Commitment to Our Priorities and Our Future

2018-2019 ROCKHURST UNIVERSITY
Institutional Examen Report
Mission Priority Examen Self-Study Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date: April 8, 2019
Institution: Rockhurst University
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Local Examen Coordinating Committee:
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Peer Visiting Committee:
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Chris Collins, S.J., Assistant to the President for Mission and Identity, St. Louis University
Nikki Gonzales, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Diversity & Inclusion, Regis University
Margaret Freije, Ph.D., Provost and Dean of the College, College of the Holy Cross

Recent Jesuit Mission Priority Emphases:
Rockhurst University’s recent Jesuit mission priorities are articulated in the approved strategic priorities for academic year 2016-2017. Animated by the annual university theme, which for 16-17 was “Contemplation in Action,” these priorities include (mission-specific priorities are italicized):
**Over-Arching Strategic Priority for 2016-17 Academic Year:**
To achieve sufficient financial and operational cash surplus in order to include compensation increases and deferred maintenance again in the 2017-2018 budget, and to put into place operational and strategic plans that strive to include compensation increases and deferred maintenance in the budget every year. We will accomplish this in a manner that is consistent with our mission, maintains regulatory and accreditation compliance, and supports our strengths as a University.

**Priority Initiatives (Critical Issues 3 and 4):**
1. By emphasizing the value of a Rockhurst education, increasing demand, and developing processes that reinforce our collective commitment to student recruitment and retention, increase net undergraduate tuition revenue.
2. Continue the evaluation and pursuit of operational efficiencies, collaborations, synergies, and internal and external partnerships.
3. Explore and discover how to house and support our performing arts.

**Priority Initiatives (Critical Issues 1 and 2):**
1. Increase net revenue through the development of new signature programs, the enhancement of existing programs and increased fundraising.
2. Set and achieve annual long-term recruitment, retention, and graduation targets that allow the University to sustain and improve the quality of Rockhurst students and their experience.
3. Review and approve recommendations made by the Compensation Philosophy Task Force, approve revised guidelines, and develop an action plan for implementation of the guidelines.
4. Continue to develop our community as one that is welcoming and inclusive.

**Proposed Jesuit Mission Priorities:**
1. **Core Revision:** After an 18-month core-review process, we are now in the process of revising our core to provide a transformative educational experience that derives from our Catholic, Jesuit identity and is infused with our mission and core values. We anticipate, therefore, maintaining our substantive emphasis in the core on the liberal arts and sciences, with Theology and Philosophy given their due. At the same time, in accord with our core review’s recommendation, we are looking to enhance interdisciplinary courses as one means of enabling our graduates to lead change in our complex contemporary world. We are also looking to increase our online course and degree program offerings while, at the same time, offering our online and non-traditional students a strong foundation in our Catholic, Jesuit traditions as well as in our mission and core values. Consistent with our identity, mission, and values, we aim to weave into the core and other courses emphases on sustainability, social justice, inclusivity and diversity. (See Pillar I of our 2018-2023 strategic plan for Rockhurst’s commitment to “Be a Leader in Educational Innovation.”)

2. **Catholic, Jesuit Formation:** Despite the many formation initiatives detailed in our Characteristics, we know how essential such programs are to our overarching commitment to remain a Catholic, Jesuit university even as the numbers of Jesuits will continue to shrink. So, we plan to increase formation programs for our Board of Trustees, Administrators, Faculty (fulltime and, especially, contingent), Staff, and Students (undergraduate, graduate, non-traditional, and online). We shall continue to celebrate the Eucharist as our central liturgy and emphasize Ignatian Spirituality in our various programs. But, as a significant component of our Catholic, Jesuit identity, we intend to provide development opportunities for faculty, administrators, staff, students, Board members in diversity and inclusivity, including the development of a guide for person-first culturally competent language that is inviting to all. And, perhaps, the means of weaving all of these threads into a seamless garment will be our efforts to engage the entire community in a common cohesive outreach project. (Please see Pillars II and III of our five-year strategic plan to “Deeply Infuse our Mission and Values” in all that we do and to “Make Inclusivity our Way of Proceeding.”)

3. **Inclusion and Diversity:** Pillar III in our strategic plan for the next five years opens acknowledging “that no one can truly be home at Rockhurst University until all are at home. Over the next five years, we will learn more about ourselves and others to ensure we revere and incorporate the diversity of our world. We commit to increasing inclusivity, affordability, and support for students from diverse backgrounds, and to enhancing
inclusivity and support for faculty and staff of diverse backgrounds.” To accomplish this challenging priority, we look to launch an Office of Diversity and Inclusion informed by the results of our climate study (which was made available during the site visit). This office, in conjunction with others, will necessarily look to create an intercultural community that promotes ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. And, as indicated in the quotation from our strategic plan, we will strive to recruit Board members, faculty, staff, and students from underrepresented groups and retain them through scholarships, compensation, and removal of barriers.

4. **Financial Sustainability:** We need to strengthen the university’s fiscal health through new programs, a comprehensive fundraising campaign, and growth of the endowment to generate adequate resources for investment in our people and campus (as outlined in Pillar IV of our strategic plan for 2018-2023). Subsumed by this financial overview and our comprehensive fundraising campaign are the following priorities: funding new initiatives, generating new scholarships (especially for under-represented groups), executing our Compensation Philosophy and Guidelines as a budget priority, expanding our technology infrastructure to support online learning of graduate and undergraduate students, improving student housing, constructing a new health and recreation center.

**Plans for Implementation**
The mission priorities discerned through the Examen process mirror the four pillars of Rockhurst University’s 2018-2023 strategic plan. Plans for implementation are encapsulated within the ongoing strategic planning process.

**Changes to Original Self-study and/or Jesuit Mission Priorities, Based on Peer Visitor Feedback**
Given the visiting team’s affirmation of the identified priorities, no substantive changes were made to the Jesuit Mission Priorities. Since the report was finished in August 2018 ahead of the October 2018 visit, the following items were added as appendices to the final report:

- Appendix A: Private Addendum Re: Recent Changes at the University, provided to the visiting team ahead of side visit to provide context and background on changes in the months following completion of the original report and preceding the visit
- Characteristic 1: Appendix 1F: Individual Mission Examen from September 2018 Board of Trustees’ Retreat
- Characteristic 2: Appendix A Daft Version of the Core Rationale
Introductory Comments
As you will find in each of the Seven Characteristics that comprise our Institutional Examen, we believe strongly that we are committed to our identity as a Catholic, Jesuit university as well as to our mission, vision, and core values. Through the Examen process, we have affirmed what we previously found to be true: Our people, programs, and resources focus upon realizing our mission, upon living out our vision and core values, upon achieving our learning objectives. Through the Examen process, we also affirmed that we are and wish to remain an authentically Catholic, Jesuit university.

Examen Methodology, Timeline, and Writing Teams
Beginning in the fall of 2015 and continuing through the spring of 2017, the Mission and Ministry Committee of the Board of Trustees examined each of the Seven Characteristics that comprise the Institutional Examen of Jesuit Colleges and Universities to prepare all Board members for and to familiarize them with our institutional Examen. The members of the Board discussed one characteristic at each of their meetings during the time indicated.

A word of note about our planning and execution schedule: both Ellen Spake and Joseph Cirincione will retire at the end of this academic year (AY2017-18). Hence, we began our planning very early in order to have the document completed prior to their departure. We have scheduled October 14-17, 2018, as optimal dates for the site visit in order to allow the new Mission Officer enough time to become familiar with the Examen report, processes, and individuals involved. We feel it is critically important that the new Mission Officer be a part of the process through the institutional site visit, as he or she will be integrally involved in some of the proposed initiatives that we anticipate forthcoming from our Examen.

During the spring of 2017, we formed a central working committee. These individuals agreed to be Chairs of the respective characteristic writing groups. Those individuals then invited other members of the university community to be part of their respective committees. Care was taken to include, when appropriate, faculty, students, and staff on the writing committees. The following are the committee chairs of the various writing groups.

Chairs of Examen Writing Teams & Coordinating Committee:
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Examen Timeline

During fall 2017, the following activities took place:

• Fr. Thomas Curran, S.J., shared information about the Examens with the university community in his fall university update.

• At the All Companions Meeting for faculty and staff, held in August 2017, we again introduced the institutional Examens to the larger community with an informational handout and a general invitation for participation. (The handout was available during the site visit.)

• We yet again shared the informational handout about the Examens with the Faculty Senate as a reminder.

• Ellen Spake met with the Student Senate president to share information about the Examens.

• We also shared weekly reflections with the university community on each of the Seven Characteristics, written by members of the Board of Trustees, students, staff, and faculty. These reflections continued monthly through the end of December 2017.

• Writing committees held listening/discussion sessions around each of the characteristics during the fall semester. These took the form of small group luncheon meetings, larger group sessions, and meetings with various committees.

• Writing committees began their first drafts of their respective sections towards the end of fall 2017.

During spring 2018, the following activities took place:

• Fr. Curran communicated with the Bishop about the Examens and its process and forwarded to him drafts of the characteristics.

• Writing committees turned in drafts to Ellen Spake and Joseph Cirincione for review and feedback before spring break.

• Final reports were due to editors by April 3rd and due to the Office of Public Relations and Marketing for review by mid-April.

• Final drafts were delivered to Public Relations and Marketing for typesetting in late April.

• Fall 2018, the visiting team was provided with private addendum. (Please see Appendix A.)

Our site visit took place October 14-17, 2018.

Overview of Characteristics

Characteristic 1: Leadership’s Commitment to the Mission. With the commitment of our leadership (from our Board to our President and his Cabinet and Council), financial and human resources have been allocated to initiatives that enable us to pursue our mission and core values. This year alone, we have been engaged in a community wide climate survey regarding our hospitality to diverse groups of people. The survey results will serve as a basis for pursuing one of four major components of our 2018-2023 strategic plan: to “Make Inclusivity Our Way of Proceeding.” Of course, prior to our climate study, Rockhurst’s leadership had engaged our faculty, staff, and students in a participative process similar to the ones that recently produced an updated version of our mission and vision statements, as well as our new strategic plan.

Characteristic 2: The Academic Life. Several years ago, our academic leadership set in motion an 18-month core review process. Based upon the results of the review (published in December 2016), a new committee took up core curriculum revision, a process that is still ongoing. Core revision comprises a good portion of the first Pillar of our strategic plan: to “Be a Leader in Educational Innovation.” This component of the plan is key for helping us remain faithful to our Catholic intellectual heritage, our Jesuit liberal arts and sciences tradition, and our academic mission. In addition to our core curriculum, courses and programs outside of the core, work in our professional schools, academic support and co-curricular programs and, of course, our employment of the Jesuit pedagogical paradigm help us to realize our mission and core values.

Characteristic 3: A Catholic, Jesuit Campus Culture. Campus Ministry is part of a great effort at Rockhurst to include people of diverse religious perspectives and philosophical worldviews in our religious services while simultaneously affirming our Catholic identity through our celebration of the Eucharist, programs steeped in Ignatian Spirituality, and support of vocational discernment. We also find a rich variety of mission-centered and value-centered activities (offered by
Athletics, the Counseling Center, Student Senate, student organizations, our Center for Service Learning, our Mission and Ministry Office’s formation programs, as well as an invitation to our campus community to help realize our institutional commitment to inclusivity and diversity). In a word, our Catholic, Jesuit culture permeates our campus, even as our strategic plan for 2018-2023 commits us to “Deeply Infuse Our Mission and Values” in all of our work and to “Make Inclusivity Our Way of Proceeding.”

