

John Carroll University

Academic Planning Task Force Report

Academic Excellence:

A Framework for Renewal and Innovation

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Charge:

In April, 2009, The Academic Planning Task Force was formed by Academic Vice President John Day with the following charge:

1. To produce a document that articulates and affirms the academic mission of John Carroll University as the center of all institutional planning;
2. To create a set of academic learning outcomes which states the measureable gains in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that a student is expected to have achieved as a result of attaining an undergraduate or graduate degree at John Carroll University; and
3. To begin the process of assessing current practices and indentifying future directions of the academic plan.

Summary of Meetings and Consultations

The APTF first convened in April 2009. Our initial meetings were spent determining the scope of the charge and the formation of a plan to complete our work. We saw our work as setting a path for present and future academic planning that places the academic excellence at the center of the student experience and student success at John Carroll University. A strong academic center would then provide the compass to inform all other planning at the university. It was agreed that our work be respectful of our past and honor John Carroll University's rich history and tradition as a Jesuit Catholic institution. To this end, the Task Force crafted a contemporary vision of a John Carroll University education grounded in liberal arts and sciences, emphasizing academic rigor, and mindful of the contemporary needs of our students and present economic realities.

The APTF met regularly beginning in May through August. The initial work of the Task Force included developing a shared understanding of strategic planning, the variations present in the student experience, review of key institutional documents including the John Carroll mission statement, the mission, vision, core values and strategic initiative statement, a preliminary draft of institutional learning outcomes, and the JCU core curriculum document. In addition, the APTF reviewed several documents on the present status of education in the liberal arts tradition available from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). The review of these materials provided an initial scan of the status of liberal arts education both internal and external to John Carroll University.

A watershed moment occurred when five members of the Task Force attended the Greater Expectations Institute sponsored by the AAC&U. The Institute allowed the necessary time and space to focus on the critical tasks facing the Task Force. With the guidance of several Institute faculty, plenary session presentations and discussions, advanced readings, and dedicated time for

individual campus teams to accelerate the work on their project, these members of the APTF left the Institute with a draft document that included: a vision for academic excellence at JCU; a statement of core educational values; a draft of academic learning outcomes; and first principles affirming those strategic areas that need attention to accomplish the vision for academic excellence at John Carroll University.

The initial draft of this document was warmly received by the remaining members of the APTF. Revisions and further conversations on specific elements of the document were completed in advance of circulating the draft plan to relevant campus constituencies. To date, formal presentations have been made to the John Carroll University faculty (August 2009), the University Planning Group (September 2009), and the Academic Affairs and Planning Committee of the Board of Directors (October 2009). The APTF has welcomed the many constructive comments from the faculty, administrators, staff and members of the Board of Directors integrating many of these suggestions into this document. THE APTF invited Jeanne Somers, Director of Grasselli Library and Breen Learning Center to join the group. Some librarians voiced concern that their work would be associated too narrowly with information technology. The APTF wished to emphasize the key role played by librarians in the academic enterprise and considers all comments pertaining to faculty to include library faculty.

Conclusions and Completed Documents:

Completed Work:

The Academic Task Force completed its primary task of drafting Institutional Academic Learning Outcomes. It also drew up a set of educational goals which complements the learning outcomes and provides fuller expression on values which characterize a Jesuit Catholic education at John Carroll.

The Committee was well aware that external pressures (particularly enrollment issues, budgetary issues within the University and because of the recession) and internal pressures (faculty perception of a diminished role played by the academic sector in the University) combined to argue the case for reviewing the academic enterprise, from curriculum to teaching, scholarship, and advising to faculty work and development concerns.

