Fordham University

Mission Priority Examen Self-Study

April 2017
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Preamble

Fordham University aims to be the model urban Jesuit university of the 21st century. The aspiration itself implies tremendous faith in the power and possibility of brokering so many different cultures.

In the context of a city that is vibrant, diverse, and always changing, the Jesuit University of New York attempts to make relevant a rich and ancient religious tradition in an academic environment that prizes independence of mind, the right to critique openly, and a studious resistance to authority that is externally imposed.

Members of the Steering Committee, who were charged with overseeing the process of this Mission Priority Examen, recognize and understand the assumptions stated in the preamble to Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument: that “university” and “Jesuit” must be fully honored, that “Catholic and Jesuit” are not simply two descriptors among many, but signify “what makes us uniquely who we are” (3). And yet, in our discussion among ourselves and with colleagues, we learned that individuals operate out of vastly different understandings of what those predicates mean. Spontaneous responses to discussion of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic university range from ones of affection, affiliation, and pride to postures of indifference, suspicion, and even hostility.

At the same time, we discovered among a vast array of people a genuine love for Fordham, its sense of community, value, and mission. Several colleagues called it “a very special place.” Most significantly, a great many are aware that what makes Fordham special is related to its identity as a Jesuit, Catholic institution. Many who came to Fordham without a background in faith-based institutions have adapted to its distinctiveness. Even those who live out the mission so well, however, are frequently unable to talk about it with any depth, texture, or ease.

A recurring theme in the discussion of the Steering Committee was the importance of continuing to raise to the consciousness of our colleagues a narrative that would reinforce Fordham’s distinctive mission and identity in a way that all stakeholders would find accessible and see themselves included in it.

The narrative would challenge superficial patterns of thinking and require a generosity of imagination. It would have to communicate, for instance, that “Jesuit” points not just to social justice and humanistic education but also to a history of exacting scholarship, of scientific research, of love for the exploration of new ideas and discoveries, of a specific vision within Christian spirituality, a commitment to the Church as well as to a global network of academic and socially entrepreneurial institutions. The narrative would have to communicate that “Catholic” points not just to an authority structure and counter-cultural teachings about sex and gender but to an extremely rich intellectual tradition, a set of theological disciplines that continues to address core questions of human meaning, a sense of ecclesial
belonging, a desire for authentic holiness, and an exceptional history of women and men laboring for the health, welfare, education, and human rights of others—especially among poor immigrants both globally and in this very City.

How we may advance such a narrative about Fordham has consequences far more significant than its mission and identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university. Living our mission well has national and global reverberations. Over 30 years ago, during the long civil war in El Salvador, Ignacio Ellacuria, S.J. argued that a Jesuit university should attend to the reality of the world around it. He called a university an “inescapable social force,” and he urged that a Jesuit university should live out its own identity by transforming and enlightening the society in which it lives.

As we carried out the work of the Mission Priority Examen, we found ourselves in the context of our own troubling reality: a national election whose campaigns and outcomes revealed severe cultural divisions within the country. “Red” zones and “blue” zones seem remarkably out of touch with each other, and the only form of moral discourse we have as a country often seems reduced to competing and self-serving expressions of outrage. In addition to larger social tension, we also find ourselves in a context of higher education that is often contentious and full of many fears. At times we are like many Americans caught in our own ideological bubbles, and yet our commitment as a university to the values of academic freedom, to genuine diversity of thought, to rational discourse and the pursuit of truth challenges us to take seriously our call to be a “social force” in this time and place in history.

If the model urban Jesuit university of the 21st century is going to succeed in its own aspiration, it will have to be a place where its members may find joy in the possibility of common good. In its own operations, it will have to embody an ethics of dialogue that society as a whole deeply needs. Moreover, the future of Fordham specifically as a Jesuit, Catholic university depends largely on its current success, as an institution, to invite colleagues from diverse backgrounds and commitments, to various levels of engagement with the Ignatian tradition.

The consistent mode of sharing the tradition must be invitation, collaboration and appeal rather than imposition. Respect for individuals and groups in their diversity must remain deep; receptivity to learning from all traditions and intellectual commitments must be constant; and openness to changing as a result of interaction with others must be authentic. Furthermore, the presentation of Ignatian spirituality, and its roots in the broader Catholic, Christian tradition, has reason to be confident in its ability to engage others from its own particularity without being parochial. We must also begin with the presumption that people associated with Fordham have a vested interest in its future as a Jesuit, Catholic university.

In order to advance the mission and identity of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic university, we may need to be more intentional in communicating that we steer
between two common and mutually opposing visions of the kind of university Fordham should be. The first stresses that Fordham, as a university, should be essentially secular and operate as such; the second stresses that Fordham, as a Catholic institution, should be essentially confessional and operate as such. While there may be an ideological purity to each of these positions, there is also an implicit intolerance. In the former vision we would dispossess ourselves of our distinctiveness as a religious institution, as well as uproot ourselves from a rich history that grounds so much of the good we hope to accomplish. In the latter vision, we would undermine the rich—if often complex and contentious—pluralism a university offers in favor of a more doctrinaire coherence. We have heard elements of these visions from stakeholders but can also discern in each advocate an implicit fear of their counterpart.

As a university, we need to promote a “culture of encounter” in a much more intentional way: where religious, cultural, and ideological identities may be shared in a robust way, but also in a way that is genuinely humble, respectful, and honoring of difference. Only with a strong culture of encounter can our mission and identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university enhance our sense of community.

And community is what so many of our colleagues and students want. For an academic institution, we were surprised at how deep is the desire to belong. In fact, a common anxiety in discussions of an institutional religious identity lies in the fear of groups and individuals that they may not actually belong. We must be particularly sensitive to the way such language can be received and be reassuring. We must also be aware that people often find a gap between the high ideals that religious language communicates and the reality an actual institution embodies at any given time. Individual and collective judgments may or may not be fair. In addition, they may occasionally yield cynicism, but that is the reality in which any institution based on lofty principles finds itself.

That said, we were encouraged at how often we heard among colleagues on the faculty, administration, and staff a deep desire to stand for some “greater good” that grounds what we do as a university. And students, who as millennials are statistically less apt to be religiously affiliating, spoke with certain love and commitment for the deep values for which Fordham, as a Jesuit, Catholic university, stands.

We hope the work of this Mission Priority Examen may contribute to the satisfaction of such deep desires and aspirations in concrete and measurable ways.
Notes on Process

1. Appointment of Mission Priority Examen Steering Committee

In July, 2016 Fr. Joseph M. McShane, S.J., President of Fordham University, appointed a Mission Priority Examen Steering Committee of ten members from a range of divisions and departments at the University. They included the following individuals:

Nancy A. Busch Rosnagel, Professor, Psychology
Jenifer D. Campbell, Director, Residential Life at Lincoln Center
Christine Firer Hinze, Professor, Theology, Director, Curran Center for American Catholic Studies
Michael C. McCarthy, S.J. (Chair), Vice President, Mission Integration and Planning
James McCartin, Director, Fordham Center on Religion and Culture
Patricio I. Meneses, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences
Stephie Mukherjee, Assistant Dean/Director, Higher Education Opportunity Program
George Quickley, S.J., Trustee
Thomas J. Scirghi, S.J., Rector, Jesuit Community; Associate Professor, Theology; Trustee
Falguni Sen, Professor, Management Systems, Director, Global Healthcare Innovation Management Center

The President charged the committee with overseeing a process that would result in a self-study and noted three key principles that should be observed. Both process and product should be designed so that:

- Genuine reflection/discernment would be generated;
- An appropriate cross-section of the Fordham community would be consulted and represented;
- A base would be created for further advancement of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic university.

Furthermore, he stipulated that the self-study should be based on the AJCU document *Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument*, that it should evaluate Fordham’s key strengths and areas of growth, and that it should propose three to five mission priorities to be achieved in the next five years.

In September, 2016, the President, through a campus-wide email, announced to the entire Fordham Community that the process was commencing, described the rationale for the Mission Priority Examen, and made available the *Characteristics* document.
2. The Method

*Steering Committee Meetings on the Characteristics Document*

From **September through December, 2016** the Steering Committee met regularly in order to discuss each of the seven characteristics. Small groups were assigned to draft an inventory of what was being done with respect to each characteristic. In general, the Steering Committee felt that a great deal is being done that advances the mission and identity of Fordham University as a Jesuit, Catholic university. Rather than focusing solely on the good work that is being done, however, most conversations turned to the variety of tensions and challenges we face—both those identified in the *Characteristics* document, as well as those felt on the ground by members of the committee.

For each of the seven characteristics, the Steering Committee asked three questions:

**First, what have we done?** This question was largely answered through data collection/inventories.

**Second, what are we learning?** This question invited thoughtful discernment on the part of members of the committee.

**Third, what do we hope to do?** This question led to consideration of achievable “mission priorities” proposed in this self-study.

Conversations were robust and ranged widely over a variety of topics. Throughout the series of meetings, a number of issues continued to arise, and they form the basis of the recommendations made at the end of this self-study.

