Supplemental Questions for the Mission Priority Examen (MPE)

The questions below are auxiliary to the document, *Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Guide for Mission Reflection*. While Universities are not required to respond to these questions in their Self-studies, their specificity may provide a helpful starting place for exploring how the school might reflect in greater detail on specific mission commitments. Provincial Assistants for Higher Education may work with the school to select some questions for further exploration.

**Characteristic 1**

*Mission Articulation and Engagement*

1. How does the mission statement of the University, as well as other major documents, clearly state its Catholic and Jesuit inspiration along with its commitment to teaching, research and service? Is the University’s discussion of its mission and identity both (a) *broad enough* to allow people of good will and diverse religious and philosophical commitments to contribute as full members of the community, and to feel valued and respected, and is it (b) *deep enough* to further the fostering and growth of the Jesuit, Catholic tradition?

2. How is the expectation of mission leadership a constitutive element of the job descriptions of all senior leaders? How are leaders expected to advance important priorities of the Society of Jesus, such as the link between the Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice, the Universal Apostolic Preferences, and the Reconciliation themes of Jesuit General Congregation 36?

*Board of Trustees*

3. How do the by-laws of the University clearly state its mission as a university and its identity as Catholic and Jesuit? How does the Board demonstrated that its core responsibility for guiding and ensuring that the university’s Jesuit mission values are lived out in the strategic planning and life of the institution?

4. Does the Board oversee the Mission Priority Examen (MPE) process? How does it monitor the institution’s progress in carrying out the priorities articulated in the resulting reports?

5. How does the Board regularly engage in discussions of the university’s relationships with the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit Community on campus, and other regional, national, and international Jesuit organizations?
6. How does the Board exhibit the leadership skills necessary for undertaking conversations about anti-racism and environmental sustainability, to lead and serve more authentically? Is the institution developing trustees for this purpose?

7. How does the University help Trustees to know and understand the use of Ignatian discernment in institutional decision-making and governance? What programs are available for trustees to grow in their own spiritual development and faith life?

*University President and Cabinet*

8. What processes are used for the University seek informed, committed Catholics or those who have a deep familiarity with the Jesuit tradition as its President?

9. How does the University encourage participation by senior leaders in Jesuit mission engagement programs on the campus and through the AJCU? Are personalized plans in place for the ongoing mission development of senior leaders?

*Academic Deans*

10. How do the academic deans support the University’s Jesuit and Catholic mission? Have they participated in mission engagement programs such as the Ignatian Colleagues Program and professional affiliation groups sponsored by AJCU network, so that they can articulate and animate the Jesuit mission of their schools and colleges with their faculties, staffs, students, and external audiences?

11. Have the Deans developed hiring procedures for faculty that communicate the Jesuit educational tradition and invite candidates to articulate how their teaching, scholarship, and service activities can contribute to that tradition?

12. How have the Deans sponsored effective mission engagement activities for faculty that demonstrate how Jesuit mission values, Ignatian pedagogy, and the Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) might be integrated into the curricular and co-curricular life of their academic programs, and into research?

*Mission Engagement Programs*

13. Is there a Chief Mission Officer or other senior leader charged with overseeing mission engagement programs and with consistent access to the president, cabinet, and other strategic planning entities at the institution? Which initiatives are in place to ensure that departments such as Enrollment, Marketing, and Alumni Engagement have sufficient understanding of the mission to articulate it thoughtfully to external constituencies? How is this assessed?
14. Does the University provide resources, time, and opportunities for members of its community to participate in mission engagement opportunities, both on campus and in programs sponsored regionally and nationally by the AJCU and Jesuit Province? How are both the personal and institutional aspects of the mission explored in these contexts?
Characteristic 2

Jesuit Education Grounded in the Mission

1. Which markers or key elements of a transformative education have been identified by the faculty for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students? How are these communicated among the faculty and in the orientation of new faculty members?
2. How does the University hold itself accountable for fostering a transformative education in every student? What follow-up with alumni/ae provides feedback for reflection and change?
3. How do the University’s academic programs ensure that faith, science, reason, and culture are reflected upon, across disciplines?
4. How are undergraduate and graduate students invited to understand and to participate in problem-solving around significant issues, in partnership with their neighbors, in their local communities, and in the world? How are the Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic Social Teaching presented as active portals to knowledge and action?

The Academic Experience Rooted in the Catholic and Jesuit Heritage

5. How does the Core Curriculum reflect the identity of the University as both Jesuit and Catholic? How does it address the need for an integral ecology and racially just society?
6. How is the fourfold focus of the Society’s Universal Apostolic Preferences (UAPs) evident in the Core and in the academic majors?
7. How are faculty given opportunities for discussing curricular decisions, in the light of Catholic intellectual tradition, Catholic Social Thought, and the UAPs?

