Institutional Assessment Plan

Amended: April 2011
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INTRODUCTION

Systematic assessment is a requirement for institutional accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and MSCHE specifically addresses institutional assessment in three of its 14 standards http://www.msche.org/publications.asp:

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal
An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment
The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning
Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution’s students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

At St. John’s University, our strategic planning and institutional assessment processes are in complete accord with Middle States standards, with institutional assessment being completely integrated into our most recent two strategic plans (2004-2008 and 2008-2013). Both of these plans have been structured around institutional vision, mission, goals, priorities, objectives, strategies and institutional measures to track accomplishments and identify gaps for improvement.

This institutional assessment planning document has the following elements:

- An extract and summary of our institutional assessment planning process from the strategic plans;
• An overview of the institutional approach to learning outcomes assessment;
• Academic program review;
• National and internally developed surveys from which various assessment measures are derived; and
• Resources, tools, timelines and responsibilities associated with the above.

In addition to these institutional level assessments, there are various operational and unit level plans. However, these will not be addressed in this document.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2004-2008 Strategic Plan Assessment Summary

In the context of our mission, vision, values, institutional goals, academic and admission standards, institutional reputation, and fiscal strength, the University established a framework of 14 strategic priorities in the 2004-2008 Strategic Plan www.stjohns.edu/strategicplan. Each priority was listed under one of the four institutional goals.

I. Develop our academic and institutional culture to be student-centered and committed to lifelong learning.

II. Enhance resource development and prioritize resource allocation to achieve our vision.

III. Build an organization of strong leaders where faculty, administrators and staff are enabled, motivated and engaged.

IV. Institutionalize our new vision and planning culture in the context of missions and external challenges.

Approximately 100 institutional success measures – 88 with targets – were developed under the four institutional goals and monitored to identify annual and cumulative progress toward academic and institutional priorities. This comprehensive list of indicators, measures, benchmarks, comparative data and targets was developed with input from the academic, operations and mission sectors and became the basis for assessing the University’s progress. The measures consisted of a variety of internal and external data and instruments including national student and faculty surveys (HERI, NSSE),
student evaluations of courses (SIR II), and external licensure examination rates. The complete matrix of measures was included in the strategic plan in Appendix K.

Ongoing reviews and refinements of the plan were made in light of progress against these institutional success measures as well as from feedback from the Middle States self-study and re-accreditation process. A progress report published in December 2007 gave the University the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the 2004-2008 Plan and to begin to shape the priorities for the next planning cycle.

Progress against the measures revealed that:

- One-quarter of the institutional success measures with targets, reached or exceeded those targets including
  - Academic - SAT scores; Honors eligibility; Licensure exams pass rates for the Bar, Teacher Certification and Pharmacists
  - Financial – Capital Campaign, Net Assets and Bond Ratings
  - Service - Participants in Service Day and community service
  - Enhancing the University’s national image as a high priority

- One-quarter had gaps between targets and current values including
  - Retention and graduation rates
  - Tuition dependency
  - Annual alumni giving rate
  - Some elements of instructional methods and student engagement, including cooperative learning, student-faculty interaction, academic challenge and a supportive campus environment
  - Overall and resident student satisfaction

- Approximately one-half were on track to meet targets
- A few had only baseline data (e.g. Facilities, Alumni)
2008-2013 Strategic Plan Assessment Summary

After careful review and analysis of the foundational elements and strategic direction outlined in the 2004-2008 Strategic Plan, it was determined that the Vision, Institutional Goals and Academic Profile outlined in that plan would remain unchanged, as the University entered this new planning cycle. Based on feedback from the assessment process and results of the 04-08 plan, some institutional success measures were deemed more critical than others and more reflective of the institutional goals. These were retained. Others were revised or deleted. Additional measures and targets were included at the beginning of the planning cycle or added subsequently to track the success of our Mission, Global, and Student Engagement priorities. The main sources for these additional measures were the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the 2009 and 2010 Graduating Student Surveys. For example:

Goal 1: Develop our academic and institutional culture to be student-centered and committed to lifelong learning.

NSSE – Have had practicum, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior students (%)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These measures which were included in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan as Appendix H are monitored and updated regularly, and appropriate action steps taken. Both the original plan and measures, as well as updated versions of the measures are available online at: http://www.stjohns.edu/about/strategicplan.
LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Starting in September of 2007, in accordance with the standards for assessment by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, St. John’s University expanded its assessment efforts to include all academic programs within the University using WEAVE Online.

WEAVE Online is an assessment management software application that helps manage accreditation, assessment, planning and quality improvement processes for many colleges and universities. Faculty, department chairs, deans, and administrators meet regularly to discuss the results and strategies for improvement.