*Focus Groups*

In order to address the President’s requirement that the process engage an appropriate cross-section of the University, between **November, 2016 and February, 2017**, one or more members of the Steering Committee met with **13 focus groups** that represented key parties at Fordham. In some cases, the groups were convened in the context of normally scheduled meetings (e.g., academic deans); in other cases, the groups were convened in collaboration with the appropriate governance entity (e.g. faculty were invited on the basis of a list of over 20 persons provided by the Faculty Senate President, student groups were convened by the presidents of the United Student Government).

The 13 sessions included representative groups of: 1) Undergraduates at Rose Hill; 2) Undergraduates at Lincoln Center; 3) Graduate Students from various
programs; 4) Facilities Workers; 5) Faculty at Rose Hill; 6) Faculty at Lincoln Center; 7/8) Two groups of staff/administrators; 9) Academic Deans; 10) Members of the Committee on Continuous University Strategic Planning (CUSP); 11) Jesuits working at Fordham; 12) Members of the President’s Cabinet; 13) Members of the Board of Trustees, including the chair.

Prior to the meetings, they were provided with a description of the Mission Priority Examen process, as well as the Characteristics document. In addition they were given, in advance, the following discussion questions:

1. As you reflect on the sections of the characteristics most relevant to your role at Fordham, how would you address some of the questions posed there?

2. From your own perspective, what would you regard as Fordham’s strengths with respect to its mission and identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university? What are areas of growth?

3. Are there any specific goals you would like to see fulfilled in the next five years?

4. Is there anything you would especially like to say that may be relevant to the work of the Mission Priority Examen?

All together, over 140 persons participated in focus groups that averaged 8-12 people. Conversations were free flowing and ranged over a very wide spectrum of topics and concerns. In every group except the Jesuits (the largest group), every person voiced reflections on the topic.

Trustee Committees

In addition to the trustee focus group, at each of the five trustees’ meetings from February, 2016, to February, 2017, the chair and Fr. Scirghi, with the trustee committee on Mission and Identity, have met jointly with other trustee committees in succession, including the Academic Affairs Committee, the Audit and Risk Management Committee, the Student Development and Athletics Committee, the Facilities Committee, and the Finance and Investment Committee. At each joint meeting the agenda was determined by that part of the Characteristics document most relevant to the work of the committee. In every case an energetic discussion of the trustees ensued.
Drafting Committee Meetings

Early on in the process, a sub-committee, known as the “Drafting Committee” (Busch Rossnagel, McCarthy, McCartin, Scirghi) was asked by the chair to help with the drafting of the self-study, to be reviewed by the Steering Committee as a whole and vetted with various groups before submission to the Visiting Team. In January, 2017 members of the Drafting Committee began to meet to discuss and propose successive drafts of the self-study, which were discussed and revised in conversation with the entire Steering Committee.

Engaging the Local Ordinary

In accordance with the protocol set forth by the national committee on the Mission Priority Examen, early in the academic year, the President’s Office at Fordham arranged for an appointment between the President and the local ordinary, the Archbishop of New York, to include his own voice in this process. On March 9, 2017, Fr. McShane met with the Cardinal at his office in order to discuss how Fordham serves the local church. The Cardinal expressed his pleasure, suggested a few practical ways the University can further support the local church, and indicated he would send the local provincial a letter indicating his support for what the University does.

3. Self-Study

The self-study that follows comes out of the process outlined above. It does not purport to be exhaustive but represents the thinking of the Steering Committee in conversation with many members of the community. The Steering Committee has attempted to provide a realistic assessment of what Fordham has done well in advancing its mission and identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university.

There is much reason to be proud. And yet the Steering Committee has taken motivation in Fr. McShane’s frequent stress that a Fordham education should produce a “bothered excellence.” We are not called, in other words, to rest on our laurels but ever to look more deeply at ourselves and at our world. Such “bothered excellence” aligns well with the purpose of an Ignatian Examen, both at a personal and at an institutional level.

As a result, the Steering Committee has purposefully avoided the temptation to produce something akin to a marketing document: to hide the problems or challenges Fordham faces as it approaches the next period of its history. Rather, it presents both its achievements and challenges in a spirit of transparency, even humility, in the hope that Fordham will continue to grow in its distinctive mission and identity through times very different from when it was founded.
Characteristic 1: Leadership’s Commitment to the Mission

“The University’s leadership competently communicates and enlivens the Jesuit, Catholic mission of the institution.”

*Fordham University enjoys a strong and consistent commitment to mission among leadership of the University but less consistency and clarity on how the mission is best communicated.*

Mission Articulation

The *Characteristics* document provides an excellent starting point: the mission statement is to clearly state its Catholic and Jesuit inspiration, as well as its commitment to research, teaching and service. Fordham University clearly does so in its published statement, adopted by the Trustees in April, 2005 which begins:

*The Mission of the University: Fordham University, the Jesuit University of New York, is committed to the discovery of Wisdom and the transmission of learning, through research and through undergraduate, graduate and professional education of the highest quality. Guided by its Catholic and Jesuit traditions, Fordham fosters the intellectual, moral and religious development of its students and prepares them for leadership in a global society.*

The University Mission Statement further elucidates these terms in subsequent sections that discuss characteristics of a University, a Catholic University, a Jesuit University, and a University in New York City (see Appendix One).

Throughout this Examen process, colleagues returned again and again to the statement in the *Characteristics* document that discussion of mission and identity should be “broad enough” and “deep enough” to be both inclusive of all and advancing of the Jesuit, Catholic tradition in its own right (*Characteristics*, 6). In the best of senses, finding this balance is an art.

Recent research associated with Fordham’s accreditation through the Middle States Commission on Higher Education indicates that knowledge of the mission statement is very broad. In a 2014 survey of staff members, 94.5% stated that they are somewhat or very familiar with the University mission. In addition, 88% have read the mission statement, and 72% agree or strongly agree that “Fordham’s mission informs the way I carry out my job” (*Middle States Reaccreditation Self-Study, 3; see Appendix Thirteen*).

Articulating the Jesuit, Catholic mission in a way that is “deep enough” remains a challenge in a population where many crucial members do not self-identify in this way. In a context that is increasingly pluralistic and prizes all forms of diversity, there is a natural concern about privileging one religious tradition. A recent
strategic framework adopted by the Board of Trustees, for instance, made little reference to the Jesuit, Catholic mission of the institution, largely in order to give everyone a sense of ownership in it (see Appendix Eleven). The question, therefore, of how to articulate our Jesuit and Catholic identity in a way that is inviting and inclusive but also respects its distinctiveness remains a chief concern and, in practice, requires great practical wisdom and human sensitivity.

Board of Trustees

As a legal entity chartered by the State of New York in 1846, the University’s Bylaws do not state its mission and identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university (see Appendix Two). The purpose of the corporation stated in the Bylaws repeats the purpose noted in the charter, namely “the promotion of education.”

In 2012, a Statement of Shared Purpose was signed by the Trustees and the then-New York Province of the Society of Jesus. While not a legal document, it goes beyond the charter/bylaws to indicate that, as part of its fiduciary responsibility, the Board of Trustees “supports, maintains, and promotes the Jesuit, Catholic nature, identity, and mission of the University.” It sets out a number of ways the board will be committed to this purpose, particularly in “curriculum, programs, practices, and policies of the University” (see Appendix Three).

Although the board has had a Mission and Identity Committee for many years, under the current chair, it meets jointly with every other committee in succession. The purpose of the meetings is to consider how, in the area of oversight a particular committee has, our common mission and identity informs their work. Since February, 2016 the Mission and Identity Committee has met with the following committees: Academic Affairs, Audit and Risk Management, Student Development and Athletics, Facilities, and Finance and Investment. These meetings have been extremely helpful in keeping questions of mission and identity in the forefront of trustees’ understanding of their fiduciary responsibility.

While unfortunately members of the Board of Trustees have not had the opportunity of a spiritual retreat in over five years, their biennial business retreats include a half-day devoted to implications of Jesuit mission for the University.

University President and Cabinet

The University President, Joseph M. McShane, S.J. is an exceptionally articulate promoter of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic institution. The University’s mission and identity pervade all his activity and communication, and he is exemplary in taking advantage of large symbolic occasions to champion who we are. Much of the work of communicating mission and identity broadly is left to the President, though Vice
Presidents, both Catholic and not, have a deep familiarity with Jesuit education. The Provost, for instance, has been affiliated with four different Jesuit institutions of higher education since college.

One vice president noted that Fordham is very good at “walking” but not necessarily “talking” the mission, and as a whole the cabinet looks to the President or other Jesuits as those who can best articulate what it means to be a Jesuit, Catholic university. Another vice president observed that, because of the culture, people who work at Fordham generally appreciate working here but that they do not necessarily make an explicit connection between the quality of the workplace and its mission. As a leadership body, we need to work harder at helping people make the link.

With a few exceptions, members of the cabinet are much more comfortable with living out the mission than talking about it. Their example speaks, and they feel more qualified to carry out their duties with virtue and a commitment to core institutional values rather than explicitly engage in conversation that may seem to require special knowledge or a “thick” understanding of the tradition noted in the Characteristics document (7). Although one vice president has regular orientation and development sessions for people in his division, most strongly acknowledge the need for orientation and development programs across the University. An element of such programs would include normal, enterprise-wide opportunities to learn more deeply about what it means to be a Jesuit, Catholic university in an increasingly diverse and pluralistic context.