**Characteristic 4: Service.** For some time, service has been a major thrust of Rockhurst’s mission, a major component of its Catholic, Jesuit identity. And our five-year strategic plan continues this commitment. Our service to neighbors, organizations in the local and national communities, as well as groups in foreign countries, has notably earned Rockhurst “the Community Engagement Classification” from the Carnegie Foundation. Through our Center for Service Learning and Campus Ministry Office, as supported by our Mission and Ministry Office, we orient our students, faculty, staff, and administrators to what it is that we are about. Service Learning, moreover, is only one component of community outreach. Mission and Ministry oversees a good deal of the formation activities for faculty, administrators, and many staff members; and service for and with others is a primary core value in these formation activities. Our strategic plan, finally, sets out as a major aim our intent to “deeply infuse our mission and values throughout our work,” especially as we “Enhance partnerships and engagement with our diverse community to help students, faculty and staff grow in their own cultural understanding and appreciation, and also to serve university and community needs.”

**Characteristic 5: Service to the Local Church.** Rockhurst University primarily serves the local Church by living out its educational mission. We also work with the Diocese on our shared mission of spreading the good news of the Gospels and serving those in need. Thus, we serve by staffing (with a Jesuit from our Jesuit community) and partnering with St. Francis Xavier parish, as well as by service of our other Jesuits and our laypeople to local parishes and various Diocesan Offices, e.g., by celebrating Mass or conducting workshops and parish missions or serving on Diocesan committees. So, too, do our students serve a number of local parishes and Catholic non-profits through their own organizations, through various service-learning activities in their courses, and through programmatic requirements. Our strategic plan, finally, sets out as a major aim our intent to “deeply infuse our mission and values throughout our work,” especially as we “Enhance partnerships and engagement with our diverse community to help students, faculty and staff grow in their own cultural understanding and appreciation, and also to serve university and community needs.”

**Characteristic 6: Jesuit Presence on Campus.** Given the shrinking numbers of Jesuits and, thus, the great challenge of keeping even a token number of Jesuits on our campus, our policies support hiring for mission and conducting various formation programs throughout the year for faculty and staff. From the packet sent to administrative and faculty applicants, as well as to most of our exempt staff applicants, explaining our Catholic, Jesuit identity, mission, and core values, to the interviews our Chief Mission Officer conducts with such applicants, we are looking to hire people who can articulate how they might support our mission. Presuming we hire such people, we then offer an array of formation programs from the semester-long Cardoner program to hour-long discussions of articles in *Conversations* magazine or the *Jesuit Education Reader*. We also encourage and underwrite attendance of our faculty and staff to any number of AJCU and ACCU sponsored events. Even so, our new strategic plan, under the second pillar, calls for “increasing formation programs for faculty and staff” as we form our lay colleagues to fill the void left by the decreased number of Jesuits.

**Characteristic 7: Integrity.** With integrity primarily influencing the financial support for our identity, mission, and core values, we demonstrate how our planning and budgeting view all allocations and requests for allocations through the lens of our mission. Thus the hiring policies, compensation philosophy, and specific expenditures for activities grow out of our focus on mission and core values. Whether considering funds for sacred spaces/core value reflection sites, Mission and Ministry initiatives, service immersion trips, Community Center outreach, or liturgies, our Planning and Budgeting Committee, along with the leadership requesting allocations for mission initiatives, operates with integrity. Our strategic plan devotes the whole of Pillar IV to “Ensuring Vitality and Financial Sustainability for the Future,” with the goal of strengthening our endowment and continuing to be responsible with our financial resources.
Emerging Priorities
Each of the characteristics conclude with emerging priorities – both needs and challenges. Our Closing Remarks will exclusively focus on the emerging priorities of each Characteristic by placing them under one or another of the four pillars in our recently published strategic plan for the next five years. These Closing Remarks will end with the four Mission Priority Emphases that Rockhurst will be pursuing, as our Strategic Plan sets them out in high relief. We have highlighted these same priorities in the Executive Summary. We have, therefore, elected not to repeat them yet a third time in these Introductory Comments.

Despite these emerging priorities, we reiterate two of our opening assertions: “we believe strongly that we are committed to our identity as a Catholic, Jesuit university, as well as to our mission, vision, and core values. . . . [Further] we are and wish to remain an authentically Catholic, Jesuit university.”
Characteristic 1:
LEADERSHIP’S COMMITMENT TO MISSION
Characteristic 1: LEADERSHIP’S COMMITMENT TO MISSION

Rockhurst University articulates its Catholic, Jesuit mission in a variety of ways that the leadership of the university upholds and reiterates.

Recently, faculty, staff, students, administrators, and trustees spent a year in reflection on and revision of the university mission and vision. They participated in open forums, surveys, and small group conversations to provide input. The updated mission and vision statements that articulate the Catholic, Jesuit, and liberal arts tradition of the university:

“Rockhurst is a comprehensive university and a supportive community that forms lifelong learners in the Catholic, Jesuit, liberal arts tradition who engage with the complexities of our world and serve others as compassionate, thoughtful leaders”; our vision is “To create a more just world through inclusive, innovative, and transformative education.” (Please see Appendix 1A for the Mission and Vision Statements: Revision Process 2017-2018.) Our Jesuit core values – Finding God in All Things, Cura Personalis, Magis, Reflection and Discernment, Contemplation in Action, and Wisdom – flow from the mission and guide our way of proceeding. The university website communicates these commitments, along with the learning themes or aims after which our academic programs strive: leadership, communication, international and cultural understanding, critical and creative thinking, ethics and social justice, and self-formation. (Please see Appendix 1B for a link to the website.)

Rockhurst employees have participated in surveys, along with other Jesuit universities, regarding Catholic, Jesuit Identity. Our employees indicate that their experiences at Rockhurst have contributed to their understanding of the university’s mission, their appreciation of social justice issues, and their comprehension of the Jesuit principle of being men and women for and with others. (These survey results were available during the site visit.) In preparation for our 2017 Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Evaluation, numerous faculty members highlighted our commitment to mission and how our classrooms and conversations positively reflected that commitment. (Please see page 6 of the HLC Assurance Report, which was available during the site visit.)

Mission Commitment of the Board of Trustees

The Rockhurst University Bylaws not only describe the university’s role as an academic institution, but also stipulate (in Article 1, Section 3) that the university will be “publicly identified as a Catholic university and a Jesuit university,” “motivated by the moral, spiritual and religious inspiration and values of the Judeo-Christian tradition,” and “guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus.” (A complete copy of the By-Laws was available during the site visit.)

As the President and existing members of the Board of Trustees consider individuals to serve on the Board, they highly value characteristics like willingness and capacity to be engaged in the mission of the university. Rockhurst President, the Reverend Thomas Curran, S.J., continuously reminds the Trustees that decision-making processes must be consistent with Jesuit core values and the Rockhurst mission. Mr. Kermit Fendler, Chair of the Board of Trustees, shared the Board’s commitment to mission in one of many academic year 2017-18 reflections on the mission by faculty, staff, administrators, and Board members. In his reflection, Mr. Fendler noted, “I can say without reservation that the leadership of Rockhurst University, including the Board of Trustees and the President, is fully committed to carrying out the Rockhurst University Mission. It is our guiding principle and a beacon that shines over everything that we as the leaders of Rockhurst do for the University.” (Please see Appendix 1C for Mr. Fendler’s complete reflection.) Similar reflections, one component of our Institutional Examen process, were distributed via email to the Rockhurst community as another formation initiative. (A sample of these reflections was available during the site visit. Please see Characteristic 6 and Appendix 6A for more on formation of faculty and staff.)

At each Board meeting the members receive a Board Book in advance of their meetings, with the mission statement prominently displayed inside the front cover. The Board regularly discusses topics related to mission at Board meetings. The Assistant to the President for Mission and Ministry often leads a “Mission Moment” for the entire Board; these moments have included a reflection on St. Ignatius Loyola, a description of the proceedings of the 36th Jesuit General Congregation,
a discussion about the Jesuit Provincial’s call for apostolic discernment, as well as considerations of related topics.

In addition, the university Bylaws established a standing Mission and Ministry subcommittee of the Board, charged with “enhancing the Jesuit mission experience of the members of the entire Rockhurst University community” and “coordinating the University-wide process of orienting, animating, promoting and maintaining the University’s Ignatian heritage, Jesuit mission and Catholic Identity.” The trustee, moreover, who chairs the subcommittee “should be .. . experienced in Ignatian and Jesuit ministry.” This subcommittee reviews the activities of the Office of Mission and Ministry and makes recommendations. All trustees of the full Board receive the subcommittee’s minutes.

The Mission and Ministry subcommittee of the Board, together with the Assistant to the President for Mission and Ministry, provides an orientation for new Board members that begins with an in-depth look at the mission, which grounds and frames the work of the Board. In addition, the Board annually designates one meeting per year for a retreat experience, part of which centers on Rockhurst’s mission and core values. In September 2015, the Board retreat focused solely on Mission, with invited speaker/facilitator Rev. Howard Gray, S.J.

A very recent example of mission lived and supported by Rockhurst leaders, in academic year 2017-18, was our campus climate initiative. The Board of Trustees, with the support of university administration, commissioned an examination of our campus climate, as President Fr. Thomas Curran noted “to ensure our campus is both welcoming and inclusive—a place where everyone feels at home, where everyone feels safe and valued.” The President invited the campus community to participate in this process, promising to share the results with the campus in April 2018. (Appendix 1D details the Climate Study Process; Characteristic 3 discusses further the campus climate survey, the complete results of which were available during the site visit.)

**Mission Commitment of Administration**

The leadership of the university has committed significant resources to support the university’s mission and core values by underwriting the work of the Mission and Ministry Office, allocating to it not only an operating budget, but also several endowed funds. The Mission Office continually places before all members of the Rockhurst University community the mission and core values of the institution, reminding members of our community (on and off campus) of our Catholic, Jesuit identity. As part of this role, it strives to ensure that all decisions, conversations, policies, and programs are in line with our mission and deeply held values. To realize its charge, the Office of Mission and Ministry provides a number of opportunities throughout the year for faculty and staff to deepen their understanding of the mission and core values of the university, of what it means to be Catholic and Jesuit.

The Mission Office begins forming members of our community even before they are hired. All faculty and administrative staff applicants, as well as most exempt staff applicants, receive a packet of commentaries on Rockhurst University’s mission, core values, and Catholic, Jesuit identity for their information and reflection. The Chief Mission Officer then interviews every one of these applicants not only to emphasize the importance of our mission and core values, as well as our Catholic, Jesuit identity, but also to provide input regarding applicants – whether they can or cannot adequately explain how they believe they could contribute to our mission and identity.

As follow-up, the Chief Mission Officer meets monthly for new employee orientation, explaining matters of mission, identity, and values. In addition, the Mission Office orients new faculty to our Catholic, Jesuit heritage, as well as the university mission and core values, through the newly launched Cardoner Program. The Cardoner Program, which is contractually required of all new faculty and open (by invitation) to all established faculty and staff, reviews the life of Ignatius, the history of the Jesuits, Ignatian Spirituality, and major tenets of Catholic Social Teaching. It also allows veteran faculty and staff to share with new hires their understanding of Ignatian Pedagogy and their experience of how the Jesuit heritage guides their daily practices.

**On-Campus Initiatives:** As part of its role in keeping the mission and identity present in people’s minds and lives, the Mission Office sponsors a number of continuing formation programs from reading groups to hospitality lunches, from mission leave for staff to mission moments at department meetings. Furthermore, it helps to keep the mission alive in the minds of students by meeting with them in their classes, in orientation programs, and in retreats.

**Brown Bag Conversations:** Two to four times each semester the Mission Office hosts “brown bag conversations”: one-hour meetings for faculty and staff, over lunch, to discuss mission- and core-value-related articles.