We currently use WEAVE Online to collect and manage data for each of the following areas for each program or unit for every academic year: Mission/Purpose; Goals; Outcomes/Objectives; Measures and Achievement Targets; and Findings and Action Plans. We also generate various assessment, audit, and other reports from the system.

Each year, the data is reviewed and suggestions are made to enhance individual programs. This ensures that St. John’s University is continually monitoring, assessing, and improving all programs the University offers.

Although we currently use WEAVE Online almost exclusively for assessing learning outcomes, as indicated on their website: WEAVE Online is a powerful software application that addresses the need to develop and maintain continuous improvement processes for both the academic and administrative structures within an institution. It guides and provides for the alignment of multiple processes, including assessment, planning, accreditation, budgeting and institutional priorities.

More information on WEAVE Online can be found at: http://www.weaveonline.com. You will need a password and ID to access WEAVE Online that’s specific to St. John’s at: http://app.weaveonline.com/stj/login.aspx. Please see the contact list at the end of this document for assistance if needed.
Assessment at the College or Unit Level

All colleges and units currently have outcomes assessment plans in various stages of development and implementation. These assessment plans are periodically reviewed by the appropriate parties within each individual college.

Assessment at the Department Level

Department chairs are responsible for developing common goals and objectives based on the courses within their departments. These are reviewed annually and changes are made accordingly based on analysis of Weave Online data & course evaluation data.

Assessment at the Program Level

As previously mentioned, Weave Online is the assessment tool used across program to measure outcomes on a year-to-year basis. The mission, goals, outcomes/objectives, measures, findings, and action plans are reviewed at the end of each cycle, and a report is generated for each program.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

To ensure the quality of undergraduate and graduate academic programs, it is important that we periodically undertake a full-scale review of all of our programs. The primary focus of the academic program review is to improve the quality of programs, advance the quality of core teaching and learning, research, professional/creative activity, and service/academic outreach. The process also promotes linkages between Academic Program Planning, Assessment, and the University’s Strategic Plan. Results of the review are expected to provide a basis for future planning and resource allocation decisions. The most recent (2009-2010) program review had seven criteria / standards that formed the framework for the self-study of each program.

The Academic Program Review Guidelines, Self-Study Template, Items for Reflection, resources, accompanying materials and completed self-studies are available at: http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/apr . Please note that you will need an ID and password to access this site. Please see the contact list at the end of this document for assistance if needed.
OUTCOMES SURVEYS

St. John’s University participates in a number of national and internally developed outcomes surveys at various scheduled timeframes. Results from these surveys are included in the institutional success measures (baselines, comparative data, targets and progress). An inventory of these surveys, reports and other information can be found at: www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys. This inventory is updated regularly to reflect current and future evaluation periods.

**National Surveys** The following lists some of these surveys with links to where information can be found on a National Level as well as specific data pertaining to St. John’s University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Surveys</th>
<th>National Level Information</th>
<th>St. John’s University Information</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nsse.iub.edu/">http://www.nsse.iub.edu/</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/nsse">http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/nsse</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)</td>
<td><a href="http://fsse.iub.edu">http://fsse.iub.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/fsse">http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/fsse</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey (HERI)/Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP Freshmen)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.heri.ucla.edu/">http://www.heri.ucla.edu/</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/heri">http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/heri</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your First College Year (YFCY)</td>
<td><a href="http://gseis.ucla.edu/heri/yfcy/survey_instrument.html">http://gseis.ucla.edu/heri/yfcy/survey_instrument.html</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/yfcy">http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/yfcy</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Satisfactory Inventory (SSI)/Institutional Priority Survey (IPS)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.noellevitz.com">https://www.noellevitz.com</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/ssi">http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/ssi</a></td>
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**Internally Developed Surveys / Evaluation**

**St. John’s Course Evaluation**

The online course evaluation form comprises 26-scaled and three open questions used to gauge students overall satisfaction with both the course and the instructor. These evaluations are administered twice a year (at the end of the Spring and Fall semesters) to courses which have at least 5 students. Information pertaining to the Student Course Evaluations can be found at: [http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/online](http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/online)

**The Graduating Student Survey**

The Graduating Student Survey (GSS) is a brief survey designed to obtain information from St. John’s graduating students about their college experience and learning outcomes. The survey was developed by the Office of Institutional Research with input from senior managers. It was incorporated into the online process used by students - other than School of Law - to register for participation in commencement exercises. This has been administered since 2009. The following GSS items have been added to the Institutional Success Measures:

- Students’ overall satisfaction
- Quality of instruction
- Tuition paid as a worthwhile investment
- Global experience
- Level of integration of technology into learning environment
- Internships and job placement
- Impact of our mission and development of a faith dimension

Reports and appendices relating to the GSS can be found at: [http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/gss](http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/surveys/gss)
ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

Office of Institutional Research (OIR)  www.stjohns.edu/about/ir

The Office of Institutional Research is a centralized resource to develop and provide timely, accurate, and consistent quantitative and qualitative information and analyses to internal and external constituents.