**Academic Deans**

As with vice presidents, academic deans are very committed to the mission and identity of Fordham but are not always certain how to talk about it, particularly with faculty or potential faculty. As the section on Characteristic 2 will show, they support a great variety of programs that advance the academic, religious, and social justice mission of the Society of Jesus and the Church, and they are always looking for ways to develop within their units a culture more attentive to the needs of the poor. The deans of undergraduate colleges and schools place high value on students’ personal development, which is a hallmark of Jesuit education. In addition, the professional schools clearly identify service to those most in need as central to their own mission in law, in social service, in education, and in religious education. One dean, for instance, remarked that it is crucial to “ensure reflection and require clinical placements with the poor and disenfranchised.”

Deans are especially eager to improve their units as a way of advancing the University’s mission, including the recruitment and promotion of faculty. But many acknowledged they needed help in knowing how to do so. Given the great diversity of students and faculty involved in these areas, it is not always clear how much they should link what they do explicitly to the mission and identity of Fordham as a
Jesuit, Catholic university. All recognize a tremendous need for more strategic, systematic and comprehensive faculty development in this area, and yet the language of “hiring for mission” is commonly understood as hiring individuals on the basis of their religious affiliation. As one dean put it, “before we talk about ‘hiring for mission,’ we need to talk about what exactly that means.”

Because this Examen was taking place in a year that the President commissioned and responded to a report to a Diversity Task Force, some deans noted the University should take care to link diversity with mission and identity. There is a perception among some members of the larger population, for instance, that by definition a Jesuit, Catholic university cannot be truly diverse. The burden for Fordham, in some respects, is to prove the opposite. The narrative framework should shift, in other words, from “even though we are a Jesuit, Catholic university, we strive for diversity” to “because we are a Jesuit, Catholic university, we strive for diversity.”

Conclusion

Consideration of Characteristic 1 leads the Steering Committee to recommend the following Mission Priorities discussed at the end of this Examen.

- A comprehensive and strategic plan for developing colleagues’ understanding of the Ignatian tradition (Mission Priority #1).
- The design/advancement of strategies for linking issues of diversity to mission/identity (Mission Priority #2).
Characteristic 2: The Academic Life

An Academic Life that reflects the Catholic and Jesuit mission as an integral part of its overall commitment to research and teaching excellence.

“The University's academic life and commitments clearly represent the Catholic and Jesuit interest in and commitment to the liberal arts and Christian humanistic education for all students. In addition, academic programs can be found which are distinctively informed by the University's Jesuit and Catholic character, thus contributing to the diversity of higher education in the United States with an education shaped by the service of faith and the promotion of justice.”

Fordham University manifests a deep commitment to humanistic education at the undergraduate level, as well as a concern for service and the promotion of justice at all levels, but our Jesuit, Catholic mission and identity has not been sufficiently understood either as an important resource for a life of research or as an asset in professional training.

Core Curriculum

The undergraduate core curriculum in the liberal arts (serving students in Fordham College at Rose Hill, Fordham College at Lincoln Center, the School of Professional and Continuing Studies, and the Gabelli School of Business) was revised in 2008 to more closely link to the University mission (Middle States Reaccreditation Self-Study, 37; see Appendix Thirteen). Included in the requirements are courses on major philosophical issues and approaches, the examination of faith and reason, and an introduction to major religious traditions (see Appendix Sixteen and Appendix Seventeen).

A significant percentage (about 1/3) of the core courses, particularly in Philosophy and English are taught by Ph.D. students who have chosen Fordham’s graduate programs in part because of the commitment to preparing future faculty as teachers (not just as researchers). Both these graduate students and faculty are committed to the teaching of undergraduates within the liberal arts tradition.

The core curriculum for undergraduates has an implicit introduction to the Catholic intellectual tradition, as seen in course titles, such as “Faith and Critical Reason” and “Philosophy of Human Nature.” Whether or not the tradition is labeled explicitly as Catholic and as fundamental to the Jesuit tradition of education depends on the instructor.
Faculty Policies in Research, Teaching, Promotion, and Tenure

In the area of teaching and research, the University sponsors three programs aiming to develop mission among faculty and graduate students as well as a deeper understanding of and commitment to Fordham: a New Faculty Seminar on Mission available to all new tenure track hires, the Arrupe Seminar for continuing faculty and staff co-sponsored by the Jesuit Community and Fordham College at Rose Hill, and a Jesuit pedagogy seminar for 10 to 12 advanced graduate students.

With regard to promotion and tenure, currently no departments at the University include explicit mission-oriented criteria in their norms for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Nor is it clear how that would be appropriate in an academic system where advancement depends mostly on the recognition of one’s peers for quality research, within the context of commitment to academic freedom. In the course of our conversations with colleagues, however, we discovered that in the minds of many faculty members, Jesuit, Catholic mission and identity is perceived as related to teaching more than scholarship. It would be prudent, therefore, to provide a more substantive opportunity for faculty of all ranks to find in our identity a resource for their own lives as scholars.

Such initiative would cohere with a suggestion made recently in the final report of the Middle States accreditation: that Fordham should intensify its efforts to engage tenure-track and tenured faculty in conversations about the role of mission in research and teaching (Report of the Middle States Visiting Team, 5; see Appendix Fourteen).

Centers, Institutes and Catholic Initiatives

Fordham University supports well over 50 mission-oriented centers and institutes ranging across disciplines and academic units. A brief scan of the relevant list will reveal a Center for Ethics Education; a Center for Humanistic Management; a Center for Urban Ecology; a Center on Race, Law, and Justice; and an Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs.

While the stated missions of research centers will naturally reflect the methodologies appropriate to their specific disciplines and publics, often they make explicit connections between their work and the intellectual traditions that have long inspired the work of the Society of Jesus. The Center for Ethics Education, for instance, identifies itself as drawing on the Jesuit tradition and states:

In this era of increased need for ethical discourse in academic, professional, and public spheres, the Center activities draw upon theological, philosophical, scientific and other areas of inquiry to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and scholarship on moral values and ethical issues of contemporary
social import. The Center embodies the University’s commitment to intellectual excellence by offering educational and research opportunities and public programming enriched through moral values, religious concerns, scientific and scholarly study, and active engagement in creating a caring and just world.

The Center for Humanistic Management finds itself within the Gabelli School of Business. Although it does not explicitly cite our Jesuit, Catholic tradition in its mission statement, it promotes the “defense of human dignity in the face of vulnerability” and stands against the instrumentalization of human beings as a “mere means for profit.” The preponderance of these research centers reflects values that are central to Jesuit, Catholic education.

While a great many research centers put our distinctive mission into action within their own disciplines, an unusually high percentage relate directly to the Jesuit, Catholic mission and identity of Fordham. Quite simply, they would not exist at institutions of higher education not so affiliated. To highlight just five:

- **The Center for Catholic School Leadership and Faith-Based Education** offers unique graduate degree programs in teaching, educational psychology, and school leadership, including a Ph.D. program in Church leadership and Master’s degree in Catholic school leadership, as well as leadership institutes and certificate programs in Catholic school leadership.
- **The Center on Religion and Culture** seeks to enrich and elevate the public conversation about religion through public events and conversations on faith, religious institutions, and the challenges posed where religion and culture meet.
- **The Orthodox Christian Studies Center** supports scholarship, teaching, and public programming on Orthodox Christianity that is critical to the ecclesial community, public discourse, and the promotion of Christian unity.
- **The Francis and Ann Curran Center for American Catholic Studies** educates students to become religiously informed citizens; fosters ecumenical, interreligious, and interdisciplinary engagement with Catholic thought and practice; and promotes informed and compassionate analysis of critical religious and social issues.
- **The Institute on Religion, Law and Lawyer’s Work** sponsors seminars and public programs for legal scholars and practitioners on issues relating to religion and law, as well as how their own faith informs their work as lawyers.

While the range of Centers and Institutes clearly do much to advance the common mission of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic university, the Steering Committee observed that promotion of a deeper collaboration among them would be positive in many respects.
Professional Schools

At various points in the Mission Examen Priority process, we heard from some colleagues that, while Fordham (like all Jesuit universities) enjoys a long history of educating undergraduates in a distinctive way, we have less confidence in our ability to promote an educational philosophy among professional schools that is not simply the “industry standard” for individual disciplines. With notable exceptions, prospective students of professional and graduate schools are looking for excellent programs, not a personal and moral formation as such. Yet we also hear—from current students, faculty members, and administrators—a desire to consider how there can be deeper integration. And we understand the social call, often expressed among current professionals, to inculcate among the next generation a deep sense of ethical behavior in all fields.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to suggest that Fordham’s professional and graduate schools do not advance a very distinctive education leading to a powerful social good. For instance, one law professor indicated that faculty members in his area have, over the years, “built out a very significant set of justice-oriented, public service law programs . . . [and] we think we have a pretty good example of how a Jesuit law school diverges from the ‘industry standard.’” Indeed, he avers that the Law School “serves thousands and thousands [of people in need] each year in New York City and around the world.”

