RESPECT | GRADUATE SCHOOL

STAKEHOLDER EDITION

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2025–2026

Presented to the Board of Trustees and the Respect Graduate School Community

A record of institutional progress in governance, assessment, strategic planning, policy infrastructure, and priorities for the coming year.

01 • LEADERSHIP

A Message from the President

The 2025–2026 reporting period reflects the collective work of the RGS community in advancing mission, quality, and institutional effectiveness.

Dr. Suleyman Eris
President

I am pleased to present the President's Annual Report for the 2025–2026 reporting period. This report reflects the collective work of our faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, students, alumni, donors, and community partners in advancing the mission of Respect Graduate School. During the year, RGS strengthened its administrative and assessment systems, expanded institutional capacity through new faculty and staff appointments, evaluated progress on the Strategic Plan, updated its principal handbooks, and consolidated a comprehensive inventory of policies and procedures.

The institution completed 93 of 98 Strategic Plan tactics, representing an overall completion rate of approximately 95 percent, with distinguished progress in educational effectiveness and community engagement and strong progress in financial sustainability.

The report also identifies areas requiring continued attention, including stronger assessment analysis, more consistent evidence documentation, student professional development, accreditation readiness, performance evaluation, and the systematic use of assessment findings for institutional improvement. These priorities will guide the work in 2026-2027.

I extend my sincere appreciation to every member of the RGS community for your dedication, cooperation, and commitment to academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and service to the broader community.

Dr.SuleymanEris
President
Respect Graduate School

02 • REPORT OVERVIEW

2025–2026 at a Glance

Aconciseviewoftheyear'sprincipalinstitutionalmeasures,followed by the structure of this report.

STRATEGIC PLAN

95%

of tactics completed*

Institution-widecompletion rate reported in the detailed Strategic Plan summary.

STRATEGIC PLAN

93 / 98

tactics completed

POLICY INFRASTRUCTURE

332

active policies & procedures

269 policies and 63 procedures are reported in the institutional inventory.

ASSESSMENT

LIVE

centralized Assessment Portal

Role-restricted access is provided to Board members, faculty, and staff.

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03 • EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Institutional Development in Focus

The year was marked by continued institutional development and the strengthening of systems that support mission fulfillment.

RGS maintained a coordinated administrative structure in which the President's Cabinet and standing committees provided regular oversight of academic, operational, financial, student,
and community-facing activities.

A major institutional accomplishment was the implementation of a comprehensive assessment framework and centralized Assessment Portal. Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Continuing Education, Finance and Operations, and Masjid services now participate in defined assessment processes designed to connect evidence, planning, budgeting, and continuous improvement.

Strategic Plan monitoring showed that 93 of 98 tactics were completed, 4 remained in progress, 1 was incomplete. RGS also updated its principal handbooks and reported an inventory of 269 policies and 63 procedures.

The priorities for 2026–2027 focus on assessment quality, accreditation readiness, student and faculty development, financial sustainability, facilities, enrollment, community engagement, and organizational accountability.

04 • GOVERNANCE

Governance and Institutional Capacity

RGS has established an integrated organizational structure connecting governance, administration, academic affairs, student services, and community-based educational initiatives.

The President's Cabinet meets weekly and oversees the work of institutional departments and The Master of Arts in Islamic Studies (MAIS), Student Affairs, Finance and Operations and Continuing Education departments and, the Masjid Advisory Committee meet regularly and report to the President's Cabinet.

During 2025–2026, the institution expanded its personnel capacity by appointing a new MAIS faculty member, a Student Recruitment and Student Services Coordinator who also serves as Library Manager and is an RGS graduate, and a Chief Public Affairs Officer. RGS also continued to engage part-time personnel, including leadership for digital and social media marketing.

PRESIDENT'S CABINET	ACCOUNTABILITY LOOP
Seven faculty and staff members. The Cabinet meets weekly to make administrative decisions, review departmental performance, monitor strategic priorities, and coordinate institutional initiatives.	Departmental evaluation → Strategic Plan monitoring → Annual reporting → Board of Trustees oversight.
Departmental performance is assessed through standardized evaluation forms submitted through the RGS Assessment System.	The President presents resulting institutional and departmental evaluation reports to the Board at its annual meeting.

How governance supports accountability: Regular Cabinet and department meetings, documented departmental assessments, Strategic Plan monitoring, and annual reporting to the Board establish a recurring chain of responsibility from operational units to institutional leadership and governance.

05 • ASSESSMENT

Evidence-Based Institutional Improvement

RGS implemented a consistent and comprehensive institutional assessment framework aligned with its mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

Assessment begins with mission and the Strategic Plan

At the end of each fiscal year, department heads submit departmental plans and individual staff plans to the President's Cabinet through the RGS Assessment System. In consultation with department heads, the Vice President of Operations and Finance prepares the annual budget proposal and submits it to the President's Cabinet and the Board Financial Effectiveness Committee. The budget is finalized by the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting.