**Jesuit Education Reader:** Similarly, twice each academic year, the Office hosts hour-long discussions for faculty and staff on selected articles from the *Jesuit Education Reader*, edited by George W. Traub, S.J. (Please
see Appendix 6B for a very recent AJCU Connections article on this formation program.)

**Department Mission Moments:** Throughout the year the mission office staff meet with units of the university to lead “mission moments,” short discussions to deepen understanding of the Ignatian mission, pedagogy, and worldview among members of our community.

**Mission Leave Policy for Staff:** The mission leave policy allows staff members to voluntarily participate, with pay, in approved, off-campus mission-related or service-related activities during regularly scheduled work hours for up to three days per year.

**May I Take You to Lunch?:** In the spirit of hospitality, perhaps as many as five times per semester, this program brings together faculty, staff, students, and administrators for an informal lunch and an opportunity to get to know one another socially.

**Faculty Fellows in Mission:** This Mission-Office initiative is a one-semester (possibly two-semester) internship for faculty who wish to develop further and experientially their understanding of the Ignatian heritage and the Catholic, Jesuit Mission of Rockhurst University. The Fellowship provides time – through a one-course release per semester – for the fellow to serve in the Mission and Ministry Office, assisting with daily activities and events, as well as engaging with members of the Rockhurst community as a steward of the mission. It also provides time to pursue a personal project that engages more fully with the Ignatian heritage.

**National Initiatives:** In addition to Mission Office initiatives, the Mission and Ministry Office oversees and funds programs that networks like the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) or the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) sponsor. For example,

**Collegium Summer Colloquy:** A joint effort by 65 Catholic colleges and universities in the United States and Canada to help their faculty think creatively about ways to articulate and enrich the spiritual and intellectual life of their institutions. Annually it sponsors summer colloquies for scholars from diverse backgrounds, faiths, disciplines to explore compelling components of Catholic intellectual tradition and to think about how a Catholic college or university setting can enrich their academic vocations and how their academic vocations can serve their students, the academy, and the world.

**Ignatian Colleagues Program:** The Ignatian Colleagues Program (ICP) is an 18-month immersion into the Jesuit tradition of spirituality, education, and social justice that proposes to increase the number of members in the Rockhurst community who deeply understand the Jesuit heritage and who can carry the tradition forward.

**Jesuit Leadership Seminar:** The Seminar is a formation program for lay leaders at Jesuit colleges and universities to engage them with our Jesuit mission and identity because formed lay leaders are key to the future of Jesuit education. Participants are presented foundational information on Ignatian history, pedagogy and spirituality, and how to integrate those into the concrete work of faculty and administrators; participants very often establish closer relationships with colleagues across the AJCU network (these relationships are life-giving and critical to the success of our work); and participants share a sense of excitement, renewal and heightened commitment to our shared mission.

**Heartland-Delta Faculty Conversations Conference:** Each February, this gathering addresses themes relevant to faculty in Jesuit higher education.

**Heartland-Delta Triennial Conference:** Delegates from the 12 AJCU Heartland-Delta institutions assemble every three or four years to critically examine issues in Jesuit education. The last conference was hosted by Rockhurst on May 28, 2015, and, for the first time, was a virtual conference.

**Engagement with Students:** The Chief Mission Officer meets with students in various settings to help to deepen their appreciation of and commitment to the university mission and values: in orientation of new students, in all Freshman Seminars, in various graduate and undergraduate classes by invitation, in retreats of various student organizations, e.g., Student Senate. (Please see Characteristic 3 regarding Campus Ministry’s initiatives for students.)

Characteristic 7 will discuss further the hiring of administrative candidates for mission, while Characteristic 6 will examine their formation in mission in more detail; but at this time we might mention the involvement of administrators in national Jesuit formation programs like the AJCU Jesuit Leadership Seminar. Most recently, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Rockhurst participated. The Ignatian Colleagues Program (ICP) has imparted a more in-depth leadership formation for members of the President’s Council, as well as for a number of key faculty. The Chief Financial Officer, the
Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Assistant to the President for Mission and Ministry are all graduates of ICP, as is our new faculty Director of the Core Curriculum. The next ICP cohort will include the Vice President for Student Development and Athletics and a faculty member from CHHS. (So important is the ICP in shaping a mission-focused leadership group at Rockhurst that the President’s Council has identified key leaders to participate in ICP over the next five years.) In addition, the President’s Cabinet and the University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC) have incorporated the Ignatian way of proceeding in their meetings which contributes to the ongoing formation of leadership.

Messages from the President, such as the September 2017 statement on the federal government’s decision to end DACA, many times communicate just how greatly mission informs the decisions and values of the university’s leaders. Emailed to all members of the university community and posted to the public website, these messages manifest our leaders’ mission focus to the campus community and to our surrounding community. (Please see Appendix 1E for a link to the full text of the President’s message on DACA.)

Feedback from listening sessions during the Institutional Examen process repeatedly noted the Cura Personalis demonstrated by administrators. Students highlighted that administrators at Rockhurst, including the President, don’t just “teach” the mission, but they also demonstrate through their work that they live it. They noted that this positively impacts how they approach their education and live their own lives. Staff and students involved in the hiring processes of campus leadership noted that it is evident that mission is important in that process. In recent years, university leadership codified its annual budgeting process and one of the objectives is “To provide a platform for a collaborative and informed dialogue and transparency within the University . . . .” (Please see Characteristic 7 for more information on the budgeting process.) In our most recent HLC accreditation report, faculty noted, as examples of leadership’s living the mission, this commitment to dialogue and transparency and the presence of faculty on UPBC. (The full text of the accreditation report was available during the site visit; pages 5 and 25 are especially pertinent to Characteristic 1.)

Finally, in our most recently published strategic plan – go forth. Rockhurst University Strategic Plan, 2018-2023 – Rockhurst’s leadership (with input from faculty and staff) committed themselves to pursuing four major aims or Pillars, two of which speak directly to Characteristic I: Pillar II sets out to “Deeply Infuse our Mission and Values” in all of our work and Pillar III aims to “Make Inclusivity our Way of Proceeding.” (A complete copy of the strategic plan is available on the website https://www.rockhurst.edu/strategicplan.)

Emerging Priorities

- Rockhurst should explore opportunities to deepen the mission formation of Board members, for example, through possible immersion experiences. (Please see Appendix 1F for the questions that guided the September 2018 Board of Trustees’ Retreat.)

- Senior administrators should focus a good deal of attention on the transition in the Mission and Ministry office in AY 2018-19 and on the outcomes of the campus climate initiative as they relate to the continued formation of current and future leaders.

- The fall 2017 listening sessions around this characteristic identified opportunities to deepen the formation of staff regarding the mission and core values. Dean’s Council and other administrative groups like the President’s Council and Cabinet should work with supervisors to enhance opportunities for staff participation.
Characteristic 2: Academic Life Reflects Our Catholic, Jesuit Mission
Characteristic 2: 
ACADEMIC LIFE REFLECTS OUR CATHOLIC, JESUIT MISSION

Rockhurst University’s Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Learning Themes comprehensively lay out our educational purpose and learning outcomes. And so we begin with what guides our academic life as a Catholic, Jesuit institution (emphases added).

**Mission Statement:** Rockhurst is a comprehensive university and a supportive community that forms lifelong learners in the Catholic, Jesuit liberal arts tradition who engage with the complexities of our world and serve others as compassionate, thoughtful leaders.

**Vision Statement:** To create a more just world through inclusive, innovative, and transformative education.

**Core Values:** Finding God in All Things, Cura Personalis, Magis, Reflection and Discernment, Contemplation in Action, and Wisdom.

**Rockhurst University Learning Themes**

In light of our mission, vision, and core values, the Rockhurst community fashioned Learning Themes (over a decade ago) that provide a comprehensive set of learning outcomes that guide the instructional mission of the university:

- Leadership
- Communication
- International and Cultural Understanding
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Ethics and Social Justice
- Academic Knowledge
- Self-Formation

These learning themes remain faithful to Jesuit spiritual and pedagogical traditions while guiding our care and formation of the whole person. They enable the intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth of the students in our charge. For each human person, we believe, should be engaged in a global society and should strive to serve both God and others through the pursuit of truth, knowledge, values, and skills, so that he or she may become ever more effective instruments of justice.

Not surprisingly, the Rockhurst University learning themes or learning outcomes unify the curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Each academic unit articulates its understanding of how its goals support the Learning Themes.

**The Liberal Core Curriculum**

The rationale of the Rockhurst core curriculum is an extraordinarily well-thought out philosophy of Jesuit education that connects Jesuit values and philosophy of the human person to a vision of the role of higher education. The core seeks to develop students who are well-rounded, encouraging them to contemplate the “big” questions of human existence from multiple perspectives. The core is the primary vehicle for carrying out the Jesuit tradition of liberal arts education, introducing students to the world’s major intellectual and religious traditions as well as exploring the meaning of being Catholic and Jesuit. Through the humanities, the sciences, the arts, Philosophy, and Theology, the core helps students to integrate knowledge of the world with knowledge of self, to integrate values of faith and justice, and to form the habits of reflection necessary to be citizens of conscience. The core thereby communicates Rockhurst’s commitment to faith and justice, helping students to discover not only their careers, but also their truest vocation as women and men for and with others.

The structure of the core flows coherently from this vision and distinguishes it emphatically from any general education program. The core comprises seven Modes of Inquiry: Artistic, Historical, Literary, Philosophical, Scientific Causal (natural sciences), Scientific Relational (social sciences), and Theological Modes. The Modes designate different areas of content knowledge. They also embrace the guiding questions that motivate inquiry and the established methods for arriving at
answers, at some aspects of truth.

Through these modes of inquiry, students gain a broader perspective on the complexities of the contemporary world. Core coursework in Philosophy and in Theology and Religious Studies, along with elective course work in Catholic Studies and other programs, offer students opportunities to examine in depth the intellectual, cultural, and social justice traditions of the Catholic Church. Work in the fine arts, history, literature, physical sciences, and social sciences introduces knowledge and methods of these fields, while required upper level work in these areas allows students to participate in inquiries with more depth and rigor. In addition, the core has three Proficiencies: Oral Communication, Mathematics, and Written Communication. Lastly, to guarantee a basic intercultural competency in at least one culture other than one’s own, students must satisfy the Global Perspectives Requirement.

Though the present core curriculum manifestly supports our mission and vision statements, as well as our learning themes, we do recognize the challenge, as we move into core revision, to be more explicit in tying core courses to our core values.

**Core Review and Revision**

We recently completed an eighteen-month review of our core. Results indicate, the faculty believe that the core is appropriately oriented to the mission of the institution and that it promotes the Jesuit ideals of educating the whole person and of nurturing an inquisitiveness that leads to lifelong learning. The review also indicates, students and alumni believe that the core develops skills in critical thinking, communicating, investigating new knowledge, and applying such knowledge to real life problems. Students and alumni also attest to the core’s significance in their social, moral, and spiritual development; their intercultural awareness and sensitivity; and their commitment to creating a more just world.

Of course, preparing students to flourish in an ever-changing society demands re-visioning the institution and the curriculum – in the context of mission and identity. Our core review highlighted ways to make the core more impactful for students. Complex problems in society require analysis and solutions that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries. Future leaders need to examine such problems from multiple perspectives in order to integrate diverse investigative and cultural frameworks. Therefore, the very first of four Pillars in our 2018-2023 strategic plan commits Rockhurst to “Be a Leader in Educational Innovation,” especially through revision of the core, enrichment of co-curricular experiences, and enhancement of online course and degree offerings, so that our students are prepared to lead in this complex world.