Undertaking such a large enterprise is understandably daunting, but the APTF concluded that the external enrollment pressures are so significant that they mandate a review of our curriculum and indeed how we articulate and communicate our academic identity. The APTF believes the time is right for the announcement of a bold strategic plan for academic renewal, one that will involve discussions and action on several fronts, but one which ultimately will result in a set of decisions that can attract, enroll and graduate more students, better serve them, and re-invigorate faculty work. Furthermore, the APTF recognizes that the Seed Money Proposals for new academic programs are already leading faculty to think expansively about new programs and interdisciplinary work; this energy, combined with the opportunity to hire a new dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, argues that the moment for substantial conversations and significant change is now. We understand the need for effective co-ordination of these efforts, full transparency and opportunity for discussion, and a realistic timeline for completion.

This conclusion led the APTF to draft a vision statement, ***“Academic Excellence: A Framework for Renewal and Innovation.”*** We believe that the value-terms identified in the document highlight our endeavor as one of teacher-researchers dedicated to student-centered learning and development that highlights both intellectual rigor and currency as well as commitment to students as individual learners and does so within the historical framework of Ignatian pedagogy. We also believe that these value terms can help guide academic renewal and change. Finally, we also drafted a set of “First Principles” that offer core principles for future strategic planning.

We submit these documents to the Academic Vice President for his review and suggest that they be then forwarded to the Faculty Council for further discussion. We believe that if the learning outcomes, educational goals, and framework for excellence are accepted within the spring 2010 semester, the University will be well-positioned to begin to discuss, design, and implement improvements to the curriculum as well as to teaching and advising.

Members of the Academic Planning Task Force are very willing to answer any questions about these documents.

Further Recommendations

With the scaffolding provided by the learning outcomes, educational goals, and first principles in place, the Academic Task Force turned its attention to making recommendations about the creation of a strategic plan and about its implementation. The following is its recommendation for an academic strategic plan:

Academic Strategic Plan

The Academic Planning Taskforce Members have begun developing a strategic plan for revitalizing the academic mission of the University and its delivery, ensuring the centrality of academics in all future integrated planning, attracting new students who are poised for success to the University, and supporting excellence, currency, and innovation in faculty scholarship and teaching. It recognizes the need for a vision statement of educational goals, as well as a set of learning outcomes. It envisions a vibrant, modified curriculum that preserves our historic commitment to a breadth of knowledge but which highlights integration and allows for students to more individually and intentionally choose courses that complement their major and minor programs of study. It also envisions the development of new curricular programs that are appropriate to the John Carroll University mission, especially in the areas of interdisciplinary and applied programs. It also recommends that a plan be developed to ensure that all students benefit from “high impact pedagogies” and more intentional advising. Finally, it advocates attention to how institutional structures and resources can best sustain faculty work, curricular improvement, and collaborative partnerships across campus.

In order to achieve the goals of this strategic plan, the APTF suggests the following action plan. It breaks the plan into several phases and suggests that the Academic Vice President establish a steering committee and five sub-committees. The APTF suggests that the sub-committees be chaired by a faculty member (or co-chaired by a faculty member and administrator where relevant). Members of the sub-committee will be elected and/or delegated by the Faculty Council. The AVP may wish to appoint additional members from the university community including student affairs, enrollment, and finance. It is suggested the committees be of sufficient size and representation to effectively complete their charge in a timely fashion.

The Steering Committee shall assume responsibility for oversight and for co-ordination among the committees. Here, the APTF suggests that the Associate Academic Vice President for Planning, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness be given this responsibility, and at the direction of the Academic Vice President, that he begins to assemble the membership of the steering committee. Current members of the Academic Planning Task Force may be

willing to serve on this committee, or there may need to be further elections and appointments. All sub-committees should have at least one faculty representative, ideally the faculty co-chair, on the steering committee.