Although we encourage continued reflection, therefore, on how traditional core values of Jesuit education may be more deeply integrated into professional and graduate education, we find solid evidence that, at a high level, such values are promoted and that, at the programmatic level, much is taking place. We cite brief examples from each professional school:

• The Gabelli School of Business emphasizes formation for ethical business practice and leadership as crucial components of its Jesuit mission. Instructors cover the themes of ethics and ethical decision-making courses such as “Markets, Business, and Society,” which introduces ethical case studies from all over the world and encourages frank discussions on how businesses should contribute to society.

• The Graduate School of Education identifies itself with “the University’s Jesuit tradition of rigorous academic endeavor, service to complex urban and metropolitan communities, and dedication to the intellectual, moral, and socioemotional development of the individual” and offers an array of courses that aim to develop teachers in a humanistic fashion.

• In accordance with the Catholic, Jesuit tradition, the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education encourages students “to integrate academic knowledge with personal wisdom, and to serve the church and society as committed and compassionate leaders.”
• Through its degree and continuing education programs, **The Graduate School of Social Service** aims “to educate students to promote human rights and social justice” and “strives to improve the well-being of people and communities through teaching culturally responsive, evidence-informed practice and engaging in research, public advocacy, and community partnership.”

• **Fordham Law School’s** motto, which is prominently displayed in its branding, is: “In the Service of Others.” The Dean’s Message on the Law School webpage indicates to prospective students that this is “the guiding principle that will prepare you for a life of responsible legal practice.”

**Conclusion**

Consideration of Characteristic 2 leads the Steering Committee to make a variety of suggestions, such as: a) promoting greater collaboration among the 50+ centers and institutes; b) deepening faculty understanding of the potential resources of the Jesuit, Catholic tradition specifically for the scholarly life; c) exploring ways to make the “humanistic” tenor of Jesuit education more relevant to professional schools.

Accordingly, we recommend the following Mission Priorities discussed at the end of this Examen.

• *A comprehensive and strategic plan for developing colleagues’ understanding of the Ignatian tradition (Mission Priority #1).*

• *The design/advancement of strategies for linking issues of diversity to mission/identity (Mission Priority #2).*
Characteristic 3: A Catholic, Jesuit Campus Culture

“The University works to foster within its students, faculty, staff, and administrators a virtuous life characterized by personal responsibility, respect, forgiveness, compassion, a habit of reflection and the integration of body, mind, and soul.”

*Fordham University works actively to promote an environment marked by the virtues named in this characteristic, even as it discerns how best to represent a Catholic and Jesuit campus culture that speaks with integrity and sensitivity to the complex culture of New York City in the early 21st century.*

University Ministry and Liturgical Life

Fordham’s vibrant Campus Ministry programs offer many opportunities for religious and spiritual care. Between the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campus there are five daily Masses, and four Sunday Masses. Attendance at the latter is typically between 400 and 500 persons per week. Over the course of the year, there are up to 21 student retreats, in addition to spiritual direction, pastoral counseling, the availability of daily confession, music ministry and community outreach. (See Appendix Six for a more expansive list of programs.) We feel confident that our programs at Fordham are of particularly high quality.

While this traditional aspect of Catholic campus culture remains strong and highly important, it is more difficult to assess the full impact of the University’s ministerial programs on students of the millennial generation who practice other faiths or who are marginally or not religiously affiliated. Moreover, what kind of culture, rooted in the Catholic Church and the apostolic mission of the Society of Jesus, is most appropriate to people who have been raised in contexts where ecclesiastical markers and religious idioms may have grown fainter or less influential?

On virtually all questions in the *Characteristics* document related to this area, we feel that we can offer particularly strong evidence of our success. But we also ask ourselves other questions, such as: What is the nature of the University’s responsibility to devout Jews or Muslims or to students from a more evangelical background? Does the difference in undergraduate populations between Rose Hill and Lincoln Center lead us to the conclusion that Campus Ministry should operate very differently in those places? How do we attend to the spiritual well-being of students who increasingly do not have a language or framework for discussing their needs in this regard? Such questions are not simply important from a pastoral point of view: they also touch upon more institutional decisions on how to allocate our limited resources.

At various points, we were reminded of the testimony of non-Catholic students (e.g., Muslims), who indicated their happiness in belonging to an institution that treats
faiths of all kinds with reverence and respect. At the end of our discussion on this Characteristic, we shall note the potential of such mutually corroborating dynamics of identity and diversity.

Building a Culture Committed to Relationality and Responsibility

Through the Division of Student Affairs, Fordham embraces its role in creating a culture that is responsive to and challenging of many tensions student face. For example, how do they negotiate the emphasis on rights versus responsibility, the self versus others, and superficiality over deep engagement with the human family? The mission of Student Affairs states:

We seek to create, for and with our students, an intentional community that will set the highest standards of academic, social, moral, and spiritual excellence. This community must bring to life, in a meaningful way, the fundamental ideals of Jesuit education. The student, as individual and as a part of the community, will be the center of our efforts, and will be expected to fully participate in the education offered by full participation in the community.

Professional staff work to realize these ambitious goals through a diverse system of connected programs, beginning with the orientation and formation programs, students’ first intensive exposure to Fordham’s values. This process of acculturation continues through required Freshman Core Programs, a soon-to-be universal First Year Formation course, and an array of Integrated Learning Communities, to name just a few (see Appendix Six). Fordham provides sensitive care and education for students to meet the universal challenges of substance abuse and sexual ethics. Once prepared, students are ushered into a rich campus culture in which participation in student organizations, activities, and later internships are the expectation and norm. Programs for students include strong peer education programs, optional substance-free communities in residence halls, and constant assessment through surveys to continuously allow improvement in approach. Students complete their traditional classroom education through participation in community, through common projects with peers, and by taking leadership roles that provide experience educating the next generations of students.

We do this work aware that some of our policies remain counter-cultural and sometimes provoke disagreement and dissent, particularly in areas of gender and sexuality. Recognizing that cultural and political mores change over time, we try to build a culture that respects Catholic teaching while remaining sensitive to those with other points of view. Moreover, the Steering Committee recognizes that, at a developmental level, faculty, academic deans’ staff, and Student Affairs staff must work hard to mentor students, in appropriate ways, so that their own contributions to the educational community are valued. When we are at our best, we foster a
culture where students feel respected and valued for their full dignity and emerging capacity for leadership. At our worst, we can patronize and control in ways that do not advance a culture of relationality and responsibility. Institutional awareness of these dynamics need to be part of our ongoing own self-examination.

**Athletics**

The broad-based intercollegiate athletics program at Fordham provides diverse opportunities for student development and formation, including a robust intramural program, a vibrant array of club sport offerings, and 22 varsity sports. Our focus is on the provision of opportunities for participation on many levels, depending on the skill, interest level and commitment of the individual student. In all endeavors, the mission and values of the institution underscore and emphasize the development of the whole student, intellectually, spiritually and physically. When it comes to the highest level of participation, our varsity athletics program, competing and winning are certainly important areas of emphasis with our coaches, student athletes and administrators. But winning is not the only variable that is important at Fordham. Equal emphasis is placed on 1) competitive outcomes, 2) academic outcomes (persistence and graduation rates), 3) citizenship (proper conduct during competition, good citizenship out on campus and in the community, community service, and leadership development and character formation) and 4) compliance (adherence to and playing within the rules of the institution, conferences of affiliation and NCAA). At Fordham, it is not good enough to satisfy one or a subset of these expectations; metrics in all four areas must be satisfied. We offer a broad array of programs and opportunities for individual and team development in all areas, particularly those that focus on community service, leadership development and character formation.

As in society more generally, athletics at Fordham can bring out both the good and the bad from people. A healthy spirit of competition and school pride can be corrupted by unhealthy ambitions, undue fascination with winning, and a need to see Fordham’s reputation for sports advance as a top University priority. We do not face the kinds of pressures other universities, with bigger athletics programs, may face. But we remain vigilant to ensure that we maintain our institutional priorities and that, above all things, Fordham’s athletic program always serves larger educational goals and never becomes an end in itself. Both students and alumni, families and coaches, friends and donors, sometimes need to be reminded that the goals of athletics must always be subordinated to our mission ideals that focus on *Cura Personalis*, the development of the whole student, and Women and Men for and with others.
Community Characterized by Diversity of Thought

The Division of Student Affairs works to create a community that approaches the ideal articulated in its mission: one in which the assumptions and biases with which each student arrives are exposed to new knowledge gained inside the classroom, to critical thinking, and to competing ideas. In this way, the community is conceived of as a seamless extension of the classroom. All contacts with students, staff, and faculty—indeed, every experience and activity—is ideally freighted with potential for further education and deeper learning. This process of learning in community and reflecting on that experience advances what our President often calls “bothered excellence.” Moreover, we expect that students develop the first principles that will guide lives in service to others in ways as various as the careers and vocations pursued after Commencement. Simultaneously asking and being asked tough questions about life and how it should be lived, students are exposed to the distinct Jesuit and Catholic values of the University through the companionship of older peers and the staff throughout the University. The diverse and carefully trained professionals charged with creating this uniquely Ignatian co-curricular environment do so along with the compassionate care they provide, through dialogue with students on even the thorniest issues of the day, and with careful attention to the needs of students from historically underrepresented groups. Each staff member is meant to connect even with those who disagree vehemently with the University on policy or procedure, sharpening the analytical skills of students as well as the institution’s own discernment process through ongoing conversation on community, ethics, and moral reasoning.