One part of Rockhurst’s educational strategy is to revise its core curriculum to strengthen what it does well – such as provide a cohesive and value-infused understanding of a whole, educated person – by being more intentional about linkages between courses and specific core values. Another part is to reimagine what a Jesuit education means for the 21st century and to supplement the strong liberal arts foundations of the core by integrating new academic elements and pedagogical practices, like interdisciplinary coursework and co-curricular experiences. A university task force is currently engaged in revising the core to be innovative while remaining true to our Jesuit tradition and core values. We only recently published the results of our core review and are currently engaged in curriculum revision. So, the core described in the previous section still obtains. (The core review report was available during the site visit. Please see Appendix 2A for a draft of the Core Rationale and Learning Outcomes)

**Courses and Programs Outside of the Core**

Other curricular programs also help to create a comprehensive learning environment that cultivates intellectual, ethical, and spiritual growth by examining and inculcating key Jesuit values. Such programs include

- Catholic Studies minor
- Bioethics and Social Justice tracks in the Philosophy major and minor
- Social Justice and Global Perspectives tracks in the Economics major and minor
- Nonprofit Leadership Studies
- Leadership Studies minor

Many of the courses in Rockhurst’s curriculum, both in the core and in upper division coursework, incorporate service learning, as well as other forms of experiential learning, as a pedagogical tool. Courses in the sciences, education, business, and philosophy are just a select few that also introduce students to experiences outside and inside of the classroom, which raise critical issues of justice, in order to develop students’ skills in reflection upon ethical, spiritual, and professional values. Such reflection, of course, serves as a basis for action. These courses especially incorporate the Jesuit pedagogical paradigm (i.e., experience, reflection, discernment, assessment) by bringing academic studies into contact with the lives of the most vulnerable in society.
and by encouraging solidarity with them. To assist faculty, the Center for Service Learning provides funds for and guidance in
designing service learning courses, as well as help in developing relationships with service sites. (Please see Characteristic 4 and
Appendices 4D and 4E for details on the Center for Service Learning.)

Professional Schools: Mission, Vision, Values
Each of Rockhurst’s professional schools pursues its mission and goals with direction from our mission, vision, core
values, and learning themes. As each school prepares its students to be knowledgeable and skillful practitioners of their
profession(s), they aim to form ethical leaders in their future fields, organizations, and communities.

Helzberg School of Management (HSOM)
The mission of the Helzberg School of Management aligns with the mission of the university by preparing leaders in
the business community to carry Jesuit values into their workplaces and communities. Summarized by the Helzberg
vision statement, “We develop leaders of competence and conscience,” the curriculum of the school fosters both knowledge
of business practices and ethical responsibility.

Research College of Nursing (RCN)
The mission of Research College of Nursing is to educate students who, as professional nurses, provide safe, quality
health care and service to the greater society. The curriculum of RCN fosters the development of responsible caregivers
dedicated to cura personalis and respectful of individual and cultural difference.

College of Health and Human Services (CHHS)
The mission of the College of Health and Human Services is to “develop reflective leaders in health and human services
who are ethical, inclusive, and compassionate professionals.” In addition to academic excellence and critical thinking,
the curriculum of the College incorporates such elements of the Jesuit tradition as development of leadership skills,
advocacy for social justice, service to and with community partners, respectful cultural competence, and personal ethical
responsibility.

(Please see Appendix 2B for a list of courses in our Helzberg School that integrate our core values into their subject matter
and, often into their titles. Titles of courses in RCN and CHHS are rather generic, but the courses themselves frequently
entail service learning projects, service immersion trips, and other means of linking subject matter to our core values.)

Academic Support Programs in the Jesuit Tradition
In pursuing our mission and core values and in working toward a more just society, we look to three primary support
programs:

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning supports faculty development, growth and renewal. The Center
offers regular workshops and reading groups to promote improved pedagogy in order to foster the growth of our
students through cura personalis. For example, the Center recently provided a workshop with a recognized scholar on
issues of diversity and inclusion to better serve the student population.

The Office of Mission and Ministry
This Mission and Ministry Office aims to engender a deep understanding of and appreciation for Rockhurst’s Catholic,
Jesuit identity (including its core values) across the whole university and “to ensure that all decisions, conversations,
policies and programs conform to these deeply held values.” The Office begins by orienting new faculty to our Catholic,
Jesuit heritage and the university mission through the newly launched Cardoner Program. The Cardoner Program
invites established faculty and staff to share their understanding of Rockhurst’s Jesuit heritage and how it guides their
daily practices with recent hires. (Please see Characteristic 3 for initiatives directed toward our students by Campus
Ministry. See also Characteristic 6 and Appendix 6A for more on the Office of Mission and Ministry and its many
formation initiatives.)

The Aylward-Dunn Learning Center
The work of the Aylward-Dunn Learning Center combines the educational mission of the university with the Jesuit
values of cura personalis and magis. The staff of the Learning Center, together with a cadre of student tutors and
instructors, offer an array of academic services to our students to help make their educational experience as valuable
and rewarding as possible. The Learning Center trains and employs approximately 60 student tutors and instructors
recognized by faculty for their excellence in their subject areas and in their writing skills. In turn, student tutors assist their fellow students through individual tutoring and by conducting supplemental instruction sessions for especially challenging courses. Tutors also conduct peer reviews and mentoring for student writing. The Learning Center conducts sessions to improve skills that increase academic success, such as time management, goal setting, reading and notetaking, test preparation, and study strategies. It also provides assistance for students with access needs by hosting quiet areas and computers for test taking. The work of all the members of the Learning Center has demonstrably improved the academic success of students who use the Center services.

Co-Curricular Programs: Mission, Vision, Values
Our co-curricular offerings contribute to a rich intellectual and spiritual environment for the Rockhurst community and the Kansas City community at large. The programs highlight academic achievement, innovative and courageous leadership, and a holistic concern for all members of the community from Catholic and Jesuit perspectives.

Student Development and Athletics
Student Development and Athletics is a co- and extra-curricular department that offers a wide array of programs and services for all Rockhurst students (undergraduate and graduate, full-time and part-time, residential and commuter, and a broad spectrum of other backgrounds). The programs and services include orientation of new and transfer students, leadership development, student organizations, Greek Life, health education, student activities board, homecoming, family and alumni weekend, residence life, conference services, judicial affairs, international students, multicultural students, counseling, disability services, career services, health services and insurance, intramurals, club sports, and intercollegiate athletics. These programs and services share the same aims: to support students during difficult times. Ultimately, we seek to foster a caring community of learners (i.e., companions) who courageously seek to make God’s good world better.

In day-to-day activities, the university’s mission, vision, and values guide our staff members and student leaders. Conversations with students and each other are guided by the Ignatian Way of Proceeding. Department staff members’ caring approach appears most visibly in care of people during personal crises; enforcement of standards and guidelines instituted to foster fairness and respect; investigating and responding to allegations and events of harm and injustice; and providing opportunities for eating, sleeping, exercising, and emotional/spiritual refreshment that are so essential in caring for oneself, so that one can lead and serve others well. (Please see Characteristic 3 for additional details about a few of the specific programs and services in Student Development that reflect our Catholic and Jesuit mission.)

Center for Arts and Letters
The Center for Arts and Letters is an alliance of varied cultural offerings: lectures, performances, readings, films, study trips, and exhibits. Among the Center programs that most speak to our Catholic, Jesuit identity are the Visiting Scholar Lecture Series; the Rossner Lectures, public presentations that explore significant issues of contemporary society from the theological and philosophical perspectives; and Return to the Classics, a continuing educational series that explores classic works of literature, philosophy, and spirituality and their relevance for contemporary life.

Thomas More Center for the Study of Catholic Thought and Culture
The Thomas More Center, named after the university’s patron saint, promotes critical and committed analysis of the Catholic tradition. Its programs elicit discussion of Catholicism from the perspectives of literature, history, fine arts, philosophy, theology, and the natural and social sciences.

The Center encourages faculty and student research and study through a minor program in Catholic studies for undergraduates and a research grant program for Rockhurst faculty. (In fact, two books of essays have emerged from courses offered by the Center: *Catholicism at the Millennium: The Church of Tradition in Transition* [2001]; and *Deep Down Things: Essays on Catholic Culture* [2008].) Additionally, the Center provides outreach programs to the community-at-large, such as presentations by a noted scholars.

Center for Leadership and Ethics
Our Helzberg School of Management established the Center for Leadership and Ethics with a primary focus on improving the quality of life for members of our community through the development of principled leaders. The Center embraces ideas like strategic philanthropy, in which organizations respond to real community needs in a way that aligns
with their organizational mission and is good for business.

**Business Leadership and Ethics Day**
Every year the Helzberg School also invites community and business leaders to volunteer their time to visit with students and to foster discussions about timely leadership and ethical issues and to relate their experiences, offer solutions, explain the approach to their successes, and answer questions.

**Emerging Priorities**
To adapt to our changing world while maintaining continuity of our Jesuit tradition is the foremost challenge of Rockhurst and its sister Jesuit universities. This challenge demands careful choices, among which emerge the following priorities:

- Set out strategies to meet the objectives in our strategic plan for the next five years in order to manage continuity of identity and mission through change

- Complete revision of our core curriculum to provide a transformative educational experience that prepares our graduates to lead, serve, and thrive in this society

- Expand access to our curriculum by offering more online coursework and degree programs (which will require us to inculcate an understanding and appreciation of our mission and values in our growing number of online students, as well as our graduate and non-traditional students); and by enhancing our emphasis on developing healthcare professionals who bring excellence, compassion, and justice to their vocations.
Characteristic 3:
CAMPUS CATHOLIC, JESUIT CULTURE
Characteristic 3:
CAMPUS CATHOLIC, JESUIT CULTURE

Campus Ministry and Liturgical Life
Recognizing the celebration of the Eucharist as central to a Catholic, Jesuit university, we offer Sunday liturgy at 6:00 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Parish (the Jesuit parish located across the street from Rockhurst University) during the academic year, and provide mass at 10:10 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays in Rockhurst’s Mabee Chapel – a popular offering. The community gathers for worship on many special occasions, as well, including holy days of obligation, Mass of the Holy Spirit, Mass of Remembrance, and Baccalaureate Mass.

Further, we partner with St. Francis Xavier to provide masses for the parish and university communities every Tuesday through Friday at 7 a.m. and 12 p.m. The parish’s RCIA program also serves our students seeking the Sacrament of Confirmation or full communion with the Catholic Church. We jointly participate in the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, and a number of Rockhurst students assist with various ministries at St. Francis Xavier, notably with the middle and high school youth groups and Confirmation preparation sessions. (Please see Characteristic 5 for more details on Service to the Local Church.)

Beyond liturgical life and partnership with St. Francis Xavier, our Campus Ministry Office contributes to the Catholic and Jesuit culture on campus by offering any number of religious/spiritual programs and activities, a select number of which appear below. (Please see Appendix 3A for a comprehensive listing of these contributions.)

• Opportunities for students to serve as liturgical and music ministers
• Retreat offerings (Frosh Get-A-Way for first-year students; Retreat on the Rock – a Kairos-style retreat; various silent retreats; Senior Get-A-Way for graduates; and weeklong opportunities in Northern Michigan each May)
• Peer-led small faith-sharing groups (CLCs) that support students’ faith journeys
• A weekly program intended to support Catholic students’ understanding and lived expression of faith (Catholic Café)
• Weeklong domestic and international service-immersion trips in January and March
• Leftovers with Love, a student-led food rescue partnership with Chartwells, the university’s food service provider (Please see Characteristic 4 for the full array of campus service and community outreach activities.)
• Weekly Reconciliation, Adoration, and bible studies

Campus Ministry strives to foster a caring and prayerful community, equally supportive of community members in times of grief and joy. As such, we send birth and death notifications to faculty and staff; regularly mail cards to those experiencing a joy, loss, or illness; offer an on-campus memorial service when a member of the campus community dies; receive and pray for the intentions of alumni and benefactors as shared through the Office of Advancement; and often shower students celebrating good news with the confetti readily available in our offices.