Action Plan: Strategic Initiatives for Academic Excellence

I. Academic Excellence: Honoring John Carroll University's Jesuit Catholic History and Tradition

Goal 1: Educational Core Values: Affirming Jesuit Catholic Education at John Carroll University

1.1 Core values for Academic Excellence

The Taskforce responded to faculty concerns that there were no explicit statements that expressed the educational goals of the University. In response, the Taskforce drafted a vision document: "John Carroll University: Educational Goals for Learning, Leadership and Service." (Appendix A) This statement affirms the historic foundation of excellence that defines John Carroll University as grounded in the proposition that academics are the heart of a Jesuit education and the central feature of a John Carroll University education. Through its Jesuit Catholic heritage, John Carroll University offers an education that values: the importance of a liberal arts core, teaching and classroom excellence, rigorous academic programs, individualized advising, the recruitment, development and retention of high quality faculty, staff, and administrators, and a commitment to social justice.

1.2 Validating our Educational Values: Student Learning Outcomes

The taskforce also drafted a set of Institutional learning outcomes, John Carroll University Institutional Academic Learning Outcomes. This set of institutional academic learning outcomes articulates the gains in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that a student is expected to have achieved as a result of obtaining a degree at John Carroll University. These outcomes frame the student experience and expectations for student success in its totality and serve as the standard to judge the goals of the JCU experience. The outcomes express the essential academic learning outcomes expected of a JCU graduate at graduation, whether it is at the culmination of the undergraduate or graduate experience. It understands that these outcomes will form the basis of regular self-assessment and accountability that is done at the core, departmental, and program level. (Appendix B)

The APTF recommends that after review by the Academic Vice President, the two documents are sent to the Faculty Council for review, discussion, and action with members of the APTF available to answer questions.

II. Development and Implementation of a Framework to Guide Academic Strategic Planning for Academic Excellence

Goal 1: Academic Excellence: A Framework for Renewal and Innovation

1.1 Framing the Educational Experience: Individual, Integrated, Innovative, and Intentional

THE APTF recognizes that achieving and maintaining a new level of excellence in the academic sector calls for integrative planning and wide consultation. It also, requires, we believe, an articulation of a framework that will succinctly capture distinctive characteristics of a John Carroll education. The APTF suggests that four terms that epitomizes our instructional excellence and communicate that commitment to prospective and current programs would be that it is Individual, Integrated, Innovative, and Intentional. (Appendix C)

The Academic Taskforce recommends that after review by the Academic Vice President, the “Framework for Renewal and Innovation” be sent to the Faculty Council for review, discussion, and action, with members of the APTF available to answer questions

Goal 2: A Vibrant Curriculum: Anchored in the Liberal Arts and Sciences, Connected to Professional Studies, Social Justice and Social Action

2.1 Curriculum Review

APTF recommends a comprehensive review of the curriculum that addresses the questions raised in Appendix D and produces a report with clear recommendations concerning the goals, structure and function of the JCU education.

The Academic Planning Task Force recommends that the Academic Vice President commission a faculty committee to review the curriculum in light of the learning outcomes. It recommends that the committee address the questions in Appendix D, undertake consultation where appropriate, and pursue other relevant issues as they arise. The APTF suggests a preliminary report, with specific recommendations concerning curricular change, be given to the AVP and to the faculty in December, 2010.

2.2 New Program Development and Interdisciplinarity

The APTF recognizes the need for strengthening the curriculum through developing innovative, interdisciplinary, and applied programs that can ensure academic currency and that can attract students while still remaining consonant with the University's identity and mission. (Appendix E)

The APTF recommends that a faculty committee be formed co-chaired by a representative from the Committee on Academic Policies and the Associate Academic Vice President for Academic Programs and Faculty Diversity

The committee is charged with:

- 1) devising models and policies for interdisciplinary programs;
- 2) developing a model through which new programs may be proposed, sustained, and evaluated;
- 3) evaluating the internal and external conditions –the opportunities and restrictions – that inform future curricular development, and;
- 4) develop a plan for working with Advancement to acquire an endowment for Academic Innovation Projects

2.3 High Impact Pedagogy

The APTF recognizes a need for a renewed commitment to instructional excellence. (Appendix F)

The APTF recommends the formation of a "Blue-Ribbon Committee on Excellence in Teaching and Learning," co-chaired by a faculty member and the Director of the Center for Faculty Development. .