The Spiritual Dimension of Jesuit Education

8. How are students encouraged, in academic and co-curricular contexts, to discover their vocation? How are undergraduates helped to explore the hungers of young people:
   - the Hunger for Integrated Knowledge;
   - the Hunger for a Moral Compass;
   - the Hunger for Community;
   - the Hunger for a Global Paradigm; and
   - the Hunger for an Adult Spirituality?
9. In what ways do intercollegiate athletic programs reflect the academic mission priorities of the university, and how does communication on this take place?
10. How do academic and career advising integrate the principles of Ignatian discernment, and how are advisors prepared to help students in this way?
Research

11. How does the university create a culture of research that reinforces the complementarity of faith and reason?
12. How is a community of scholars, oriented toward the common good and the focus of the UAPs actively fostered?
13. How are graduate students taught to connect their research with the commitment to reconciliation and justice?
Characteristic 3

Social Justice in the Context of Jesuit Higher Education

1. How, in discourse among faculty, staff, and students and in public statements, are the “Jesuit values” of social justice regularly connected to the service of faith from which those values arise?

2. How does the University model, to people of various religious backgrounds and diverse commitments, how faith can motivate the pursuit of social justice?

3. Are core principles of the Catholic Social Tradition presented in their depth, such as:
   - the inherent dignity of all people based on an understanding of all persons bearing the image of God,
   - environmental justice as a moral imperative to care for the gift of creation entrusted to us,
   - a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, stemming from a vision of God as deliverer who identifies with the oppressed,
   - the right to life in its fullness as a consequence of adherence to the Gospel, and
   - solidarity as grounded in the imperative to love our neighbor?

4. How does the practice of Ignatian discernment inform the way members of the university respond to urgent issues and how are members of the university taught how to discern among the various spirits elicited in the work for justice? Does Ignatian discernment provide a method where people of faith and those who do not adhere to a religious framework may draw from their deepest spiritual sources to addressing the needs of our times (e.g., wealth, power, and privilege) mindfully?

5. In what ways does the University’s identity as Jesuit and Catholic enable serious discourse about the common good and requirements that follow from it, such as the commitment to truth, public health, clean water, access to education, dignified work, a just wage, etc.? How does University discourse about “social justice” move toward the greater good of justice as right relationship with God, the earth, and other creatures?

Racial Justice & Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

6. Does the university speak the truth about its historical and ongoing racial story? Whose voices have been missing in our narratives and how does their absence affect us and the work we are doing?

7. What opportunities exist for reflecting together on how systemic racism has been embedded in the everyday work and practice of the University? How are anti-racism demands from students, faculty/staff, or the surrounding community incorporated into this reflection?

8. Where does dialogue about cultural difference take place and where is it missing? How do campus conversations specifically address issues relating to white privilege, not
simply diversity? What plans are in place for diversifying the Board, senior leadership, faculty, and staff, and for creating a culture of inclusion?

9. How does the University connect its commitment to racial justice indivisibly to its Catholic and Jesuit mission and identity? How does it draw on the prophetic traditions of the Hebrew Bible, as well as the Gospel and other religious sources of community members to advance that commitment? How does the University hold together in truthful humility both the Church’s and Society of Jesus’ complicity in sin and examples of real sanctity? In what ways is the university invited to repair relationships that have been damaged and seek reconciliation with other people and with God?

**Caring for Our Common Home**

10. How is a culture of environmental awareness and action, led by the Board and senior leaders, promoted for all areas of the institution? How are the Jesuit community, key scholars and mission leaders engaged with the President in developing the University’s spirituality and culture of care for the environment?

11. What specific roles to students, faculty and staff play in the ecological identity of the institution? How are students introduced to sustainability and are internships for sustainability offered?

12. How is the institution a social force for integral ecology beyond the campus and how does it both model and advocate for sustainability for the neighborhood and city? How does the University provide hope to overcome the environmental crisis?

13. Does the University have a campus engaged in the concrete reduction of the campus environmental footprint (reducing energy consumption, waste, water consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions)? Does the university use its experts to engage the ecological issues facing the institution?

14. How is sustainability and environmental justice evident in Strategic Planning and conversations about investments?

**Service and Solidarity with the Community**

15. How are the values and experiences of community engaged learning incorporated into the curriculum for students? Into other service-learning opportunities provided by the University? How are students given the opportunity to engage with the Jesuit, Catholic values of a faith that does justice and reconciliation as part of these experiences, as well as the values from other faith traditions?