Vocational Discernment

Fordham University, from a student’s very first encounter, intentionally cultivates a culture of discernment by inviting students to name their gifts and put them in the service of not only themselves, but the world. They are encouraged to ask where, in their pursuits, they have encountered the pull of the Divine.

Through campus addresses, orientations, programs and instruction, this reflective dialogue permeates the University culture, from classroom to volunteer site. An intentional element of the Division of Mission Integration and Planning, discernment programs include volunteer and career discernment sessions, post-graduate career fairs committed to the common good and opportunities for individual conversation with staff, often held in partnership with the Office of Career Services. Student Affairs also offers intentionally integrated programs on vocational discernment such as a First-Year Formation course and a Senior Transitions program, along with similar initiatives in academic life such as discernment-focused Integrated Learning Communities, which it carries out in collaboration with academic deans and the division of Mission Integration and Planning.
In a more specific sense, for Catholics, the University also remains committed to nurturing the growth and development of religious life, offering opportunities for vocational discernment through Campus Ministry, and by intentionally programming with Jesuit scholastics and retired Jesuits at Murray-Weigel Hall, highlighting both the width and depth of Jesuit life, and the powerful witness of a lifelong commitment to Christ.

Campus Events

The University conducts many campus-wide events throughout the year that highlight its role as an institution of academic excellence rooted in its Catholic and Jesuit identity. Many campus events are intentionally celebrated with University liturgies, and great care is taken to mark the seasons of the academic year including fall opening, Mass of the Holy Spirit, the Easter Triduum and the Baccalaureate Mass, Commencement and Jubilee. Also important at Fordham is the celebration of Founder’s Dinner—an evening that supports Presidential scholars and honors their academic achievements, and Dagger John Day, a celebration of faculty and staff and a tribute to Archbishop John Hughes, founder of Fordham. In 2017, Dagger John Day will also mark the closing of our Dodransbicentennial, Fordham’s 175th year.

Church Calendar/Academic Calendar

The University Church, built in 1845, sits at the center of campus. Similarly, the liturgical seasons and feast days are central to the course of the academic year. In addition to the liturgies mentioned above, the Advent and Lenten seasons play significant roles in the life of the University, both as avenues for Catholic identity and pastoral engagement. Gaudete Sunday has become particularly popular, as the University is able to celebrate the joy of the Christmas season as a church prior to the departure of students for the semester break. The University also celebrates the Easter Triduum, joyfully welcoming students into full communion with the Church each year. Recently, the University also celebrated the Papal visit to New York City and the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, as key moments in the life of the Church.

Race and Diversity

Although not mentioned in the Characteristics document, it is important to comment, if briefly, on an issue that has and continues to be so central to Fordham, especially within the context of New York City. We continue to struggle to be a university that reflects the cosmopolitan nature of our surroundings, both in the Bronx and in Manhattan. In a later section we will discuss the President’s Task Force on Diversity, which was prompted by racially charged incidents in 2015-16. What
we need to observe here is that “A Catholic, Jesuit Campus Culture” can often be understood as a predominantly white culture of Irish and Italian immigrants. While that is our history, of which we are duly proud, the Steering Committee is also aware that, as we move forward into the 21st century, we must work very hard so that our notion of “Catholic culture” more effectively communicates our rootedness in a global tradition and that we slowly come to greater understanding and commitment of our need, precisely as reflecting a Jesuit, Catholic culture, to become an institution where all racial and ethnic identities may find a home and inspiration.

Again, when we are at our best, a deep sense of identity fosters, rather than militates against, a sense of inclusion. We are encouraged when we hear that students of other faiths and commitments find a home in Fordham, precisely because they are taken seriously. Although we do not always succeed and have sometimes failed, we must continue to grow in a way that speaks with integrity and sensitivity within the complex culture of 21st century New York City.

**Conclusion**

*Consideration of Characteristic 3 leads the Steering Committee to recommend the following Mission Priority discussed at the end of this Examen.*

- *The design/advancement of strategies for linking issues of diversity to mission/identity (Mission Priority #2).*
Characteristic 4: Service

“The University as an institution and all of its various parts seeks to insert itself in the world on the side of the poor, the marginalized, and those seeking justice. It does this in particular by using its academic and professional resources.”

*Fordham University places high priority on inserting itself in the world on the side of the poor and succeeds in multiple individual efforts, but it can improve significantly through more strategic, long-range, intentional, and collaborative activity.*

Solidarity

The principle of solidarity remains a high value in an organizational system that is relatively complex. Like many universities whose primary revenue source is tuition, Fordham must operate within fragile economies, where dedication to employees, for instance, must be balanced with consistent attention to concerns of affordability and cost to families. Institutionally, then, solidarity is a virtue that requires a quality of constant attention and discernment. In times of conflict, which are natural to any complex organization, all parties must be even more diligent in calling themselves to act in good faith and for the common good.

Certain data indicate moderate success in building a culture of solidarity, though also a continued room for growth. In a recent survey of unionized employees, for instance, 48% indicated they “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement that Fordham’s employment policies are fair as written, while 41% indicate they “neither agree nor disagree.” In another survey, 65% of Fordham employees indicated they personally experienced being treated with respect always or most of the time by supervisors, while 92% personally experienced being treated with respect always or most of the time by co-workers (see Appendix Seven). When the University terminated its recent food service contract and opened up a request for proposals bidding process, the University indicated that it would choose a provider who received high marks in, amongst other qualifications, “fair treatment of employees and commitment to work with unions” (see Appendix Seven). Employees such as custodians, groundskeepers, tradespeople, and secretaries are specially honored at the annual 1841 Awards. At this event the President personally confers distinction on long-standing members of the community, as well as gratitude for their dedication. At a focus group of such employees, members communicated their deep appreciation for the working environment of Fordham and spoke about how they take seriously their responsibility to care for our students. Thus do they understand themselves as integral to the educational enterprise.

In programs specifically for students, there is a shared commitment to principles of solidarity. For instance, shorter immersion trips (such as those operated by a very successful Global Outreach program for undergraduates) surely do emphasize time
living among those the students are visiting. The GO! program, as well as other programs, such as the Ubuntu Program in South Africa, stress mutually beneficial relationships, and the testimony of students strongly suggests that happens. At the time of this Examen, the Ubuntu program has been temporarily suspended on account of concerns for student safety, but the pause also allows us the opportunity to consider how, structurally, certain aspects of this program may improve—especially in cultivating a deeper sense of solidarity and understanding among students and those who have historically enjoyed little access to wealth, power, or privilege.

**Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm**

Service learning is integrated into the curriculum in different ways, depending on college or school and whether the students are undergraduate or graduate. In general there is a commitment, at least among a significant part of the University, to service learning. For instance, in a 2014 survey of faculty, 15% indicated they had taught a service-learning course. Of the 85% who hadn’t, 30% responded that they would be interested in doing so but did not know how (Middle States Reaccreditation Self-Study, 60; see Appendix Thirteen).

Graduate programs, particularly in fields such as law, social service, and education include substantive service learning natural to their fields (e.g., pro bono legal aid, supervised social work, student teaching, etc.). As the following section on community outreach will show, there is a great deal of work being done in these areas.

It is especially at the undergraduate level, however, that service learning requires significant examination, including consideration of how well resources have been deployed. Data from the Middle States Report shows that, in recent years, service learning in the arts and sciences has dipped (Middle States Reaccreditation Self-Study, 60; see Appendix Thirteen). In 2014-15, for instance, there were only seven service-learning courses, which included 161 registrants for both FCRH and FCLC, with an estimated 4,800 hours of engagement in the community. For a student population as Fordham’s, we should strive to do better.

In the Gabelli School of Business, undergraduates have the opportunity to reflect on the connection between the classroom and the community through the New York City Service Learning Program. Students identify a Bronx-based community organization and match it with a course they are already taking. The program allows students to learn local business theories and practices as well as the role of non-profits in the community. In recent years, students completed an estimated 1,700 hours of engagement in the community.
While there have been genuine efforts to advance service learning, much work needs to be done. In the 2016-17 academic year, the Provost and the Vice President for Mission Integration and Planning have collaborated in order to set up more comprehensive University goals, learning objectives, and an optimal infrastructure to meet those goals.

In addition, the specific tension and challenges noted in this section of the Characteristics document are particularly apt. While there may have been a time when academics objected that “social justice” had little place in the academic pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, such tension, in that form, rarely obtains now. What can at times be observed, however, is a detachment of praxis from theory, so that “service” can be unfavorably compared to “social justice” rather than as mutually corroborating and ongoing practices. It may, in fact, be a sign of this particular moment in history that “social justice” is sometimes associated primarily with advocacy and activism rather than as a way of life to which all members of the Fordham community are called. Certainly, any bifurcation of social justice from active engagement in the community does not reflect the ideals of Jesuit education as articulated throughout the last 50 years.