Their task is:

- 1) to determine how JCU's curriculum can recognize and reward teaching excellence,
- 2) connect instructional excellence to verifiable methods of defining and validating student success, and;
- 3) more systematically and intentionally employ and track the impact of a variety of "high impact pedagogies," as identified by the AAC&U, shown to improve student learning, development, and persistence.

2.4 Advising

The APTF recognizes that advising is a key component of making John Carroll's education distinctive. (Appendix G)

The APTF recommends that an advising committee, co-chaired by a faculty member and in consultation with the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for Student Services and Academic Advising and the Assistant Dean of the BSOB, undertake a study of how advising can facilitate such issues as course alignment, integration, and student reflection on academic choices.

III. Nurturing and Sustaining Faculty Excellence

Goal 1: Recruit and retain a faculty committed to scholarship, academic excellence and student success.

1.1 Faculty Workload and Recognition

It is essential to address how changes to the curriculum will affect faculty workload, development, and reward. Already, the appearance of new programs, especially interdisciplinary programs will entail changes in faculty work (Appendix H)

The APTF recommends that a faculty committee be charged with a thorough examination of faculty work-life culminating in recommendations regarding the appropriate balance between teaching, scholarship and service, tenure and promotion, faculty development, and faculty salary and rewards to foster and sustain academic excellence.

IV. Development of First Principles to Sustain Strategic Planning

Goal 1: Formulate and disseminate first principles of strategic planning to anchor institutional planning processes.

1.1 Strategic Planning: First Principles

The APTF recognizes the value of having a have a set of principles that will underlie strategic planning for the academic division (Appendix I)

The APTF recommends that the Associate Academic Vice President for Planning, Assessment, and Institutional Effectiveness and a member of the faculty serve as co-chairs of this sub-committee and be charged with the completion and dissemination of these principles.

Appendix A: John Carroll University: Educational Goals for Learning, Leadership and Service

The historic foundation of excellence that defines John Carroll University is grounded in the proposition that academics are the heart of a Jesuit education and the central feature of a John Carroll University education. Through its Jesuit Catholic heritage, John Carroll University offers an education that values: the importance of a liberal arts core, teaching and classroom excellence, rigorous academic programs, individualized advising, the recruitment, development and retention of high quality faculty, staff, and administrators, and a commitment to social justice. The contemporary vision of Jesuit higher education for the 21st Century and beyond produces graduates with a well-educated solidarity---morally responsible, aware of the fundamental challenges facing the modern world, with the strength of character to work for a more just and humane world . At John Carroll, education for the 21st Century and beyond is based on the respect for the individual student and the recognition of individual talents (*cura personalis*), enlivened by our commitment to engaged teaching and supportive learning. The following statements summarize John Carroll's educational goals.

As a result of the intentional learning that has taken place through a student's choice of courses, John Carroll University students develop the ability to recognize, frame, and solve problems, to contribute new ideas to his/her field of endeavor, and to adapt to changing professional expectations and social relations.

For undergraduates, the rigorous study of core academic courses in the humanities, social sciences, mathematics and natural sciences will provide complementary breadth to the chosen program of study as well as deepening the habits of inquiry that are necessary for meeting lifelong personal, professional, civic, and global challenges.

For graduate students, a John Carroll education emphasizes advanced and specialized levels of research and analysis, further professional development, and enhanced leadership skills, doing so within the framework of values that characterizes Jesuit education.

In accordance with the Jesuit practice of *eloquentia perfecta*, John Carroll University students excel in written expression and oral communication and are able to engage effectively with rapidly emerging technologies.

In consonance with the Jesuit tradition of solidarity with the marginalized, a John Carroll University education emphasizes personal responsibility and ethical conduct.

A John Carroll University education deepens the values that characterize lives of service, including the integrity to call attention to all forms of discrimination and oppression, the dedication to work persistently on behalf of social justice, and a respect for all human dignity.