Academic Affairs Assessment

RGS faculty developed a three-year Program Learning Outcome (PLO) assessment cycle. Each year, Academic Affairs focuses on one PLO through course-embedded assessment, while the Final Research Paper serves as a comprehensive capstone assessment of all three PLOs. The full cycle is scheduled for completion in July 2028.

2025–2026	Foundational Sources — broad knowledge of the Islamic tradition based on foundational sources.
2026–2027	Graduate-Level Critical Thinking — analyze and evaluate ideas at the graduate level.
2027–2028	Scholarly Research and Academic Writing — conduct graduate-level research and communicate arguments and analysis in academic writing.

Student Affairs Assessment

Student Affairs follows a three-year assessment plan that evaluates student services and the student experience. Objectives include measuring satisfaction with campus life, activities, and services; identifying areas for improvement; establishing consistently administered assessment instruments; using findings to inform budgeting and strategic planning; and supporting MSCHE expectations for periodic assessment.

06 • OPERATIONS

Departmental and Operational Assessment

Assessment is applied across continuing education, finance and operations, and Masjid services, with findings intended to inform planning and improvement.

AREA	ASSESSMENT APPLICATION
Continuing Education	The Turkish and English Family Schools, Spiritual Care and Counselling Program, Adult and Youth Qur'an Schools, Center for Risale and Hizmet Studies, and Friends of Respect are assessed across five dimensions: objectives, academic quality, enrollment, marketing, and finance. At year-end, program heads submit annual reports, document alignment with the Strategic Plan, and prepare plans for the following year based on assessment results.
Finance and Operations	Includes Fundraising and Outreach, Operations and Human Resources, Information Technology, Social and Digital Media Marketing, and Finance and Accounting. Each unit is assessed through departmental evaluations and constituent satisfaction survey results.
Masjid Services	Assessment is implemented through five components: the President's and Cabinet's annual staff evaluation of the imam; community evaluation of the imam's performance and Masjid programs; assessment of the Masjid Advisory Committee by its members; and a Ramadan services survey.

ASSESSMENT PORTAL	The Finance and Operations Department developed and launched a centralized Assessment Portal with role-restricted access for Board members, faculty, and staff. Surveys and forms are embedded directly in the system, making required instruments easier to locate and complete while reducing the need to recreate forms each year. The portal improves consistency, efficiency, and scalability. During the first year, faculty and staff received training on portal access and completion of assessment forms.

Assessment-to-planning connection: Departmental findings are intended to inform annual plans, the institutional budget, Strategic Plan monitoring, and improvement priorities. Strengthening documentation of this connection remains a major priority for the coming year.

07 • STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic Plan Evaluation

The Strategic Plan Performance Report tracks 106 tactics and action items across three strategic goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL	TOTAL	COMPLETED	STATUS
Goal 1: Educational Effectiveness	66	54	Distinguished progress
Goal 2: Financial Sustainability	13	12	Strong progress
Goal 3: Community Engagement	27	27	Distinguished progress
Institutional Total	**106**	**93**	**95% completed***

*Tactics that are not due and N/A are not included in the calculation.

Goal 1 — Educational Effectiveness	Major progress was achieved in academic assessment, student learning outcomes, curriculum development, student support, enrollment, governance, and institutional effectiveness. Remaining work is concentrated in assessment analysis, student professional development, policy review, accreditation preparation, annual planning, and performance appraisal.
Goal 2 — Financial Sustainability	Twelve of thirteen tactics were completed, and RGS achieved its principal financial objectives for the year. The report attributes the remaining incomplete item to the institution's high rate of growth.
Goal 3 — Community Engagement	All tactics were completed. The principal area for continued improvement is documentation, including attendance records, program reports, feedback forms, and evidence of community impact.

Priority Follow-Up Areas

- Complete student professional development activities, including resume-writing and job-search workshops.
- Complete policy review and governance-related assessment activities.
- Continue accreditation preparation.
- Strengthen evidence documentation for completed Strategic Plan tactics.
- Complete annual plans, supervisor evaluations, and performance appraisal processes.
- Improve tracking of assessment findings and their use in institutional improvement.

08 • POLICY INFRASTRUCTURE

Handbooks, Policies, and Procedures

During 2025–2026, RGS updated its principal handbooks and strengthened its institutional policy infrastructure.

RGS updated the Academic Catalog, Administration and Staff Handbook, Faculty Handbook, Student Handbook, and Campus Safety and Security Report. The institution also developed a new Board Handbook. Current publications are available through the RGS website.