Mission- and Value-Centered Activities
At the listening sessions conducted in preparing this section of our Examen report, faculty, staff, and students underscored their experience of our campus culture as one marked by a sincere commitment to our institutional values and a prevalent – though not perfect – spirit of compassion and support. Many components shape and support this culture, including

• Institutional adoption and incorporation of one core value as our annual theme
• Residence Life’s regular use of this theme for August training of professional and student staff to include a spiritual component in the department’s programming model
• Athletics’ demonstrated commitment to “care of whole person,” reflected in superior GPAs and graduation rates, coaches’ work on character formation, and teams’ commitments to service
• Accessibility of the Counseling Center, staffed by two Ph.D.-level psychologists, the Associate Dean of Students, and Success Coach, all readily available to support students facing barriers to success
• August New Student Orientation, which opens with a welcome and prayer service rooted in our institutional core values, as well as the Finucane Service Project (Please see Characteristic 4 for details.), a Mass, and a closing ceremony
• Student Senate’s Culture Initiatives:
  • Social Justice and Campus Life committees
  • Sustainability efforts, including purchase of joint trash and recycling containers for Kinerk Commons and 
    unanimous passing of the SUSTAIN Act, calling for a $20 Sustainability Fee to be added to the student bill 
    (Pillar II in our 2018-2023 strategic plan – “Deeply Infuse our Mission and Values” – sets out our intention to 
    “Be a campus that is a leader in environmental sustainability.”)
  • Partnership with Active Minds to advocate the inclusion of a mental health statement and listing of available 
    resources in all course syllabi

• Student Organizations’ Contributions to Catholic/Jesuit Culture:
  • Active Minds: empowering students to speak openly about mental health in order to educate others and 
    encourage help-seeking
  • RAKERS: observing individuals and groups on campus who deserve recognition, encouragement, or 
    congratulations simply to say “thank you” or “we support you” in a creative way
  • Rockhurst Respect Life: advocating for a consistent life ethic and coordinating our annual trip to the March 
    for Life in Washington, DC
  • Voices for Justice: delving into the root causes of various injustices and exploring ways to make an impact
  • Social Mentors: offering social support and programming for new students during their first semester at Rockhurst
  • Student Development Leadership Awards: highlighting the university’s mission and core values through the Living the 
    Mission Emerging Leader and Living the Mission Advanced Leader awards
  • Staff Advisory Committee’s “You Rock Award”: celebrating living the Magis

Diversity of Thought and Student Engagement

Our new mission, vision, and strategic plan underscore a sincere and pervasive valuing of inclusion and diversity as we move 
into the future. In fact, Pillar II in our strategic plan for 2018-2023 proposes as one means to “Deeply Infuse our Mission 
and Values” to “Be a campus that is inclusive and welcoming to all,” while Pillar III is completely focused on making 
“Inclusivity our Way of Proceeding.” (Please see each of the other characteristics for pertinent details on our strategic plan. 
A complete copy of the strategic plan is available on the website https://www.rockhurst.edu/strategicplan.)

Throughout the past year and a half, we have partnered with Rankin & Associates to perform a campus climate study so 
that we might better understand our campus environment and inform future direction on programs and policies. Such 
an understanding is essential in order to create and maintain a welcoming, inclusive campus community where individual 
abilities and differences are respected and everyone feels safe and valued, a place where everyone feels at home. Study results 
were shared with the campus in late April 2018. (Please see Characteristic 1 for the role of leadership in this climate study; 
see also Appendix 1D for details on the study and the process employed in conducting it. The complete results were 
available during the site visit.)

Further evidence of our commitment to diversity and inclusivity as central characteristics of our Catholic, Jesuit culture follow:
• Efforts of the university’s tripartite Diversity and Inclusion Committee (i.e., membership comprises administrators/ 
  staff, faculty, and students), which has sponsored extensive programming (Please see Appendix 3B for more detail.)
• Student Senate’s “Oath of Inclusion” (Please see Appendix 3C for text of the Oath.)
• RU First, a new initiative intended to celebrate and support the experience of first-generation college students
• Affinity-Group Student Organizations, including Asian Students in America (Asia Club), Black Student Union (BSU), 
  Student Organization of Latinos (SOL), and UNITY (LGBTQIA+ and allies)
• Campus Ministry’s ecumenical and interfaith offerings (delineated in Appendix 3A)
• Sizeable scholarships uniquely positioned to increase the accessibility of a Rockhurst education for students 
  from underserved populations
  • Hummel Family Scholarship: an endowed fund providing substantial scholarship awards
  • KC Scholars: a Kauffman Foundation initiative
Ignatian Spirituality Programs and Vocational Discernment
Consistent with the university’s commitment to our mission and core values, students and employees have numerous opportunities to deepen their understanding and experience of Ignatian spirituality and, in turn, to discern God’s active invitation in their lives.

Ignatian Spirituality Programs
Mission and Ministry offers
- Grants for employees who wish to participate in the retreats and programs offered through the Ignatian Spirituality Center
- Opportunity for faculty and administrators to participate in the Ignatian Colleagues Program and the Jesuit Leadership Seminar
- Brown bag lunch conversations over excerpts from Conversations magazine and A Jesuit Education Reader
- The Cardoner formation program

(Please see Characteristics 1 and 6, as well as Appendix 6A, for discussion and listing of faculty/staff spirituality/formation programs.)

Campus Ministry provides
- Christian Life Communities (CLCs), small faith-sharing groups rooted in Ignatian Spirituality
- An 18th Annotation of the Spiritual Exercises piloted in Lent 2018 for a small group of students with the hopes of assessing and expanding the opportunity in the future
- Intentional incorporation of the university’s Jesuit core values into retreats, notably Frosh Get-A-Way, Retreat on the Rock, and the silent retreats
- Individual spiritual direction with the university Chaplain or by referral to external directors
- Strong encouragement of participation in the National Jesuit Student Leadership Conference and in Ignatian Solidarity Network’s offerings, including Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, the Ignatian Family Advocacy Month, and Summer Justice Summit

Vocational Discernment
- Career Services offers numerous resources and opportunities that support students’ discernment of personal strengths and interests.
- Campus Ministry offers vocation groups for men and women discerning religious vocations.
- Campus Ministry strives to provide leadership opportunities for students discerning a ministerial vocation.

Emerging Priorities
Challenges and resultant emerging priorities that surfaced in conversations around Characteristic 3 largely fall into three areas: inclusivity; our Catholic, Jesuit identity; and our institutional commitment to Cura Personalis.

Inclusivity
Because our mission calls us to foster an inclusive community, as do our strategic plan and our pursuit of a climate study, the following priorities have arisen:
- An office of diversity and inclusivity to advocate for efforts to foster a diverse community
- Enabling our community members to engage in civil discourse with diverse perspectives and realities
- A centrally located and easily accessible multi-faith prayer and meditation space

Catholic, Jesuit identity
As we work toward making Rockhurst a home for all, we need to balance our embrace of diversity and our simultaneous embrace of the school’s Catholic, Jesuit identity. Therefore, we need to address the following priorities that have emerged:
- Modification of the current academic calendar to accommodate Holy Thursday observance for all students
- Increased access to the Spiritual Exercises in adapted forms

Cura Personalis
Emerging priorities focused on care for the whole person include
- A health educator to meet the significant – and increasing – needs in that area
- A true student center and updated residential facilities, including reworking of the residence hall chapels
Characteristic 4: SERVICE
Characteristic 4:
SERVICE

Service to our city, region, and world is central to our mission. Further, in keeping with our mission, the Reverend Thomas B. Curran, S.J., Rockhurst University President, has reiterated one key message to all groups: we should strive to “make God’s good world better.” Fr. Curran’s message captures the expectation of Criterion 4 that Jesuit colleges and universities “insert [themselves] in the world on the side of the poor, the marginalized, and those seeking justice.”

Community Outreach

Through institutional practice, partnerships, and teaching, Rockhurst tackles social justice issues that affect the community around us, as well as the students in our care. In doing so, Rockhurst University seeks to serve our neighbors while fostering the skills that will help our graduates build a better world.

For example, Rockhurst’s master planning process included residents of our surrounding neighborhood. The Rockhurst University Neighborhood Committee (RUNC), first convened in late 2006, continues as a medium of communication between university administration and neighborhood leaders. RUNC was vital in planning our North Garage and retail space. Through cooperative action, the retail space meets the needs of students and neighbors with a neighborhood walk-in healthcare clinic, financial education center, and Truman Library Foundation, as well as a bus stop located in front.

As the university developed plans for the North Parking Garage retail space, HCA Midwest became an early partner to serve students and neighborhood residents. The HCA Midwest Neighborhood Walk-In and Care Clinic donates educational pieces and hygiene items to university-supported outreach programs such as Safe Trick or Treat and RUNC outreach activities. Similarly, Rockhurst has forged partnerships with the United Way, LISC, and Full Employment Council to run the Prosperity Center for Financial Opportunity. The Prosperity Center is located on the Rockhurst campus in an easy-to-get-to location for visitors – in the storefront of the parking garage. The Prosperity Center is open to any community member 18 and older. The services include financial and employment coaching.

In addition to seeking tenants who serve the greater community, RUNC and university administration sought to ensure the building was environmentally sustainable and built with LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) quality standards. The practice of environmentally sustainable construction is a priority at Rockhurst, as outlined in Pillar II of our 2018-2023 strategic plan.

In 2002, Rockhurst opened its Community Center to nonprofit organizations in the neighborhood and community groups. The Center’s availability has enabled the growth and capacity of some of our smaller community groups. The Center receives an average of 13,000 visitors, while more than 60 organizations utilize the space free of charge. Groups visiting the center include neighborhood associations; after-school programs; youth-serving agencies; neighborhood advocacy groups; civic groups; official, public city meetings; emerging and established nonprofit organizations. (Please see Appendix 4A for a breakdown of Community Center usage.) The Center also serves as a McGruff Safe Place for children who may find themselves in need of safety, quite appropriate as the Rockhurst Security Department is in the same building with 24-hour dispatch officers.

Each October, the Community Center becomes a haunted house for children ages 12 and younger to enjoy Safe Trick or Treat. Student volunteers create the haunted house and lead activities for the children and their families. In addition to the efforts of the Community Center, academic departments, athletic teams, and student groups also sponsor co-curricular outreach programs. For example, each month, VOICES for Justice focuses on a different social justice issue through education and service activities. Students engage in a reflective Examen after every service opportunity to discern its personal and social significance. It is very much worth noting that an article on Rockhurst’s outreach to and solidarity with its neighbors appeared in the spring 2018 issue of Conversations. (Please see Appendix 4B for a list of outreach programs and Appendix 4C for the text of the article in Conversations.)

Not surprisingly, students have taken up the mantel of social justice to effect change on campus. The Fair Trade Committee
of the student group VOICES for Justice seeks institutional support for fair trade products, including apparel, food, and beverages. In November 2016, Rockhurst became a designated fair trade campus, “the first in the state of Missouri.” As a part of this designation, the Committee ensures that there are at least two fair trade products in every retail location on campus. The university’s recycling efforts began when students, concerned about the amount of waste on campus, initiated conversations with Rockhurst administrators to address the issue even as they raised awareness about being good stewards of the environment with their peers and campus offices.

Our commitment to solidarity extends beyond university and student activities to our auxiliary services and partnering agencies. Chartwells, the campus food service company, supports many efforts of the university through donation of supplies, placement of Fair Trade products, and sustainable disposal of waste. Leftovers with Love, for example, is a food recovery program through a partnership of Campus Ministry, Chartwells Food Service, and St. James Place, a local nonprofit. Students have the opportunity to prepare meals under the supervision of Chartwells, and to deliver them to St. James Place to share with community members in need.