16. How are faculty members, campus ministers, student development, and service-learning professionals trained to lead students through reflection and analysis of their service experiences, with special attention to the communities they serve and the needs of the poor and vulnerable?
17. How does the University exercise responsible and positive citizenship to its surrounding community as well as to the neighborhoods and regions that host its study abroad and immersion programs? How are neighbors made to feel welcome on campus, especially those from marginalized communities?
Characteristic 4

The Spiritual Dimension of Jesuit Education

1. How does the University link its activities to the deepest spiritual sources that members of its community represent? How well are “faith” and “justice” presented as mutually illuminating, in ways that are meaningful and appropriate to people of diverse religious, philosophical, and/or personal commitments?

2. How does University Ministry support the Catholic student community through catechetical programming, exploration of Catholic theological and spiritual traditions, retreats, and opportunities to participate in service activities? What are the available liturgical and other programs to mark significant events in the Church calendar and academic life of the University? With which other service organizations at the institution does it work to explore the faith foundations of service and justice activities? How does University Ministry actively and respectfully engage students of no faith tradition?

3. How does the University make available a range of experiences related to Ignatian Spirituality and actively promote them? Does the University sponsor an Ignatian Spirituality Center? Does it partner with the Province, and with regional Jesuit retreat centers and spirituality programs to provide regular spirituality opportunities for its community members, alumni, and others? Include board members?

4. How does University Ministry offer opportunities for exploring the relationship of spirituality and faith to service in an intellectually serious way? How does it mark major holidays of other religious traditions in ways that encourage the spiritual practices of all members of the community? What spirituality and worship opportunities are available to those of diverse faith traditions in the community?

Building a Culture Committed to Relationality and Responsibility

5. How does the University help to foster a culture for students that draws attention to their actions as moral agents with a respect for those who may differ from them in background and belief?

6. What activities and programming are offered to illuminate Jesuit values? How are faculty engaged as collaborators in these efforts?

7. How does it support students in navigating complex issues around sexuality and gender? Those who struggle with substance abuse, mental health, and various disabilities?

8. How does the University create a culture of respect toward those who may feel at odds with particular teachings of the Catholic tradition and yet still hunger for communion with the Church, exploration of their own faith traditions, and a forum to wrestle with some of the difficult social and political questions of our time? How does the University offer opportunities for these questions to be posed in ways that are at once respectful of Church teaching and reflective of the real tensions felt by various members of the
University community? How does it teach and model respectful dialogue on these and other contested issues in society at large? How does the University foster a community in which students can study and employees work, and in which they do not feel alienated?

Student Life

9. How are Residence Life staff selected and oriented to animate Jesuit values into the student residential communities they oversee?

10. What support services that help students to succeed, particularly those students from first generation college families and those with special needs, are offered?

11. How do the athletic and recreational programs at the institution reflect Jesuit values and provide opportunities for students to model lives of service and reconciliation?

12. How do the University’s intercollegiate athletic programs demonstrate a culture of respect and character formation? How do they align with the larger mission-driven goals of the University? Does the public recognize in the University’s athletic teams and coaches the values and personal development reflective of its Catholic and Jesuit mission?

13. How does the University provide opportunities for graduate and professional students to participate in its activities and support programs?
Characteristic 5

Programs and Resources

1. In what ways does the University educate first-generation immigrant populations, both Catholic and non-Catholic?

2. Do the research and scholarly activity of the faculty foster dialogue between faith and culture? Does the institution make these resources accessible to the wider Church?

3. Does the University provide opportunities for both the campus and surrounding community to learn about Church teaching and to address issues important for the Church and society? Does it support ecumenical and interfaith dialogue in ways that reach those who might not otherwise encounter the Church’s message of hope?

Support for the Local and Regional Church

4. How does the University offer continuing education opportunities for local clergy, religious, and lay ministers? How does it promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the region and assist the work of local seminaries and catechetical programs?

Service to the Wider Church

5. How does the University inform its community and constituencies about important initiatives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic bishops and other major national and international Church priorities? How are students engaged in supporting these initiatives?

6. What institutes and centers that advance the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and Catholic Social Teaching does the institution sponsor? How well supported are these efforts?
Preparation of the Next Generation of Catholic Leaders

7. How do the courses and degree programs that engage and prepare students to understand the work of the Church and serve in its various ministries lead them to take on future leadership roles? How do these programs and courses address the needs of those who are underserved or marginalized within Church communities or society at large?
Characteristic 6

With Individual Jesuits at the University

1. How comprehensive is the university’s formal mechanisms for recruiting, supporting, and retaining Jesuits? How do the departments of the University actively seek to know, mentor, and encourage the work of Jesuits in their areas? How are faculty hiring committees helped to understand the unique motivations of Jesuits for university service?