Activities include:

• Providing statistical data to administrative and academic units to support planning efforts, program reviews, outcomes assessment, and proposals for external funding.

• Assisting administrative and academic units in areas such as, retention analysis, enrollment projections and special studies.

• Initiating and supporting the development, administration, and analyses of outcomes related surveys. If an individual wishes to conduct his or her own survey, the first step is to complete a request form available on OIR’s website.

Assessment tools - the Office of Institutional Research maintains an ongoing, comprehensive list of national and internally developed outcomes surveys utilized by the University. This inventory of assessment instruments is updated regularly, and is available online.

St. John’s University Fact Book

The University Fact Book is prepared by the Office of Institutional Research on an annual basis, with contributions from other offices and individuals at the University. It contains texts, tables, and graphs of current and historical information on students, employees, and finances. Fact books dating back to 2004 can be found at: http://www.stjohns.edu/about/ir/factbook
RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSESSMENT

The Executive Planning Committee (EPC) has overall responsibility for institutional planning and assessment. The University Core Curriculum has responsibility for the Core. Schools/colleges and some operational units have individuals, committees, and/or coordinators that have primary responsibility for assessment within their units. Additional committees are created at the university or unit-level to study and address specific assessment topics in connection with accreditations and other important matters. The names of individuals mentioned in this section were current as of the April 2011 amendment to this document. Dr. Clover Hall, Vice President for Institutional Research and Academic Planning, has overall operational responsibility for assessment.

Strategic Plan /Institutional Assessment

The Executive Planning Committee comprised of senior administrative and academic leaders of the organization, has overall responsibility for the strategic planning and institutional assessment processes and success measures, ensuring that strategies related to their areas are accomplished, progress made toward targets and actions are taken to eliminate gaps and make improvements as warranted.

Within the EPC, Ms. Mary Harper Hagan, SVP for Human Resources and Strategic Planning and Dr. Clover Hall, VP of Institutional Research and Academic Planning, have primary responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the plan and Institutional Success Measures. Dr. Yuxiang Liu, Director of Institutional Assessment regularly updates the Institutional Success Measures and uploads to the website mentioned earlier. He also has overall responsibility for analyzing and disseminating results of various national and internally developed outcomes surveys, and for conducting comprehensive research and analysis on retention and graduation rates for subsets of the student population. This position reports to the VP of Institutional Research and Academic Planning.

Responsibility for assessment of the Core Curriculum resides in the University Core Curriculum committee (UCCC), comprised of faculty members and chaired by Dr. Derek Owens, Vice Provost,
**Learning Outcomes –WEAVE Online**

The primary administrator of the WEAVE Online assessment management system is Steven W. Glogocheski, Associate Director of Academic Assessment. Mr. Glogocheski continually monitors the inputting of assessment data and reports on the progress at the college, department, and program level. He also assigns IDs and passwords as requested and provides group or individual training and consulting on the effective use of WEAVE Online. This position reports to the VP of Institutional Research and Academic Planning.

Each school/college has WEAVE Online Coordinators, who are the primary individuals responsible for inputting (or assigning appropriate individuals to input) and encouraging the use of programmatic data for improvement of student learning within their schools/colleges. **Below are the WEAVE Online Coordinators as of November 2010 –**

St. John’s College: Dr. Michael Wolfe, Dr. Kelly Rocca – Associate Deans  
College of Professional Studies: Dr. James O’Keefe (Associate Dean and Professor)  
College of Business: Dr. Victoria L. Shoaf (Dean), Dr. Adrian Fitzsimons (Professor)  
School of Education: Dr. Richard Sinatra (Associate Dean of Academic Affairs), Nancy Garaufis (Coordinator of Accreditation and Program Registration)  
School of Pharmacy: Dr. Sandy Zito (Professor), Anthony C. Marziliano (Assistant to the Dean), Dr. Marc. E. Gillespie (Associate Professor)

**University-wide Course Evaluation** –

Steven W. Glogocheski, Associate Director of Academic Assessment

**Administration and Analysis of Outcomes Surveys** –

Dr. Piyaporn Nawarat, Associate Director of Institutional Assessment. This position reports to the Director of Institutional Assessment

**Academic Program Review** –

Dr. Diane Hergenrother, Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Resource Management or Dr. Clover Hall, Vice President of Institutional Research and Academic Planning
REPORTING/PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

All of the assessments mentioned above are reported on a regular basis, and information is disseminated to appropriate parties. In addition, as noted in the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan (page 72) “in a process that is collaborative, continuous and evolving, we will monitor our progress against the Institutional Success Measures, making adjustments as conditions warrant.”