As world citizens cognizant of global interdependence, John Carroll University students recognize the importance of historical and cultural context in order to promote equitable exchange, respect for difference and pluralism, and environmental responsibility.

John Carroll graduates have the skills for civic and professional leadership and productive collaboration.

Appendix B: John Carroll University: Institutional Academic Learning Outcomes

The following set of institutional academic learning outcomes articulates the gains in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that a student is expected to have achieved as a result of obtaining a degree at John Carroll University. These outcomes frame the student experience in its totality and serve as the standard to judge the goals of the JCU experience. The outcomes express the essential academic learning outcomes expected of a JCU graduate at graduation, whether it is at the culmination of the undergraduate or graduate experience.

Because these nine learning outcomes represent the entirety of a John Carroll University education, no single program of study (whether core, major, minor, concentration, undergraduate, or graduate) is expected to cover all the learning outcomes; they represent in the aggregate the most important things we wish a John Carroll student to accomplish academically. While they are stated in more general terms, they correspond with the educational goals stated above linking our contemporary learning outcomes with the traditional goals of a John Carroll University education.

These institutional learning outcomes form the basis of the regular self-assessment and accountability that is done at the core, departmental, and program level. It is at these levels that the learning outcomes will be made more specific – for courses, sequences, or programs—as faculty members determine how their curricular and pedagogical goals for individual courses or programs support the institutional learning outcomes.

These institutional learning outcomes also articulate a framework for the development of new academic programs. In order to have a global overview and assessment of how well we are achieving the institutional academic learning outcomes, it will be important to establish a mechanism for such review.

We expect that graduates of John Carroll University will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an integrative knowledge of human and natural worlds;
2. Develop habits of critical analysis and aesthetic appreciation;
3. Apply creative and innovative thinking;
4. Communicate skillfully in multiple forms of expression;
5. Act competently in a global and diverse world;
6. Understand and promote social justice;
7. Apply a framework for examining ethical dilemmas;
8. Employ leadership and collaborative skills;
9. Understand the religious dimensions of human experience.

Appendix C: Academic Excellence: A Framework for Renewal and Innovation

The historic foundation of excellence that defines John Carroll University is grounded in the proposition that academics are the heart of a Jesuit education and the central feature of a John Carroll University education. Through its Jesuit Catholic heritage, John Carroll University offers an education that values: the importance of a liberal arts core, teaching and classroom excellence, rigorous academic programs, individualized advising, the recruitment, development and retention of high quality faculty, staff, and administrators, and a commitment to social justice. The contemporary vision of Jesuit higher education for the 21st Century and beyond produces graduates with a well-educated solidarity---morally responsible, aware of the fundamental challenges facing the modern world, with the strength of character to work for a more just and humane world . At John Carroll, education for the 21st Century and beyond is based on the respect for the individual student and the recognition of individual talents (*cura personalis*), enlivened by our commitment to engaged teaching and supportive learning. We believe that this curriculum can be best described by the following terms:

Innovative Individual Integrated Intentional

Why these terms?

- First, we intend them as a ***method loci***, the Ciceronian mnemonic device useful for structuring and communicating complex ideas, signaling that beneath the terms lies a rich, tested, and valuable educational experience unique to John Carroll University. They are also a shorthand for the fuller statements articulated in the educational goals and the learning outcomes.
- Second, we intend them as a ***heuristic*** method, designed to prompt such questions as: how is our curriculum innovative? Where is it not? Where and how does integration take place? How can the academic experience be more individually tailored to a student's aspirations? Career goals? Learning styles? How can we encourage a greater degree of intentionality on the part of students and faculty? How can we promote complementarity between core and major programs?
- Third, we believe they ***succinctly*** capture the values of our educational experience for prospective students, parents, donors, and partners.

What do they communicate?