Moreover, the challenge of “service and justice” being excised from an originating religious narrative can be seen in two ways: 1) a troubling phenomenon where students engaged in religious practices are not interested in “works of justice” and 2) where students who advocate for justice can seem suspicious and even hostile to the articulation of religious or generally spiritual motivations. In a pluralistic context and in a way appropriate to the diversity of commitments of students, faculty, and staff, we need to find new ways to find links between thought-worlds that have somewhat drifted apart.

**Community Outreach**

Fordham has a long tradition of reaching out to be a good neighbor to the local and global community.

Although the main study abroad centers operated by Fordham University, such as that in London, focus more clearly on the development of our own students than on our hosts, in the case of our Ubuntu program in South Africa, we are especially aware of the multiple sensitivities of cross-national, cross-institutional, and cross-cultural programs, and we need to work with greater diligence to assure mutual respect and understanding of our common purpose.

Two unique Fordham programs that stress our responsibility to serve the larger global community include first, the program in International Political Economy and Development (IPED), an interdisciplinary program of the Departments of Economics, Political Science, and Sociology. The core of the curriculum is an
advanced, interdisciplinary study of global economic relations and international development from a political and economic perspective. Second, the Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs (IIHA) prepares current and future aid workers with the knowledge and skills needed to respond effectively in times of humanitarian crisis and disaster. The mission of the Institute is to train and educate current and future aid workers at local, regional, national, and international levels. The Institute regularly hosts events that aim to create an increased understanding of global humanitarian crises.

As noted above, Global Outreach (GO!) is a cultural immersion and service program where students learn about various issues of social, economic, political, and environmental justice, while living a simple lifestyle that fosters communal and spiritual growth. Teams of 11 students and one chaperone are sent to live, work, and learn in approximately 30 locations throughout the United States and countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe. Of the 30 locations, 14 are international and 16 are domestic. The goals of these projects are to create solidarity, learn about issues of poverty and injustice, and connect local and global realities. In the 2015-16 academic year, there were 427 applicants for a total of 300 spots on Global Outreach teams. The program is immensely popular among undergraduate students and remains the largest of its kind among all institutions in the AJCU.

At the more local level, Fordham is especially proud of its Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), which identifies educationally and financially disadvantaged students in New York State who show academic potential, but do not meet admission requirements. More than 100 students enroll in the HEOP program each year with graduation and retention rates that are favorable compared to the overall University population.

HEOP puts special emphasis on being mission centric for Fordham’s commitment to reach out to the local community as most of the HEOP students are from the five boroughs of New York City. The program has been at our Rose Hill campus since its state-wide inception in 1969. HEOP also contributes to the diversity and first generation students on our campus through this additional HEOP enrollment. Based on data from Fordham University Office of Institutional Research, the following represents the graduation rates of HEOP students (in comparison to all Fordham undergraduates) for the cohort entering in Fall, 2009: four year 65.6% (all Fordham undergrads =74.9%); five years 71.6% (all undergrads = 79.9%). The results are exceptional in that the HEOP cohort was enrolled from a pool whose admission into the University would otherwise have been impossible. Fordham University is thus duly proud of students in this program, who represent our neighboring communities so well.
Conclusion

Consideration of Characteristic 4 leads the Steering Committee to recommend the following Mission Priorities discussed at the end of this Examen.

- The design/advancement of strategies for linking issues of diversity to mission/identity (Mission Priority #2).
- Significant advancement in strategic programming around community-based learning (Mission Priority #4).
Characteristic 5: Service to the Local Church

“The University offers educational and formational programs and resources that build up the local Church; in union with the local Church, it also provides a locus where people of faith can wrestle with difficult questions facing the Church and the world.”

*Fordham University, since its very founding, understands its history and destiny as being shared with the local church; in organization, programming, and personnel it dedicates significant resources to support the needs of the local archdiocese and neighboring dioceses.*

Programs and Resources

Throughout this Examen process, leaders across the University community have voiced the conviction that Fordham’s Catholic and Jesuit mission distinguishes it in two especially noteworthy ways. First, Fordham, unlike its secular counterparts in higher education, is naturally committed to cultivating a strong relationship with the local church and to serving a variety of particular needs within that church. Second, as an institution whose purpose is to advance high-level critical thinking and to produce rigorous academic scholarship, Fordham plays a unique role among the many institutions affiliated with the local church, including parishes, parochial schools, and a multitude of charitable organizations and spiritual initiatives which provide their own distinctive contributions.

Its relationship to the local church is the vehicle through which Fordham continually affirms and advances a tradition of dialog between the Church and the academy. At its best, this tradition enables people of faith to draw upon the critical insights of the academic disciplines and thereby persistently refresh and refine the relationship between faith and the broader cultural context in which faith is lived out. Such a dialog also ensures that academic researchers give due weight and consideration to the theological, philosophical, and moral claims of people of faith.

It is important to recognize that this engagement will, at times, produce natural tensions, as ancient spiritual wisdom is drawn into conversation with new data and new scholarly insights, and as the Church seeks to discern what may best promote the vision of the gospel. Yet Fordham’s commitment to maintaining a strong relationship with the local church should be understood as a pledge to ensure that, regardless of such tensions, this dialog remains both robust and mutually fruitful.

Fordham can boast of an expansive list of programs and resources directly dedicated to serving the local church. One prime example is the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education (GRE), which provides training in pastoral
ministry, religious education, and spiritual counseling and direction at substantially reduced tuition costs to employees of the Archdiocese of New York and other local dioceses. GRE is also home to the Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord Online Program, a training program for church employees undertaken as a collaborative effort with the Archdiocese of New York.

Under the auspices of the Graduate School of Education, the Center for Catholic School Leadership and Faith-Based Education serves as a well-known hub of groundbreaking research designed to foster fruitful innovation in Catholic education at the primary and secondary levels.

At Fordham Law School, the Feerick Center for Social Justice has provided legal counsel to the Archdiocese of New York, and its associates have assisted in developing and executing the Making All Things New process by which parishes were merged and clustered.

Other examples of service to the local church include the free public programming through which the Center on Religion and Culture models intelligent and sophisticated discussion of contemporary faith issues and the Dorothy Day Center for Service and Justice’s service learning program which connects students to local Catholic organizations.

Ultimately, these examples only hint at a full accounting of how Fordham commits itself to the local church and dedicates its programs and resources to its service (see Appendix Eight).

**Relationship with Local Ordinary**

Fordham’s relationship to the local ordinary has been marked throughout its history by mutual trust and a shared commitment to advancing the vision of the gospel. As president, Father McShane has cultivated a warm and durable bond with the ordinary of the Archdiocese of New York, as well as with the ordinaries of neighboring dioceses.

In recent years, Cardinal Timothy Dolan has preached and lectured for the Fordham community on multiple occasions, and Fordham has bestowed on him an honorary doctoral degree, as well as its Founder’s Award, in recognition of his leadership. Fordham has also welcomed Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio and Bishop Frank Caggiano, respectively the ordinaries in the neighboring dioceses of Brooklyn and Bridgeport, CT, as well as cardinals, archbishops, and bishops from throughout the region (indeed, from around the globe).

The intent behind cultivating such ties to local church leaders has been to signify Fordham’s unambiguous commitment to serving the Church in ways that comport with its unique status as an institution of higher education.
Preparation of the Next Generation of Catholic Intellectual Leaders

Universities bear a vital responsibility for cultivating new generations of intellectual leaders. But Fordham bears the added responsibility of preparing leaders equipped to advance the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Multiple examples demonstrate how this responsibility is fulfilled. It should be noted that Fordham distinguishes itself among United States Jesuit colleges and universities by enrolling the largest number of undergraduate Theology majors and minors. The Francis and Ann Curran Center for American Catholic Studies, with its highly selective undergraduate concentration that engages Catholicism from an interdisciplinary perspective, also serves as a critical locus for the formation of such leaders.

Furthermore, doctoral programs in Theology and Philosophy enjoy strong reputations, rivaling peer programs throughout the country and producing scholars noted for their scholarship in the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Yet while these programs each demonstrate a healthy and vigorous commitment, particularly in the areas of Theology and Philosophy, the Examen process surfaced a desire, shared especially among deans, for more strategic opportunities for faculty from across the disciplines to engage critically with the Catholic intellectual tradition. By introducing Fordham’s diverse community of scholars and teachers to concepts within this tradition that have contemporary resonance, faculty would be invited to widen their intellectual scope and enhance their ability to engage substantively and critically in conversations within their particular areas of research and teaching.

Assuring Fordham’s ongoing capacity to prepare the next generation of Catholic intellectual leaders will require careful stewardship of existing academic programs, as well as a commitment at all institutional levels to hiring leading scholars across the disciplines who are either already engaged with the Catholic intellectual tradition or willing to engage with it in substantive ways.

Conclusion

Consideration of Characteristic 5 reinforced the Steering Committee’s sense of the importance of our commitment to serve the local church. We look forward to learning how, as a University, we may best continue in our relationship with the various dioceses we serve. Because individual schools have their own programming, we feel it is best to encourage such programs rather than set a University-wide Mission Priority at this time.
Characteristic 6: Jesuit Presence

“The University values the presence, work, and witness of Jesuits on its campuses with its students, colleagues, and alumni.”