AREA	POLICIES	PROCEDURES	TOTAL
Academic Affairs	49	7	56
Human Resources (HR)	81	29	110
Financial and Compliance	31	0	31
Student Affairs	32	0	32
Operations, Facilities, and Safety	24	17	41
Technology and Communication	17	5	22
Institutional	30	5	35
Continuing Education	3	0	3
Policy Development, Revision, and Review	2	0	2
Active Total (reported)	**269**	**63**	**332**

09 • LOOKING AHEAD

Institutional Priorities for 2026–2027

Twenty-one priorities are organized into four institutional themes to strengthen accountability, academic quality, financial sustainability, institutional capacity, and community impact.

A. Institutional Effectiveness and Governance

- Continue providing staff training on policies and handbooks to promote institutional awareness, compliance, and consistency in practice.
- Review and modify the Strategic Plan.
- Modify the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Manual based on the Strategic Plan Review and departmental assessment cycles.
- Strengthen analysis of the assessment.
- Initiate the assessment process for the effectiveness of assessment tools.
- Establish a governance committee of the Board of Trustees.
- Increase the number of members of the Board of Trustees.

SEPT 2026	Review and modify the Strategic Plan
OCT 2026	Staff Training
OCT 2026	Modify the Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Manual

B. Academic Quality and Student Success

- Improve Final Research Papers as demonstrations of program learning outcomes through increased training on use of library resources, Scholarly Debate Forums, and advising.
- Expand opportunities for student research presentations, publications, and scholarly engagement: organize a student academic conference.
- Increase attention to analysis of assessment findings and use them to guide curricular and instructional improvements.
- Increase academic partnerships.
- Increase the number and quality of admitted students.
- Increase post-graduation success by providing more professional development workshops for students.
- Increase faculty visibility and impact through faculty publications, presentations at conferences, and community engagement.

10 • LOOKING AHEAD

Financial Sustainability, Capacity & Community Growth

C. Financial Sustainability and Operational Capacity

- Continue facility improvements that support academic, administrative, and community needs.
- Improve fundraising and outreach through more organized, consistent, and measurable engagement efforts.
- Continue the annual review of financial sustainability through budget reports, donor records, endowment progress, fundraising outcomes, and enrollment-related income.
- Increase the endowment fund by $200,000 through focused donor engagement and fundraising strategies.
- Increase donation/fundraising income by 10%.
- Increase tuition income from continuing education courses by 10%.
- Increase tuition income from Master of Arts in Islamic Studies Program to the targeted amount.
- Limit the increase in Program Expense to 5%.
- Limit the increase in General, Administrative, and Other Expenses to 5%.
- Significantly improve the English and Turkish YouTube channels for brand image development and advertising effectiveness.

D. Community Engagement and Program Growth

- Family School (Turkish & English): Expand and diversify Turkish- and English-language family education programs by launching a Turkish "Premarital Preparation Program", developing new courses on parenting, contemporary challenges in raising children, and family prayer awareness, while refining the online English Pre-Marital Preparation Course/Certification Program based on stakeholder feedback and delivering at least two English program cycles in 2026–2027, with an aspirational target of three cycles.
- Spiritual Care and Counseling: At least a 50% increase in student enrollment and net financial contribution compared to the 2025 baseline; tracking the number of clinical placement partnerships.
- Centre for Risale & Hizmet Studies: At least one English-language course in each school; 25 reading circles; at least four online retreats annually; social media intern support for 100% of courses.
- Digital Media: Publication calendar adherence rate, watch time, subscriber growth, click-through rate, and enrollment conversion; prioritization of a portfolio of approximately 20 program concepts.
- Friends of Respect: Periodic reporting of active regional programs, event planning, internal training, and volunteer retention indicators.
- Public Affairs: At least 80 high-impact meetings/events; linking partnerships to measurable outcomes such as student recruitment, events, funding, or academic projects.

11 • CONCLUSION

Moving Forward Together

The 2025–2026 reporting period reflects meaningful progress in the systems and structures that support Respect Graduate School's mission.

The institution strengthened governance and staffing, launched a centralized assessment portal, completed approximately 95 percent of its Strategic Plan tactics, and expanded its policy and procedural infrastructure.

The next phase of improvement will require deeper assessment analysis, more consistent documentation, clearer evidence of how findings inform decisions, sustained accreditation preparation, and continued attention to student success, financial sustainability, and community engagement. Progress in these areas will depend on the shared participation and accountability of the Board, administration, faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, and community partners.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

RGS remains committed to continuous improvement, responsible stewardship, academic quality, and beneficial service in fulfillment of its mission and strategic goals.

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Where Knowledge Becomes Wisdom

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