The terms are both ***descriptive*** and ***aspirational***. They describe some of what we already do at John Carroll, and they provide a framework for planning change and improvement. They are applicable to the entire academic learning experience: advising, classroom teaching, service learning, internship, new pedagogies, technology, co-curricular activities, pre-professionalization, etc. There is productive overlap between the terms, and together they are meant to communicate the JCU educational experience as dynamic, current, responsive to change and need in the world, and attentive to students as individual learners and future leaders.

Individual: How can the JCU academic experience allow students to choose, design, and achieve their career and personal aspirations? How can it be responsive to individual learning styles? How can JCU be widely known for the individual attention it offers students? How can it help students to become principled leaders? Ethical thinkers? Creative problem-solvers?

Innovative: How do our curriculum, our advising, our teaching and our research remain current and relevant? How does it help students stay ahead of the curve as new social paradigms take shape, new literacies and technologies emerge, and environmental and global dynamics affect local circumstances?

Integrative: How does the JCU core complement and deepen a student's chosen plan of study? How does it introduce breadth and contrast? How can synthesis occur? Within a major or minor program, what kinds of activities foster integration and critical thinking? How can we promote more intentional course alignment?

Intentional: Systemically, how can our assessment and planning practices combine to make best use of resources, facilitate cross-discipline exchange, and enhance programs?

How are they connected to the educational goals and learning outcomes?

The four terms speak to the relevance, currency, cogency, flexibility, and adaptability of our curriculum in preparing a student to meet professional, personal, and civic challenges in a manner that emphasizes competence, breadth and depth of understanding, ethical conduct, and solidarity with the marginalized.

Appendix D: Curriculum Study

Recommendations:

1. The APTF strongly recommends that the entire curriculum be evaluated and that core reform should not be the exclusive focus of this study.
2. It further recommends that the Curriculum Committee map the current curriculum to the institutional learning goals.
3. In consultation with the AAVP for Planning, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, It urges the Curriculum Committee to evaluate JCU against peer, competitor, and aspirant institutions.
4. It requests that the AVP to make funds available to send a cohort to relevant AAC&U or other meetings.
5. Finally, it suggests that a set of common readings on curricular reform be assembled by the AAVP for Planning, Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness and made available to the committee.

The APTF suggests the following issues for discussion and recommendation; they are not prioritized.

1. Overall credit hour; 120 hour model. Should we move to 120 credit hours for graduation? Would doing #1 above make such a move more or less practical? What changes in Core and majors would be necessary to move to 120 hours?
2. Should we go to 4 credit hour courses? What are the pedagogical benefits of students focusing on 4 courses per semester versus 5 or 6? What are the practical difficulties in making such a move and do they outweigh potential pedagogical benefits?
3. Can the curriculum better harmonize and integrate liberal arts and sciences, professional studies, and social justice and social action? The committee should perform a critical review of all the academic programs currently offered by JCU. Are all the programs in line with the academic mission of JCU and are they in demand by our constituents?
4. Core: What would a non-distributive Core look like? What can such a Core accomplish that could help JCU achieve its learning outcomes? Should we move in that direction? Is the present core too large?
5. Is the curriculum CURRENT: does it reflect changes in knowledge, information exchange, disciplinary procedures due to such influences as globalization, information technology; biotechnology; cybernetics and virtuality; global symbolic economy; emergence of non-state actors; religious conflict; new ethical and moral dilemmas; reconsideration of political rights , environmental issues, climate change, rise in entrepreneurship, etc.
6. Is the curriculum RELEVANT: does the coursework enhance critical thinking skills and decision making; does it allow students to align their courses so that meaningful intersections emerge?
7. Is the curriculum INNOVATIVE? Does it allow students sufficient freedom to follow individual interests and areas of specialization? Does it balance traditional pedagogies with experiential or other high impact pedagogies? Encourage risk-taking and discovery?
8. Size: Have the requirements for any of the pre-professional majors become too large? Are there any departments that could reduce the size of their majors and still meet accreditation and licensing requirements through creative measures?
9. Does the curriculum sufficiently address issues of internationalization, inclusion, and diversity? Are these issues consigned to individual courses rather than woven throughout the curriculum?
10. Is there a sufficient technology component? Do courses raise critical awareness of technology's effect on the human experience?