2. How does the University recognize and support the pastoral and mission contributions of individual Jesuits to the larger mission and identity of the institution?

With the Jesuit Community on the Campus

3. Which agreements are in place with the Jesuit Community or within Trustee by-laws that describe the University’s relationship with the Society of Jesus, including support for the Jesuit Community and Jesuit residence, mutual expectations for the relationship between the Jesuit Community and the University, and active roles for the Superior in University life? How these agreements reflect the current reality and aspirations of the University and Province?

4. How does the Jesuit community publicly express its own corporate mission within the context of the University? How does University leadership work with the superior on issues related to multi-apostolic or multiple Jesuit communities affiliated with Jesuits employed at the institution?

5. How do members of the Jesuit community express their individual and corporate value to the university both practically and affectively?

In Collaboration with Regional Jesuit Organizations and Ministries

6. What are the regular points of contact among the Provincial, President and Board Chair? Does the Board regularly invite the Provincial to address the Board on issues important to the Province and Society of Jesus? What is the board’s understanding of the University’s contribution within the larger apostolic priorities of the Province?

7. How does the University collaborate with the Province to promote vocations to the Society of Jesus?

Through Active Engagement with National/International Jesuit Networks and Organizations
8. How is the University actively participating in AJCU networks, mission orientation programs, and leadership programs, especially the Ignatian Colleague Program, Jesuit Leadership Seminar, and Trustee Forum?

9. How does the University engage in academic and mission partnerships with other Jesuit universities, internationally? How does it support international programs of the Society of Jesus, such as Jesuit Worldwide Learning?
Characteristic 7

Human Resource Policies that Demonstrate a Commitment to Mission

1. How does the University demonstrate a commitment to fairness in promotion practices and to the ways it engages with all its employees? How does it demonstrate particular concern and fair treatment for those earning the least within the University structure, particularly contract vendors and part-time and affiliate faculty members?

2. How do employees have a voice in the development of Human Resource policies? How does the University provide opportunities for employees – particularly those hourly employees – to participate in mission engagement programs?

3. How has the University demonstrated equity and fairness in its response to campus concerns over issues such as harassment, creating a supportive work environment, and protecting the safety of employees in the workplace? What appropriate training is provided to supervisors in these Human Resource policies and best practices?

Hiring Practices that demonstrate a Commitment to Mission

4. What specific practices does the University employ in its approach to hiring and recruitment with the intention of preserving and enhancing its Jesuit, Catholic mission, across the institution? How are search committees prepared to engage prospective hires in a substantive way regarding the institution’s Jesuit mission values, including the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are DEI goals a clear consideration of every search, including those for faculty and leadership positions?

5. What materials do candidates receive that is appropriate to their prospective roles and that (a) clearly states the guiding principles of the University, and (b) reassures them that the University is committed to valuing employees from a range of religious traditions and beliefs? How are candidates asked to describe in writing how their prior preparation and interests prepare them to contribute to the University’s Jesuit mission?

6. How are Jesuits, mission officers and other colleagues knowledgeable about the University’s Jesuit mission included on search committees and interview schedules for candidates?

Financial Management that Gives Evidence of a Commitment to Mission

7. How does the University’s financial management demonstrate its Jesuit mission values and awareness of Catholic Social teaching through its choices of investment strategies, business partnerships, and deployment of resources?

8. How does the institution’s budget decision-making process show concern for those most vulnerable among its faculty, staff, and students, especially during challenging financial circumstances?
9. Does the University engage fairly with its vendors, creditors, and other financial partners? How does it engage businesses that are owned and operated by women and persons of underrepresented communities?

Campus and Physical Resource Management that Demonstrates a Commitment to Mission

10. How does the University demonstrate its commitment to environmental sustainability and “care for our common home” (Universal Apostolic Preferences) in its construction/renovation of buildings and grounds? How does it regularly assess how it can improve as an environmentally responsible institution and make appropriate changes in its practices and policies?

11. How does the institution provide resources and planning for campus spaces that reflect its Jesuit mission values in artwork and spaces for prayer and reflection? What policies and budget lines provide funding for Mission space and art in the design and construction of new or renovated building and grounds?

Respectful Relationships with the Neighboring Community

12. How does the University consider the impact of its planning and decisions on the neighborhood community? How does it regularly inform and consult with these neighbors on those issues that affect them, particularly vulnerable community members? Is the University an active participant in neighborhood groups and associations that build up the surrounding area? How does the University aid neighborhood groups that request its expertise and resources?