*Fordham University wishes both to encourage and support the Jesuits in every way possible and in turn to make a claim on them corporately to assume greater responsibility as animators of the mission of the University.*

Jesuits Active in the University as Faculty, Administrators, Campus Leaders, and Campus Ministers

Currently 28 Jesuits are active in Fordham’s administration and faculty, including the President, the Dean of Fordham College at Lincoln Center, the Vice President for Mission Integration and Planning, the Executive Director of Campus Ministry, and over a dozen tenured members of the faculty, in addition to other community members with various teaching and administrative responsibilities. Ten Jesuits currently serve as Jesuits-in-residence in various residence halls. At Ciszek Hall, there are 25 Jesuit scholastics in First Studies. Most of these are graduate students at the University in a range of departments and offer significant leaven to the Jesuit mission of the University. Many are actively engaged in various apostolates on campus such as Campus Ministry and are highly valued by the professional staff as excellent role models and pastoral counselors nearer to the age of both undergraduate and graduate students. Contiguous to campus there are two houses of senior Jesuits who also exercise significant influence by their example and availability to various works, especially sacramental, in the University. In addition, five Jesuits, who do not work at Fordham, serve as members of the Board of Trustees.

In addition to their normal work as teachers, scholars, and administrators, a high percentage of the Jesuits on campus contribute generously to the sacramental life of campus, through five daily Masses (between the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses), regular confessions, help with retreats, spiritual direction and other service. In general, Jesuit faculty and staff members are highly regarded as good colleagues and hard workers.

Throughout our focus groups we very frequently heard a desire on the part of the wider community, however, to have the Jesuit community as such to exercise a greater influence as a community. Events in which larger scale hospitality is offered (such as the New Faculty Orientation) are deeply appreciated and contribute to our colleagues’ sense of what the Jesuit, Catholic mission of Fordham is. Yet we also frequently heard people say they had very little sense of who the Jesuit community, precisely as a corporate body, really is, and many expressed a desire for some
appropriate forms of greater hospitality. Some expressed worry about the declining number of Jesuits working in the University, and the general aging of the community. Many too articulated a desire to encourage and support the Jesuits. Others mused over the possibility that Jesuits might sometimes feel alienated when treated as “tokens” or when certain key themes attributed to Jesuit education (such as cura personalis, magis, the promotion of faith and service of justice) are deracinated from the deeper religious texture and spiritual tradition that gives them meaning. And yet, again and again we heard the desire for the Jesuit community, as a corporate body and in a way that is appropriate, to assume greater responsibility as animators of the mission of the University.

**Relationship with the Society of Jesus at the Local, Regional, National and International Levels**

In respect to its relationship with larger groups in the Society of Jesus, Spellman Hall has been a locus of hospitality to many visiting Jesuits, and in the current year it is at full capacity with Jesuits normally assigned to other houses in New York City. In addition, all places for Jesuits in residence halls are filled. At the University, there is an increasing effort to form partnerships with other Jesuit apostolates in the area, most notably Fordham Prep and such institutions as Cristo Rey New York High School and America Media, so that collaborative efforts may accrue to the common good of the apostolates of the Society in the area. Beyond the local, there is a growing awareness of the need to plug into Jesuit apostolates internationally, such as the Jesuit Institute of South Africa in Johannesburg, and other institutions abroad. Sometimes it can be difficult to determine what exactly the mutual goals of such collaborations are, and yet the University enters into dialogue with members of the global Jesuit network with an eagerness to find connections.

We need to promote a broader and stronger relationship with our “Ignatian colleagues,” i.e., those who work alongside the Jesuits in the mission of the University. There are two reasons for this promotion. First, as already mentioned, there is a concern for the diminishing number of Jesuits, and we must ask who will advance this apostolic work. Many of our lay colleagues stand ready to take on this work. However, it is not merely a matter of numbers. These colleagues express a desire to contribute to the work of the Society as it enhances their own spiritual and professional work – for the greater glory of God.

**Vocation Promotion**

Since 1996, 16 men have entered the Society of Jesus through Fordham University. The Campus Ministry program holds regular meetings with those men and women who are considering religious vocations, and the Director of Vocations for the USA Northeast Province, Fr. Charles Frederico, S.J., makes an annual visit to the campus
to meet with young men who are considering a Jesuit vocation. A crucial element in vocation promotion, of course, is the presence of a Jesuit house of formation with so many students at the University.

Conclusion

Consideration of Characteristic 5 leads the Steering Committee to recommend the following Mission Priority discussed at the end of this Examen.

- Find ways both to support and make a claim on the Jesuit Community as animators of mission/identity (Mission Priority #3).
Characteristic 7: Integrity

"University Management and Administration reflect its mission and identity."

*Fordham University works to reflect organizational integrity at a moment where institutions of higher education face significant tensions, disagreements, uncertainties and anxieties.*

Human Resource Policies that Demonstrate a Commitment to Mission

As a community we struggle to achieve the right balance between a range of goods to which we are committed. Throughout the year in which we have been engaging this Mission Priority Examen, tension between the faculty and administration has steadily mounted over issues of salary and benefits. During this time, the Board of Trustees has asserted its fiduciary responsibility to ensure fiscal sustainability, as well as affordability and accessibility to students of various means. This self-study is not a place to weigh in on specifics of these controversial matters. From the perspective of both trustees and administration there is a commitment to fairness, equity, and the well-being of the employee, and it is argued that, by external measures, salary and benefits policies are consistent with that commitment. From the perspective of faculty members, however, who face the practical and very personal stress of living in New York, salary raises the last few years have been insufficient and changes in health care programs would be inconsistent with a concern for their well-being.

In addition, throughout the last year the University has been engaged in a self-examination on issues surrounding race and diversity. In Fall, 2015, the President named a Task Force on Diversity, which consulted widely and submitted a report, with recommendations, to the President, in July, 2016. After consultation with the President’s Advisory Council, a response and action plan was published in November, 2016 (see Appendix Twelve). While the focus of the task force was on the subject of racial diversity at Fordham, it did disclose other areas for institutional growth. Among the many relevant elements of the action plan, one of the most important was the creation of a position of Chief Diversity Officer, who will report to the Provost with a dotted-line relationship to the President. While a single individual, even one with a high-level administrative position, cannot bear the full burden of the University’s commitment to diversity, it is hoped that the person who enters this role will provide leadership so that Fordham may grow in this area. In addition, we are in the process of hiring a new Chief Human Resources Officer, who will also share considerable responsibility for improving our strategic and organizational capacity to advance in our commitment to diversity.
The questions of whether the University provides a just wage, appropriate benefits and working conditions—especially to those who earn the least within the University structure—are particularly important. Among various categories of workers that may be vulnerable, Fordham, like most institutions of higher education, relies on part-time teaching staff (i.e., “adjunct faculty”). Although the majority of adjuncts in schools such as those in the Gabelli School of Business or the Law School, have full-time jobs outside academia and teach part-time out of their own sense of duty to their profession, a strong majority in arts and sciences do not (see Appendix Fifteen). If one measures their salary by the number of hours involved in preparing and teaching classes, the wages of adjunct faculty members compare favorably to other part-time jobs, at a range from $30 to $55 per hour. As professionals who contribute significantly to the education of Fordham students, however, adjunct professors have noted their situation can be difficult. This problematic issue came up in a number of focus groups. In most cases there was an awareness of the need to attend to this particular segment of professional worker at the University. In terms of salary and general treatment, members of focus groups indicated that the lot of adjunct faculty at Fordham is better than at peer institutions. And yet, there was a common perception that we need to do better and that the full burden does not rest exclusively with the Administration. Voices of adjunct faculty we heard, for instance, observed that, while full-time faculty members express support and solidarity in principle, there is not always a willingness actually to share resources with their part-time colleagues. The problem of reliance on part-time faculty is an issue facing colleges and universities throughout the country. While not easily solved, it requires of us continued care, honest reflection, and improvement upon current policies and practices.

Obviously, all these issues are contentious, and members of the University have deep, personal, and varying convictions on them. As a Jesuit, Catholic university we are not immune to the realities of businesses, though we attempt to operate in a way that reflects the quality of commitments we do profess. As all members of the University community face the tensions surrounding such questions, however, we do need to summon up our resources and disciplines of discernment—not only in the careful study of issues but in the monitoring of a range of internal impulses, some positive and productive, others negative and destructive.

Formation for Mission and Leadership

The Steering Committee sees the question of “formation for mission and leadership” as a significant area of growth for Fordham. In a nutshell, we have programs but not a strategic plan that prioritizes the development of mission leaders according to clear objectives.

Like other universities in the AJCU, Fordham supports a range of programs for faculty, staff, and administrators that intend to develop them for leadership in
mission. While hard data is not available, the University has sent its members to national programs, such as the Ignatian Colleagues Program, the Jesuit Leadership Seminar, the ACCU Leadership Seminar, Collegium and programs associated with the Lilly Fellows. There is little or no follow-up, however, when they return. Nor do we cultivate past participants as a base for further development.