11. How should the curriculum incorporate on-line learning? Consider the appropriateness of such different models as: full on-line instruction and degree programs, mixed methods which include in-class and on-line learning and other forms asynchronous instruction.
12. What should be the specific learning outcomes of FYS? Does our current model achieve those outcomes?
13. Do our students possess adequate skills in managing information, fluency in multiple forms of information identification, acquisition and presentation.
14. How will interdisciplinarity affect the core?
15. How creative thinking, production, and fine arts appreciation be better represented in the core? Will courses in Music Theory, The Symphony, American Music, Music in the Classic Period, Opera, Dance, Photography, Film, Painting, etc., attract more students? How might they be made available in partnership with Student Affairs?
16. Is the current core inflexible? Do students view completing the core curriculum as something to “get through” or as a “menu” rather than an essential component of the JCU education? The Committee might consider what kind of foundation the current liberal arts core provides in relation to the rest of the student’s academic experience.
17. Can a relatively firm three-year rotation of courses be designed?
18. Can the University better communicate the value and relevance of a liberal arts education in the twenty-first century? Further, can a student be given greater independence and responsibility for determining some aspects of how core requirements are fulfilled?

Appendix E: New Program Development and Interdisciplinarity

Specifically we recommend that the committee consider:

- A. Examine how academic programs can best be created, prioritized, evaluated, and sustained.
- B. Identify areas of collaboration with the division of student affairs and admissions to enhance student learning and development.
- C. Create a plan to address the existing barriers to the design, implementation, and sustainability of innovative or interdisciplinary program and course development.

Appendix F: Blue Ribbon Committee on Teaching Excellence

Specifically we recommend that the committee consider:

- 1, How all courses incorporate and deepen the critical thinking and communication skills that are foundational to student learning;
- 2. Defining high impact pedagogies and disseminating this information to the university community;
- 3. Collecting data on what kind of “high impact” pedagogies are used at JCU
- 4. Making recommendations on whether there should be an experiential learning requirement;
- 5. Determining if capstone courses or their equivalent should be required or more widely offered;
- 6. Examining ways that all courses include critical thinking and communication skills;
- 7. How teaching excellence can be better recognized, supported, and rewarded, and;
- 8. How teaching methods meet differences in student learning styles (including students with disabilities) to maximize student learning, development, and success.

Appendix G: Advising

Specifically we recommend the committee consider:

- A. Examining how we can make course alignment more viable both within and between academic programs and the core curriculum to promote: a more holistic and **integrated** sense of their relationship to each other, more **intentional** course selection, and more **individualized** programs of study.
- B. Determining how advising can facilitate a more **intentional, integrative, and individualized** selection of courses.
- C. Whether to use E portfolios or some other system that asks students to take greater responsibility for demonstrating how they are meeting the institutional learning outcomes and how they are designing their own personal and career goals.
- D. Whether the current model of course registration should be modified?

Appendix H: Faculty Workload and Recognition

Determine what human, financial and capital resources are necessary to maintain and enhance academic excellence.

Specifically, the APTF recommends a faculty committee be charged with examining:

Faculty Recruitment:

- A. How can we better recruit and retain faculty with diverse backgrounds who excel in both teaching and scholarship in their field? What kind of salary and benefits package, based on CUPA or other relevant salary benchmarks, would be appropriate to recruit and retain strong, committed faculty?

Faculty Development:

- B. What procedures and infrastructure are needed to develop, implement and sustain a comprehensive professional development program to support junior and senior faculty to excel in teaching and scholarly pursuits within their area of expertise?

How can support services—such as library resources, technology assistance, or grant proposal writing become well geared to strengthen faculty research and program development?

