, including their resume and work experience and samples of their work. Students must also complete LinkedIn profiles and learn job-hunting and budgeting skills for success after graduation.

These digital portfolios are part of the School's assessment plan. Industry professionals, who are often also alumni, are brought in each spring for portfolio reviews, and each senior participates. Many professionals use the review as an opportunity to "scout talent." The students may also use the services of the university career placement center, Handshake, to search for employment. The School has also brought in a talent recruiter from Gray Media to

conduct additional interviews with students. Seniors are also eligible to join the Loyno Legion, a closed Facebook group that posts job opportunities in related career areas.

The following represents [job placement](#) data for the school's graduates. (Appendix I) Data are acquired through the student career service in coordination and follow-up with the School using emails, phone calls and social media. It should be noted that 2018-2019 data show one of the highest percentages of employed graduates at 93%. Data from 2016-2017 show 89% of graduates employed and 2015-2016 data reveal 83% employment. It should be noted that the job placement might be even higher, but the School's inability to connect with graduates is automatically coded as "Not employed/unknown."

**6. Discuss the processes in place to collect, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention and graduation rates within the major and in comparison to university' rates. Discuss the findings of the analysis. Provide the URL where the unit shares its most recent retention and graduation data with the public.**

The School shares its enrollment, retention and graduation rates on the unit's [Student Success Page](#). Data show the number of students enrolled in the School since the last accrediting visit had a small decrease. This was at the same time that the university had a significant drop in enrollment. The total number of students in the School has increased since 2017. And in fact, unofficial numbers for fall 2019 show an increase of students from 214 to 221. When including online students, that number jumps to 241. With the newly configured School of Communication and Design, new president and with additional outreach to high schools through recruiting efforts, there is optimism and an encouraging sense of stability. Unofficial numbers for fall 2019 show the School of Communication and Design with more than 400 students.

Regarding [retention](#), it should be noted that students enroll in the School their freshman year. At Loyola, it is important to retain students at the university so we examine those students who remain at Loyola and those who remain in the major. Since the 2015 School cohort, of those students who began in the School of Mass Communication, they were retained at the Loyola at or above the all-Loyola student average. The 2015 and 2016 communication cohort from freshman to sophomore year was retained above the all-Loyola student average, with the 2017 communication cohort dipping below the all Loyola student average. With such small numbers, it is difficult to reach any major conclusions from the data. It is interesting to note that since the 2014 all-Loyola student cohort, retention has increased from 77% to 79% to 80% to 85%. The university has opened a Student Success Center, and each student has a success coach.

The School's [graduation rates](#) are similar to the university's. For example, the 2013 cohort of communication majors had a four-year graduation rate of 42%, compared with 31% of all Loyola students. Again, it should be noted that when students are accepted in their majors during their freshman year, one would expect lower retention and graduation rates compared with schools where students are not accepted into their major until the sophomore and/or junior years. (Appendix J)