Our faculty are also deeply involved in an outreach project that Rockhurst will be launching in the very near future (we are targeting this summer) at the Chillicothe Women’s prison. We plan to offer college classes to women who are confined as well as to correctional officers. The plan is eventually to offer the opportunity to this population to earn an Associate’s degree. This project supports women in our diocese with a program that respects their inherent human dignity, respect that flows from our Catholic, Jesuit identity, as well as our core values.

Ignatian Experiential Learning & Service

As a Catholic, Jesuit university, Rockhurst’s invitation to students to engage in service arises from the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, which lends itself to many forms of experiential learning: practicums, internships, research, and service learning. In all cases, students (as well as faculty and staff when participating) are asked to reflect upon the experiences in order to discern the significance of their service, personally and in connection to matters of social justice. (Please see Characteristic 2 for more about the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm and the place of experiential learning in the curriculum.)

The Center for Service Learning (CSL) was established in 1994 to promote and organize community service projects and academic service-learning. CSL empowers individuals to move toward social action, enhancing their sense of meaning and purpose as men and women for and with others through service-learning, community service, and community engagement. (Please see Appendix 4D for a list of service-learning courses.) Pillar II in our strategic plan 2018-2023 outlines our commitment to “Become the leader in Kansas City in social justice thought and practice through an increased awareness of the university’s mission and values.”

In support of faculty engaged in service-learning, the CSL offers two programs through the McMeel Family Faculty Institute on Service Learning. First, The McMeel Fellows Program assists faculty in preparing and teaching their first service-learning courses. The McMeel Fellows Program is a three-day workshop where facilitators guide participants through the steps of developing a service-learning course that meets authentic community needs and aligns with academic learning outcomes. After the workshop, the CSL supports faculty as they implement service-learning teaching methods through in-class orientation, reflection, connection to community organizations, and best practice workshops. Second, the McMeel Scholars Program is a two-year cohort model in which participants learn best practices regarding community-based scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL), research methods, and dissemination of findings. In support of students engaged in service, the CSL offers a variety of programs designed to connect students to community organizations through service. (Please see Appendix 4E for listing of CSL student programs.)

Along these lines, experiential education is a highlight of many academic programs like Nonprofit Leadership Studies, Criminal Justice, and Exercise Science that require internships for successful completion. Service-learning and experiential education also comprise components of new academic programs, such as the Social Justice Track for Philosophy Majors, as well as Leadership Development and Medical Humanities Minors. Professional programs like Education, Occupational Therapy, and Accounting offer practicums and clinical experiences for students to implement the skills learned in the classroom within the community. In addition, the Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy programs developed a Pro Bono Clinic in cooperation with the Kansas City Free Health Clinic. The Clinic enhances the quality of life for those people who are uninsured, while our faculty and students who help to staff the Clinic live out moral and economic responsibilities as citizens of the community. In addition to local practicums, the graduate programs offer international
practicums in Ecuador and St. Lucia.

Sending people on mission has been an integral component of our Jesuit tradition. Rockhurst’s Campus Ministry continues the tradition through winter and spring service-immersion trips to domestic and international locations. The experience serving in these communities helps students, faculty, and staff recognize social justice issues and enhances their own cultural understanding. In addition to the service-immersion trips, Campus Ministry sponsors student participation in the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, which educates students about social justice issues and empowers them to visit the offices of their elected officials to advocate for changes that will lead to greater societal justice. (Characteristic 3 also addresses social justice issues.)

In addition, co-curricular programs employ experiential learning in various service activities. The university hosts two large campuswide service projects, the Finucane Service Project and MLK Day of Service and Celebration. In both, students, faculty, and staff go into the neighborhoods to meet immediate needs of our community partners. The Finucane Service Project, named for one of Rockhurst’s late, beloved Jesuits, began approximately 25 years ago when Rockhurst incorporated a community-service experience into the new-student orientation. The MLK Day of Service and Celebration includes an interfaith prayer service and service projects designed to go beyond the service activity to engage our community in meaningful dialogue about social justice. (Characteristic 2 discusses co-curricular programs in much more detail.)

**Emerging Priorities**

Among the priorities that emerged from our conversations and surveys in preparation of this section of our *Examen* report, were

- A need to explore whether we might serve the Kansas City school district in a more intentional, organized manner
- A need to balance the institution as a community anchor, whose Jesuit mission is to act as an agent for social justice, while continuing to care for the immediate needs of our campus
- A need to address safety and crime in, as well as institutional encroachment into, the neighborhood
- A need to tout our many service efforts and share them with our internal campus constituency, so that people know what is happening across campus and how they can become involved
Characteristic 5: SERVICE TO THE DIOCESE AND LOCAL CHURCH
Characteristic 5: SERVICE TO THE DIOCESE AND LOCAL CHURCH

Despite very real tensions in relationships between individual American Catholic universities and their local Bishops – tensions based on issues of authority and identity – institutions like Rockhurst University continue to serve the local Church. Of course, colleges and universities serve primarily through their focus on education. Such service in Kansas City reflects the fact that Rockhurst and the local Church share a fundamental mission to spread the Gospel message, to “make God’s good world better,” as Father Curran, S.J., President of Rockhurst University, likes to say. When the focus is on service and shared values, tensions tend to fade. In any event, we serve the local Church by doing what we do best, namely, pursuing truth in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition of learning, leadership, and service.

Work with and within the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph is central to our mission as “a comprehensive university and a supportive community that forms lifelong learners in the Catholic, Jesuit, liberal arts tradition who engage with the complexities of our world and serve others as compassionate, thoughtful leaders.” Rockhurst University is situated in the center of the Western edge of the diocesan boundaries. With 98 parishes and missions, the Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph covers 15,429 square miles in northern and western Missouri. The Diocese serves approximately 140,000 Catholics. The Diocesan See, for all of its size, is located less than eight miles from campus.

As noted under Characteristic 3, St. Francis Xavier is our primary parish partner. The Pastor, Fr. Steven Yavorsky, S.J., is a member of the Rockhurst University Jesuit Community. While formally part of the diocese, St. Francis Xavier is known as Kansas City’s Jesuit Parish.

Rockhurst University Jesuits – Fathers Thomas Curran, S.J. and Brian Frain, S.J. – celebrate Mass within the diocese at a number of parishes, as well as serving in other ways, such as leading diocesan staff retreats, parish missions, seasonal lecture series, or pastoral sessions on the emergence of Generation Z as a demographic of changing values and expectations.

Of course, our lay faculty and staff serve their parishes and the diocese in a myriad of activities. At the parish level, laity serve on pastoral councils, in adult faith formation programs, athletic programs, and liturgical ministries. At the diocesan level, though few in number, they serve on the Diocesan School Board and the boards of particular schools, in adult faith formation endeavors (e.g., on task forces to design new diocesan adult education programs and on search committees to staff the programs), and on the planning committees for a new high school (e.g., on the general task force for overall planning and on the program committee to establish priorities and principles for the new school). In addition, they have served as Special Advisor on bioethics issues for the Diocese, as a consultant working closely with the Vicar General for Clergy, notably on the sale of two local Catholic hospitals.

Service to the Bishop and Diocesan Administration

An important aspect to our service to the diocese is the presence of the Bishop on campus. We have extended the invitation to Bishop Johnston, as well as former Bishops, to partner with us. For example, we include the Bishop in many campus events, including graduation, Musica Sacra, Visiting Scholar lectures, as well as other cultural and spiritual activities.

In 2015, Bishop Johnston saw a need in the diocese to improve the formation of newly ordained priests as leaders and managers in preparation for duties as parish administrators and pastors. Rockhurst has provided this unique, nine-month program since its inception – at no cost to the diocese – instructing eight to ten priests annually during their first three years after ordination. The priests meet once a month on our campus to delve into such areas as finance, human resources, fundraising, leadership, and communication. The second cohort will complete the program in May 2018, and the third cohort will begin in August. The program has received special recognition from the Bishop, the priests, and our alumni/alumnae. Indeed, an alumnus provided a gift to the university to help fund this program. (Please see Appendix 5 for the curriculum.)

In addition, Rockhurst provides support directly to the Office of Priestly Vocations and Conception Seminary College.
Specifically, we aid the Office of Priestly Vocations by supporting Rockhurst students as they discern vocations to Jesuit life and diocesan religious life; we provide administrative assistance to the seminary in areas such as Title IX, regulatory reporting, Acceptable Use Policy, and academic exchanges.

Conception Abbey is a monastery of the Swiss-American Congregation of the Benedictine Confederation, located in Conception, Missouri, within the northern boundary of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Conception has had a long relationship with Rockhurst. Over the years, our MBA and Executive MBA (EMBA) students have worked with their print shop (The Printery House) and their kitchen, to help with efficiency and to develop better business models. Their newly elected Abbot Benedict (elected in 2016) was a 2013 graduate of our EMBA program; at the time, he held the position of Abbey Business Manager. Since his election to Abbot, he has sent another monk, who is the new Printery House Business Manager, to our EMBA program. Finally, we have a long relationship of sending students, faculty, and staff to the Abbey for spiritual and planning retreats.

**Student Service to Local Parishes**

Although 60% of Rockhurst’s student body is of the Catholic faith, and 88% is of the Christian faith, all of our students are invited to support the various missions and projects of the greater Catholic community. An illustrative list of parishes served by our students, through their own organization initiatives, along with details on the services provided, follows.

**St. Francis Xavier (SFX)**
- Finucane Service Project Site (moving items into storage, cleaning, yard work, etc.)
- MLK Day Service Site (painting and organizing food pantry)
- Ad hoc student help with tree planting and building garden beds
- Student food can collection and donation to SFX’s Food Pantry
- Assistance with children’s ministry at St. Francis Xavier Church by current and past Rockhurst students
- Assistance by Rockhurst students with the high school youth group at St. Francis Xavier, including accompanying them to a weeklong service/retreat at Jerusalem Farms

**Saint James Catholic Church**
- Finucane Service Project (cleaning rectory, yard work, etc.)

**St. Therese Little Flower**
- Finucane Service Project (painting, yard work, light construction)

**St. Peter’s Catholic Church**
- Service Saturday setting up for food pantry fundraiser
- Finucane Service Project (weeding garden and planting)

**Visitation Catholic School**
- Help with set up and monitoring of Silent Auction during the fundraising event

**Program and Curricular Service**

In addition to students serving the local Church/local parishes through their own organizations, they also serve (along with faculty) or are encouraged to serve by way of educational programs and curricular requirements.

- The Thomas More Center for the Study of Catholic Thought and Culture sponsors speakers and offers courses on special topics pertinent to the Catholic intellectual tradition and the place of service in that tradition.
- Faculty in the Department of Education bring Catholic elementary school students to the Rockhurst campus to learn technology skills.
- The Education Department’s students many times do their student teaching at area Catholic schools
- Through the Office of Campus Ministry and in partnership with Chartwells catering, students run Leftovers with Love, which takes food to St. James Place, a Catholic service organization, every Thursday. Students remain to share in fellowship with the guests.
- Several Rockhurst students participate in the Bishop Sullivan Internship: There are internships available – through a competitive application process – one for each of six different Catholic non-profits in Kansas City that work with impoverished communities.
- A number of students serve in the Diocese of Kansas City/St. Joseph as liturgical ministers, members of the choir, religious teachers, and Knights of Columbus members.

These are just select examples of activities we sponsor in service to the local Church. Whether through programs specifically designed to assist the Church in its numerous educational, social, and spiritual ventures, or through modeling the unity of
faith and reason in our educational programs and curricula, Rockhurst serves the local Church. St. Augustine wrote of “faith seeking understanding.” Rockhurst is a place, given its educational mission, where that can and should happen. And, above all other service, by encouraging faith to seek understanding, Rockhurst serves the local Church.