Faculty Annual Evaluation:

- C. Are the current faculty evaluation and reward practices (annual self- evaluations) transparent, and do they encourage continuing and productive self-assessment?

What:

is an appropriate weight to give to faculty publications in professional rather than disciplinary areas such as pedagogy or higher education policy?

is an appropriate weight to give to university service, and/or to full-time administrative appointments? and;

mechanisms can be developed to determine such standards and to make those standards transparent, known, and enacted?

Should John Carroll enact a university-wide student evaluation of teaching and formulate clear guidelines as to what constitutes good teaching in specific programs and disciplines?

Faculty Tenure and Promotion:

D. What structures are necessary in order to strengthen the tenure and promotion process?

In particular, the APTF recommends a faculty committee be charged with:

Evaluating the role of COAD

Determining if a college or university-wide tenure committee be adopted

Deciding if external observers and/or examiners be used

E. What is an appropriate balance between: the number of full-time and part-time faculty? the number of faculty and the number of administration, and staff? What is the appropriate role of part time faculty?

Appendix I: First Principles for Maintaining Academic Excellence

In order to achieve—and continuously to improve—an education that is **individual, innovative, integrative, and intentional**, the following core principles should underlie all strategic planning in Academic Affairs.

Students: First Principles

- Recruit, enroll, retain and graduate a diverse, academically talented student body at both the undergraduate and graduate levels;
- Offer an array of academic programs, grounded in the liberal arts, that prepare students to meet the challenges of adulthood;
- Provide students with the necessary academic support programs to be successful;
- Academic advising programs that highlight how each student can intentionally realize personal and educational goals,

Curriculum: First Principles

- Academic Excellence achieved through strong core curriculum, major, minor, interdisciplinary and graduate programs;
- Academic Excellence maintained through institutional support for the classroom experience and the continuing development of effective pedagogies;
- Academic Excellence strengthened by a commitment to the assessment of student learning and continuous improvement through rigorous academic program review;
- Academic Excellence demonstrated by a commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout the curriculum and throughout the student's JCU experience, and;
- Academic Excellence supported by experiential and integrative learning experiences.

Faculty: First Principles

- Academic Excellence sustained by recruiting a diverse faculty who are or are in the process of becoming strong scholars in their fields, who respect the John Carroll University mission, and who are committed to a career that combines effective teaching, rigorous scholarship and service;
- Academic Excellence sustained by enhanced programs for faculty development supporting teaching, scholarship and service;
- Academic Excellence sustained by fair and transparent practices of faculty retention, promotion, and reward, and;
- Academic Excellence sustained by continuing self-assessment and continuous review of institutional processes and procedures, and;

- Academic Excellence supported by a commitment to maintaining cutting-edge academic library and technological resources necessary to sustain teaching, learning and scholarship.

Administration: First Principles

- Recruit, develop, and retain a team of diverse administrators with substantive vision, strong leadership, a respect for the John Carroll University mission, a demonstrated ability to plan strategically and a collaborative style of working with faculty and staff within academic affairs and across other divisions of the university.
- Implement a transparent system of assessment for administrators.

Staff: First Principles

- Academic Excellence fostered by the commitment to hire, retain and develop outstanding support staff dedicated to student success.

Facilities: First Principles

- Academic Excellence sustained by state-of-the-art learning environments including classroom spaces, laboratories and living-learning facilities that promote learning and scholarship both inside and outside of the classroom.

Community Engagement: First Principles

- Share our academic excellence through a commitment to contribute our time and talent to the local community.

Relationships with Other Divisions: First Principles

- Maintain a mutually supportive relationship with other divisions to realize institutional learning outcomes.

Integrated Strategic Planning



Beginning with Academic Excellence, the fundamental purpose of all institutional planning, the center and supporting sections of the circle represent the emphasis on academic programs, the student experience and the various unit plans needed to support the overall goal of the pursuit of academic excellence. The outer rim of the diagram represents the importance of institutional vision, mission and values in shaping institutional planning.