At the New Faculty Orientation, there is an introduction to the mission of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic university appropriate to first-day faculty recruits. Follow-up with tenure-track faculty does occur: they are invited to monthly lunch-meetings addressing a range of mission-oriented topics in a systematic way. So, too, does the Arrupe Seminar, hosted by the Rector of the Jesuit community, provide an occasion for several arts and sciences faculty to meet monthly to discuss topics. No internal programs exist for staff or administrators, except in the area of Student Affairs. The Department of Human Resources does not offer a series of professional development courses, though it is an expectation from the soon-to-be-hired Chief Human Resources Officer. As a part of that person's portfolio, sharing a sense of Fordham’s mission and identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university will be key.

Spiritual programs are offered for faculty, staff, and administrators, though numbers are modest. A program in Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Living currently has 16 participants, and a faculty and staff retreat has had waning numbers.

It is far from clear that Fordham has cultivated a “core contingent” to be carriers of the Ignatian Tradition. At the same time, it would be untrue to suggest there is a lack of interest on the part of colleagues to carry this tradition in important, appropriate ways. As observed previously, however, a far more comprehensive and strategic approach to these questions is warranted.

**Hiring Practices that Demonstrate a Commitment to Mission**

While there is a significant degree of commitment to mission on the part of senior administration, individuals, and discrete units, there are no known University-wide processes to indicate that hiring practices specifically promote the mission of Fordham as a Jesuit, Catholic university. There is much to be done in this area. Particular issues noted from the *Characteristics* document that we need to address include: mission-specific language in job postings, the ability of search committees to engage candidates in a substantive way on matters of Jesuit, Catholic mission and identity, clear articulation of principles, active recruiting for mission-oriented hires, resources for targeted mission hires.

This particular question raised a number of interesting conversations among members of the Steering Committee and focus groups. Most people recognized the phrase “hiring for mission” is problematic because, in the context of Fordham, it is frequently received simply as “hiring Catholics.” In an academic institution of
sufficient diversity and complexity as Fordham, such a message does not convey our desires, aspirations, or intentions.

While there was a general resistance to certain connotations in “hiring for mission,” however, there was also a deep awareness that, given Fordham’s identity as a Jesuit, Catholic university, it is important to find ways to advance its distinctiveness. The scope of hiring practices, in other words, need not be limited to particular skill sets or professional abilities but to the capacity to contribute productively to an educational body that states its aspirations in quite specific terms.

In the discussions of the Steering Committee there was a strong sense that “hiring for diversity” should find both motivation and inspiration in the broader mission and identity of Fordham precisely as a Catholic university and that any framework that sets “diversity” and “mission/identity” against each other should be challenged. Although the alignment of diversity and mission/identity may seem counter-intuitive, we expect it to yield a dynamic tension that will broaden the semantic field of each term. At the same time, we discussed what the Characteristics document called a “core contingent” of colleagues that are carriers of the tradition because of their identification with it.

It is also clear, however, that various further distinctions need to be made. We may expect, for instance, a core group of colleagues to identify personally with the tradition in different ways. A Jesuit’s appropriation will be different from that of a self-identified Catholic layperson, which will in turn be different from a person who identifies deeply with another religious tradition or philosophical commitment. Moreover, we do not presume that a self-identified Catholic will, by that fact, make a better contribution to the mission and identity of Fordham than one who is not. Thus, the Steering Committee did not object in principle to the idea of a “core contingent” of faculty, staff, and administrators but felt there needs to be an expression of some texture within such a contingent. Authentic sensitivity to variegation will enable such processes and procedures noted in the Characteristics document, in addition to giving them credibility.

Financial Management that Gives Evidence of a Commitment to Mission

Although this issue was not examined in great depth, at a joint meeting of the Mission and Identity Committee and Finance and Investment Committee of the Board of Trustees, the chair of the latter committee noted that an investment policy was recently re-drafted to ensure that investments were consistent with Catholic Social Teaching, with far greater attention than ever before to alternative, socially-beneficial investments. At the same time, it is not always possible to disambiguate among investments that, by standard practice, are bundled together. But the chair of the committee offered reassurance that, insofar as they have control, the policy does aim to give evidence of commitment to mission.
Furthermore, Fordham seeks relationships with vendors and service providers that strive to optimize the balance of integrity, opportunity, quality, and value – practical qualities that we believe are common to both our values and the tenets of good business. We seek to hire small, local businesses and minority- or women-owned businesses whenever possible, and subject potential vendors to a rigorous background check that includes background verification, searches in debarment registries, and other activities that certify the integrity of the vendor.

**Physical Resource Management that Gives Evidence of a Commitment to Mission**

Sustainability at Fordham University is part of our Jesuit tradition of social justice and service to humanity. More than ever we are deeply conscious of our moral responsibility to respect the environment, and Fordham values the goal of minimizing our environmental impact in all our activities. Through design, construction and maintenance of our buildings, infrastructure and grounds, Fordham ensures environmental sustainability and demonstrates best practices in a broad range of areas.

A presidentially established Sustainability Council, comprising staff, faculty, students and consultants, meets throughout the year to discuss key issues, such as improving recycling, University-wide energy and greenhouse gas reduction initiatives, to name a few ongoing areas of focus.

In the most recent period, for instance, we have focused on reducing our greenhouse gas emissions University-wide, and we expect in 2017 to achieve a 18% reduction from our baseline year of 2005. This achievement is especially gratifying because the University space has grown 16% over the same period of time.

In the area of green space preservation, we have at Rose Hill one of the oldest collections of mature American Elms, *Ulmus Americana*, which are endangered due to Dutch elm disease. The oldest tree is dated to be 280 years old, and we have undertaken an intensive care program to ensure the continuing health of more than 50 mature elms on the campus. In 1997 we were awarded the International Arborist Grand Award for our efforts to preserve American Elms. In addition, we have achieved Tree Campus USA designation at Rose Hill. Other efforts in this area include having our own tree nursery, using environmentally friendly landscaping practices, and maintaining in a natural setting 115 acres of wooded terrain, the Louis Calder Center, the University’s Biological Field Station in Armonk, NY.

Finally, we recently signed a 20-year agreement to purchase green solar power from a 2.5 Megawatt off-site array. At full production, this addition to campus operations can offset 20% of all electric use at Rose Hill. Moreover, we are also actively looking to develop a 800 kilowatt array on our garage roof.
There is a high degree of concern for the beauty of the campus, both at Lincoln Center and at Rose Hill. Art, architecture, and landscape reflect constant concern for the transcendent qualities of beauty at Fordham. In uneven ways, there is good space for reflection, prayer, worship, and social gathering. At Rose Hill, the University Church is well maintained, and there are other chapels (in Keating, Dealy, Loyola, and Spellman), but dining spaces for faculty and staff are simply functional. At Lincoln Center there is a modest chapel on the second floor of Lowenstein, adequate for the need. Over the last few years the aesthetic quality of the Lincoln Center campus has improved greatly, and social spaces are far more numerous and attractive than they have been. For non-Catholic Christians, there is less worship space at either campus, and for non-Christians, there is an emerging need for more room (especially for Muslim students at Lincoln Center).

Conclusion

Consideration of Characteristic 7 leads the Steering Committee to recommend the following Mission Priorities discussed at the end of this Examen.

- A comprehensive and strategic plan for developing colleagues’ understanding of the Ignatian tradition (Mission Priority #1).

- The design/advancement of strategies for linking issues of diversity to mission/identity (Mission Priority #2).
Mission Priorities

Throughout the process of self-study, the Steering Committee has looked carefully at what Fordham does well and what are areas of growth. Conversations on all seven characteristics have turned around three questions.

First, what have we done? This question was largely answered through data collection/inventories.

Second, what are we learning? This question invited thoughtful discernment on the part of members of the committee.

Third, what do we hope to do? This question led to consideration of achievable “mission priorities” proposed in this self-study.

Based on our work, we propose four priorities to be accomplished within the next five years. We expect to review our progress at the next Mission Priority Examen.

1. Outline a much more comprehensive and strategic plan for developing faculty, staff, and board members in their understanding of Fordham’s mission in a way that is both reflective of our identity as Jesuit and Catholic and appropriate to a diverse set of needs and backgrounds. As an outcome of this plan, all members of the community would be equipped with the competence and confidence to describe our common mission as a Jesuit, Catholic university, as well as how they fit into it. It would also find ways to cultivate leaders who will be crucial carriers of the tradition.

2. Design and advance strategies for linking issues of diversity to mission and identity. (That is, shifting the common framework from: “We prize diversity, even though we are a Jesuit, Catholic university” to “We prize diversity, because we are a Jesuit, Catholic university.”) This would include the implementation of methods for promoting hiring practices that demonstrate a commitment to mission.

3. Find ways both to support the Jesuit Community and to make a claim on them corporately to assume greater responsibility as animators of the mission of the University, as well as supporters of faculty, staff, and administrators in advancing it.

4. Significantly improve the program in Service Learning so as to deepen engagement of students, faculty, staff, and administrators with the Bronx and areas around Lincoln Center, have a greater institutional impact on these communities, and in turn learn from our community partners in mutually beneficial ways.