Emerging Priorities
While we wish to partner with the diocese, some issues, both theological and logistical, persist. While these differences sometimes result in difficult conversations, the conversations are necessary to serve the local Church and to work side-by-side with the Bishop and his staff as companions.

- We have experienced pressure from the Diocese regarding our Catholicity and handling of certain personnel issues. Similar pressures have surfaced regarding some of our student organizations. In all instances, we have attempted to educate and inform in a clear, thoughtful and respectful fashion.
- A logistical issue regarding student housing begun by the previous Bishop remains a challenge. The diocese is sponsoring student housing across the street from our campus to serve Catholic students at the large nearby public institution as well as our institution. While we have maintained no public position on this housing structure, we have made our concerns about competition with our housing and ministry services known in private. Dialog will continue.
Characteristic 6:
JESUIT PRESENCE ON CAMPUS
As we look at the present number of Jesuits across the globe and across the United States, we find that the numbers are shrinking far faster than the influx of novices (not to mention the attrition of the number of novices as they proceed through their education and formation). Our conversations with Rev. Thomas Curran, S.J., president of Rockhurst University, revealed that the Central & Southern Province anticipates a drop by almost half (over the next decade or so) of the approximately 380 Jesuits that comprise it today.

In light of this situation, maintaining “a strong cohort of Jesuits” (as Characteristic 6 suggests) seems an ideal that will likely exceed our grasp. We will, in all honesty, be more than pleased to maintain our present numbers: a Jesuit President (Rev. Thomas Curran, S.J.), a Jesuit in Campus Ministry (Rev. Carl Heumann, S.J.), and a Jesuit in the Education Department who heads our Thomas More Center for the Study of Catholic Thought and Culture (Rev. Brian Frain, S.J.). Even maintaining this number as a goal, quite honestly, seems a stretch for us.

Attracting Jesuits to Rockhurst University
Nonetheless, towards the end of attracting Jesuits to Rockhurst, President Curran frequently converses with our Provincial about possible Jesuit candidates who might consider coming to Rockhurst. Fr. Curran also networks with other Provincials and Jesuits, as he actively recruits Jesuits to take positions at our university. Our Jesuit community (comprising Jesuits from across various ministries in the Kansas City metropolitan area, from staffing St. Francis Xavier parish to heading up Rockhurst High School to working with the Ignatian Spirituality Center of Kansas City) provides Fr. Curran with names of possible recruits. But for all that, the numbers remain what they are and the pool looks to be rather limited for recruiting “a strong cohort of Jesuits.”

As we try to carry out our present and future spiritual and sacramental activities in this context of shrinking numbers of Jesuits, we are very much concerned that we attract Jesuit and diocesan priests to celebrate the sacraments on the Rockhurst campus and to concelebrate such important masses as the Mass of the Holy Spirit, Baccalaureate Mass, Mass on Alumni/Alumnae Weekend, etc. Spurred by our concerns, Campus Ministry has already compiled a list of Rockhurst alums in the Kansas City area who are ordained priests (both diocesan and Jesuit) whom we plan to invite to help us meet the sacramental and spiritual needs of our students, colleagues, and neighbors. There have also been suggestions that we explore what it might take to establish a Visiting Jesuit Program. Fr. Curran (as noted above) communicates regularly with the Provincial; perhaps he might suggest the notion to the Provincial.

The Rector of the Jesuit Community, Rev. Bill Sheehan, S.J., indicated that the members of the community feel that the university values their presence so near the campus, though only a few actually work on the campus. The Jesuit Community has, over the years, made possible any number of university initiatives, e.g., a generous commitment of funds to endow scholarships for minority students. Such a positive relationship between the Jesuit and campus communities might prove persuasive to Jesuit candidates for positions at Rockhurst.

One way in which Rockhurst has tried to maximize the impact of the three Jesuits on our campus is to ensure their daily connection to people at Rockhurst. “In support of their ministry of presence,” the three receive dining dollars to eat their dinners in one or another of our dining venues where faculty, staff, visitors, and especially students may readily benefit from their visibility and availability.

Fr. Sheehan wondered if, perhaps, the Jesuits whose primary work is with the Ignatian Spirituality Center might have an influential presence on campus through the Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life, which the Center offers annually to members of the campus community, as well as the Kansas City metropolitan area. Since few members of the campus community actually accept the Center’s offer, however, we know that we need to do more to encourage colleagues on campus to experience the Exercises and do more, in the words of Characteristic 6, “to hire persons interested in and capable of doing the Exercises.”
Collaboration in Mission

In keeping with this last thought, it is far more likely that Rockhurst University will have a strong cohort of committed laypeople intentionally hired and formed in the mission and identity of Jesuit higher education far more likely, that is, than having “a strong cohort of Jesuits” on campus to carry on Rockhurst’s Jesuit mission and maintain its Jesuit identity. Encouraging these laypeople to experience the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, upon which Jesuit core values and Ignatian pedagogy rest, should be a priority in our hiring and formation efforts. In keeping with this likelihood, Rockhurst has done a great deal to put in place procedures

1. To hire people who are committed to and open to supporting our core values and mission, as well as our Catholic, Jesuit identity, and
2. To implement programs of formation for faculty and staff that will shape them into men and women who are committed to our mission, identity, and core values.

The Mission and Ministry Office plays a significant role in the hiring process, the primary role in faculty formation, and a substantive role in staff formation. Along these lines, our new strategic plan for 2018-2023 sets out as one component of “Deeply Infus[ing] our Mission and Values” in all that we do, the need to increase “formation programs for faculty and staff.” We also need to determine how best to draw contingency faculty into a greater understanding and appreciation of our mission and values while respecting their time and their outside commitments.

Hiring for Mission

Prior to any campus visit, all faculty and administrative staff applicants, as well as most exempt staff applicants, receive a packet of documents on the history of the university, its mission and core values, the life of Ignatius, and so on; they also receive two topics to ponder:

• What concept in the information packet resonates most with you, and how might you incorporate it into your work at the university?

• What notion in the packet most challenges you, and how might the university help you to address this challenge?

Once on campus, applicants meet with the CMO to discuss these topics, among other mission related issues. The CMO subsequently meets with newly hired faculty, administrators, and staff (usually within the first month of employment) to talk over many topics linked to mission, core values, Catholic/Jesuit identity, etc.

Formation Programs: Local, Provincial, and National

We are doing a good deal to manifest our Catholic and Jesuit identity, as well as to offer an array of religious and spiritual activities and programs to those on campus and to those in the wider community. Through the Office of Mission and Ministry, we try to nurture in faculty and staff (and, of course, students) a deeper appreciation of our mission and identity through a variety of initiatives. We list selectively examples below, drawn from local, Provincial, as well as Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) sponsorship. (Please see Appendix 6A for a list of all of our formation initiatives and Appendix 6B for one that is detailed in a recent AJCU Connections article.)

• Our campus Cardoner Program: A semester-long formation program on Ignatian/Jesuit matters, contractually required of every new faculty member and to which staff and continuing faculty are invited
• Our participation in the Province Colleague Retreat at the Sacred Heart Retreat Center in Sedalia, CO
• Our regular participation in AJCU sponsored activities like the Ignatian Colleagues Program, affinity-group conferences, and conferences on Ignatian topics
• Our presence in the AJCU Jesuit Leadership Seminar
• Our presence at ACCU Collegium Conferences

(Please see Characteristic 1 for a comprehensive discussion of the Office of Mission and Ministry.)
Emerging Priorities
We realize that we need to do more in the future to “deeply infuse our mission and values throughout our work”:

• We are in the process of revamping the Cardoner Program, creating a formation program specifically for staff, and planning how we might engage contingency faculty in our formation programs or whether we need to fashion new programs precisely for them.

• We also feel that we need to develop programmatic experiences of Ignatian Spirituality and the Spiritual Exercises for faculty and staff, as well as students.

• We look to the Provincial’s Office to help engender best practices in formation across all that we do (by sharing what various apostolates in the Province are doing), e.g., in formation of Board members and in resolving (perceived/real) tensions between being Catholic and being inclusive or between our Catholic identity and religious freedom and/or academic freedom.

(Please note, Appendix 6A, not only provides a comprehensive listing of formation activities and programs for faculty and staff, but also listings for what we envision we might do to enhance these activities, including seeking help from the Province and our own alums.)
Characteristic 7: INTEGRITY
Characteristic 7: INTEGRITY

Rockhurst University is committed to operating with integrity in the daily activities and programs of all departments and offices on campus. We are committed to behaving fairly and ethically, to proceeding in our Ignatian way even while facing and adapting to various challenges.

At Rockhurst, we recognize that employees are our most valuable resource. We strive, therefore, to be an employer of choice through our policies and practices, which aspire to offer competitive salaries and generous benefits. In this manner, we try to demonstrate a commitment to fairness, equity, and the well-being of both our employees and prospective employees. In our most recent strategic plan, Pillar IV looks to “Ensure Vitality and Financial Sustainability for the Future,” whereby we can realize the aspirations of our Compensation Philosophy and Guidelines, making compensation increases, as well as staff and faculty development, areas of emphasis.

Rockhurst’s Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy
Rockhurst welcomes persons from all backgrounds and beliefs. We seek to create and foster a sense of community that facilitates the development, both personal and professional, of all our members, including faculty, staff, and students. Consistent with our core value of cura personalis, we are committed to providing equal opportunities for all persons and do not discriminate or retaliate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, pregnancy status, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin or ancestry, age, gender, disability, citizenship or intended citizenship status, gender identity, veteran status, or any other status protected by law (i.e., “protected status”).

The Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy and practices were established to demonstrate our commitment to fairness in hiring, promotion, and all employment practices, as well as our commitment to equal opportunity. This policy extends to admissions, employment, housing, services, and the educational programs and activities that the university operates.

Rockhurst University’s Compensation Philosophy and Guidelines
To further support our commitment to fair and equitable hiring and employment practices, we established Rockhurst’s Compensation Philosophy and Guidelines, making it our aspirational goal to provide a fair, competitive, and financially affordable compensation package to all faculty and staff.

The Compensation Philosophy is consistent with our Catholic and Jesuit identity and is rooted in principles of Catholic social teaching and justice. It balances the core values of cura apostolica and cura personalis; it considers the members of our community as companions in pursuit of the mission; and it is a primary objective at Rockhurst as Pillar IV, subpoint 1 of our 2018-2023 strategic plan indicates. (Please see Appendix 7 for our Compensation Philosophy and Guidelines. A complete copy of the strategic plan is available at https://www.rockhurst.edu/strategicplan.)

Commitment to Mission: Hiring Practices
Rockhurst aims to preserve and augment its Catholic, Jesuit mission across the institution through its hiring practices in several ways:

- We include our mission-specific language in job postings and new hire orientation materials for prospective and new hires to understand our Catholic and Jesuit mission.
- During the recruitment process, we provide prospective hires materials that explain the university’s mission, core values, and history; in other words, we provide them a glimpse of our Catholic and Jesuit traditions and practices. Moreover, this information, along with additional materials that clearly state the guiding principles and philosophy of the institution, appear on our website for prospective hires and existing employees to access. (Please see Appendix 1B for the link to the website.) During the interview/screening process, the Chief Mission Officer commonly interviews faculty and staff candidates.

(Please see Characteristics 1 and 6 for further details about hiring for mission and mission formation opportunities for
faculty and staff, e.g., Brown Bag Conversations, Ignatian Colleagues Program, Cardoner Program, Mission Leave Policy. Several endowed funds support these initiatives, which the Mission Office uses strategically to underwrite mission and leadership formation.)

- In addition to the Chief Mission Officer, Deans, Department Chairs, Managers, and Directors serve on applicant screening committees as well as on candidate interview committees. In these capacities, committee members can incorporate interview questions and steps in the recruitment and hiring process that help target and assess mission-oriented hires. The importance of this practice is emphasized throughout the university, top-down, starting with the President, who plays a role in the screening and hiring of key leadership positions. All these processes and practices help to ensure staff and faculty recognize the importance of our mission to the well-being of our institution.

**Commitment to Mission: Financial Management**

All Financial Management policies and procedures are grounded in our mission and values. Financial vitality and sustainability are the bases of Pillar IV of our 2018-2023 strategic plan, with special focus on a comprehensive campaign to grow the endowment. By consistently receiving unqualified audit opinions and no significant findings in reviews related to federal financial aid and compliance, including a program review by the Department of Education in 2015, Rockhurst embodies integrity in its fiscal operations.

- The University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC) manages the university budget process, facilitates our strategic planning process, and monitors progress on our strategic goals. The Committee has broad representation of the Rockhurst community, which enhances transparency of financial and planning information on campus. The UPBC regularly examines university needs and allocates funds in light of the mission. Our Chief Mission Officer is a standing, voting member of the UPBC precisely to advocate for mission priorities, though we expect all UPBC representatives, as well as their constituents, to articulate needs in terms of the mission.

- UPBC earmarks a portion of any budget surplus to new funding requests, which require specific attention to how the proposal aligns with the mission of the university. As part of the budgeting process, UPBC evaluates these funding requests through the lens of our mission and values.

- The Chief Financial Officer and the Vice-President of Academic Affairs present semi-annual faculty-staff conversations to update financial and strategic planning, thereby contributing to transparency and engendering trust in the administration.

- The Office of Financial Aid strives for fairness in its awarding processes and makes some form of financial aid available to all students. The university recently received a significant gift from a donor specifically for scholarships targeting students with high financial need.

In addition, offices across campus, including Advancement, Admissions, Institutional Effectiveness, Finance, and Financial Aid, collaborated to develop a scholarship program designed to plug gaps in existing financial aid and give qualified full time students the opportunity to finish their degrees in cases where the costs of higher education might otherwise put that goal out of reach.

- In collaboration with the Full Employment Council, the university created the Prosperity Center for Financial Opportunity (in 2013) to offer employment services, financial counseling and coaching, etc., in an integrated resource center. Rockhurst University’s participation in this endeavor demonstrates its intention to be “in the city for good.” (Please see Characteristic 4 regarding the Prosperity Center and Characteristics 3 and 4 regarding many service and outreach initiatives outside of the realm of finances.)

- Administrators are continually looking for ways to improve the use of limited resources in support of the mission by examining existing relationships with vendors and entering into new relationships. For instance, we have reworked relationships with our banking partners, bondholders, audit and tax firm, and payroll service to save the university money that we can now use elsewhere.

**Commitment to Mission: Physical Resource Management**

Rockhurst University has demonstrated a consistent commitment to sustainable design. With the most recent campus master plan (2008), we established priorities around appropriate stewardship of our existing resources and the ongoing
process of incorporating sustainability and efficiency goals in new construction, as Pillar II in our most recent strategic plan states: Ours shall “Be a campus that is a leader in environmental sustainability” by improving sustainability practices on our property and developing initiatives, both on and off campus, to educate about sustainability. Our newest parking deck is LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) silver certified and one of only a handful of similar type structures with that distinction. Our most recent new academic building outperforms similar buildings of its type by a wide margin. We benchmark our Energy Use Intensity, utilizing the Energy Star Portfolio manager. Based on statistics from that source, recent construction is exceeding the national average by 70%. Through continued efforts in high-efficiency system retrofits and upgrades, daylight harvesting, LED lighting, etc., we continue to work on reducing our energy consumption.

We promote sustainability and stewardship through a variety of collaborative structures: for example, the Faculty/Student Sustainability subcommittee of the Faculty Senate, as well as the Student Senate sustainability/facility representatives, work in conjunction with the facilities staff to identify potential projects and initiatives and to communicate their potential to the broader campus. Recent initiatives include expanding recycling efforts in the residence halls and a pilot program to replace hand towels with electric dryers to gauge usage, user satisfaction, and overall effectiveness.

Our facilities staff also works closely with our Office of Mission and Ministry and our Jesuit Arts and Core Values Committee. A key component of our campus master plan is to incorporate our core values into the physical environment of our campus, e.g., in sacred spaces. The Arts Committee has taken the lead in designing these sacred spaces to reflect our core values and provide areas for quiet reflection or, at times, for ad hoc classes. The landscaping and consistent design approach help communicate the intent and core value of each space.

We have already created a mix of indoor and outdoor reflection areas dedicated to Reflection and Discernment, God in All Things, and Wisdom. Plans continue to evolve for Magis, Cura Personalis, and Contemplation in Action. We are currently in the early stages of constructing a recreation center, which will include a sacred space dedicated to Magis.

**Emerging Priorities**

- We need to strengthen the university’s fiscal health through new programs, a comprehensive fundraising campaign, and growth of the endowment to generate adequate resources for investment in our people and campus, as outlined in Pillar IV, subpoint 4 of our Strategic Plan.

- As described in Pillar II, subpoint 3 of our Strategic Plan, we need to enhance support and resources for faculty/staff involvement in mission opportunities and formation.

- We need to increase inclusivity and support for faculty, staff, and students of diverse backgrounds, as described in Pillar III of the university’s strategic plan.
Closing Remarks
Closing Remarks

As we claimed in our Introductory Comments and demonstrated in our Seven Characteristics, the Examen process has allowed Rockhurst University to affirm just how deeply committed it is to its Catholic, Jesuit identity, its mission, and its core values. We believe that we are a Jesuit institution of higher learning, and we plan to remain so into the future. In our Closing Remarks, we have chosen to focus on the future by reviewing the priorities that emerged in each of the characteristics and tying them to the four major initiatives to which our strategic plan commits us over the next five years (2018-2023). We have, therefore, incorporated all of the emerging priorities listed at the end of the Seven Characteristics under one or another of the four Pillars by which we have organized our strategic plan.

Not only does this approach work to pull all of these priorities together in one place, but it also allows us to indicate why we have selected our four Jesuit Mission Priority Emphases: Core Revision; Catholic, Jesuit formation of our Board, Administrators, Faculty (fulltime and contingent), Staff, and Students (undergraduate, graduate, non-traditional, and online); Inclusion and Diversity; and Financial Sustainability. To indicate how the priorities that emerge in our Seven Characteristics find their place in the Jesuit Mission Priority Emphases, we have bolded key words and phrases. (Please see the Executive Summary for a detailed paragraph on each of the Mission Priority Emphases.)

Pillar I: Be a Leader in Educational Innovation

Characteristic 2: Complete revision of our core curriculum to provide a transformative educational experience that prepares our graduates to lead, serve, and thrive in this society

Characteristic 2: Expand access to our curriculum by offering more online coursework and degree programs (which will require us to inculcate an understanding and appreciation of our mission and values in our growing number of online students, as well as our graduate and non-traditional students); and by enhancing our emphasis on developing healthcare professionals who bring excellence, compassion, and justice to their vocations.

Characteristic 4: A need to explore whether we might serve the Kansas City school district in a more intentional, organized manner

Pillar II: Deeply Infuse our Mission and Values

Characteristic 1: Rockhurst should explore opportunities to deepen the mission formation of Board members, for example, through possible immersion experiences.

Characteristic 1: Senior administrators should focus a good deal of attention on the transition in the Mission and Ministry office in AY 2018-19 and on the outcomes of the campus climate initiative as they relate to the continued formation of current and future leaders.

Characteristic 1: The fall 2017 listening sessions around this characteristic identified opportunities to deepen the formation of staff regarding the mission and core values. The Deans’ Council and other administrative groups like the President’s Council and Cabinet should work with supervisors to enhance opportunities for staff participation.

Characteristic 2: Set out strategies to meet the objectives in our strategic plan for the next five years in order to manage continuity of identity and mission through change

Characteristic 3: As we work toward making Rockhurst a home for all, we need to balance our embrace of diversity and our simultaneous embrace of the school’s Catholic, Jesuit identity, explaining the following priorities:

• Modification of the current academic calendar to accommodate Holy Thursday observance for all students
• Increased access to the Spiritual Exercises in adapted forms
Characteristic 4: A need to tout our many service efforts and share them with our internal campus constituency, so that people know what is happening across campus and how they can become involved.

Characteristic 4: A need to balance the institution as a community anchor, whose Jesuit mission is to act as an agent for social justice, while continuing to care for the immediate needs of our campus.

Characteristic 4: A need to address safety and crime in, as well as institutional encroachment into, the neighborhood.

Characteristic 5: To serve the local Church and collaborate with the Bishop and his staff, difficult conversations about theological and logistical issues sometimes arise:

  • The need to resist Diocesan pressure – with diplomacy and respect – regarding our theologians and their theology classes, handling of certain personnel issues, and our student organizations.
  • The need to keep open dialog with the Bishop regarding diocesan-sponsored student housing across the street from our campus (to serve Catholic students at our institution as well as at a large nearby public institution) despite the opening slated for 2018.

Characteristic 6: We are in the process of revamping the Cardoner Program, creating a formation program specifically for staff, and planning how we might engage contingency faculty in our formation programs or whether we need to fashion new programs precisely for them.

Characteristic 6: We also feel that we need to develop programmatic experiences of Ignatian Spirituality and the Spiritual Exercises for faculty and staff, as well as students.

Characteristic 6: We look to the Provincial’s Office to help engender best practices in formation across all that we do (by sharing what various apostolates in the Province are doing), e.g., in formation of Board members and in resolving (perceived/real) tensions between being Catholic and being inclusive or between our Catholic identity and religious freedom and/or academic freedom.

Characteristic 7: As described in Pillar II, subpoint 3 of our strategic plan, we need to enhance support and resources for faculty/staff involvement in mission opportunities and formation.

Pillar III: Make Inclusivity our Way of Proceeding

Characteristic 3: The following priorities have arisen:

  • An office of diversity and inclusivity to advocate for efforts to foster a diverse community
  • Enabling our community members to engage in civil discourse with diverse perspectives and realities
  • A centrally located and easily accessible multi-faith prayer and meditation space

Characteristic 7: We need to increase inclusivity and support for faculty, staff, and students of diverse backgrounds, as described in Pillar III of the university’s strategic plan.

Pillar IV: Ensure Vitality and Financial Sustainability for the Future

Characteristic 3: Emerging priorities requiring financial support:

  • A health educator to meet the significant – and increasing – needs in that area
  • A true student center and updated residential facilities, including reworking of the residence hall chapels

Characteristic 7: We need to strengthen the university’s fiscal health through new programs, through a comprehensive fundraising campaign, and growth of the endowment to generate adequate resources for investment in our people and campus, as outlined in Pillar IV, subpoint 4 of our strategic plan.
In Summary

In putting forth our four Jesuit Mission Priority Emphases — Core Revision, Catholic, Jesuit Formation of our campus community, Inclusion and Diversity, and Financial Sustainability, we trust that we have demonstrated just how much we have accomplished in these areas, how much this process of preparing our Examen Report has allowed us to affirm regarding our mission, identity, and core values. But the process has also revealed to us how much more we wish to achieve as we look to the future. By tying these Priority Emphases to our very new five-year strategic plan, we have tried to indicate just how seriously we have attended to what our faculty, staff, students, neighbors, and administrators have told us (over the past year or two and during the Examen process), namely, what we need to do and should be doing as a mission-focused institution intent on adhering to our core values and living up to our Catholic, Jesuit identity.