AQIP Category Two: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

PROCESSES (P)

2P1 - Design and Operation of Key Non-Instructional Processes for Stakeholder Groups

As indicated in the overview, the University of St. Francis distinguishes itself and its mission through the charism of its founding sisters. This spiritual influence directs our orientation to service to others and a love of all of God’s creation. From this directive, initiatives include structures to reach unmet community needs and to serve as good environmental stewards. These efforts are directed through a number of programs. Each program has a director or chair that provides leadership. The following table 2.1 provides the major charism programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program or Office</th>
<th>Sample of Outreach Efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solutions</td>
<td>Income tax preparation for low income families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Court ordered parenting classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foreclosure workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Educational Academy for Leadership, REAL</td>
<td>Training for area schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to Intervention Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Induction; new teacher training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with the Mexican Consulate</td>
<td>Immigration and citizenship workshops and outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation Administration</td>
<td>Work with District 86 schools on childhood obesity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 Team</td>
<td>Recycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greening of Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Resource Center</td>
<td>Tutor referral service for community families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second distinctive objective, collaboration with the city of Joliet, is a result of a shared vision for a vibrant city with USF at its heart. Cooperation with the city has evolved through discussion between key personnel in city government and the University.

2P2 - Determining Major Non-Instructional Objectives for External Stakeholders

An observable strength for this University is the integrated approach to mission-critical objectives. The distinctive objectives are central to the overall strategic goals. The determination of objectives for our external stakeholders is a collaborative process rooted in the University’s Franciscan heritage. The 2006-11 strategic goals and objectives have emerged through a layered analytical and participative series of gatherings and discussions (Refer to Category 8 for detail).

The University of St. Francis has as part of its leadership team a full-time Vice President for Mission Integration and Ministry. This individual is charged with keeping the connection between the church and USF. Through this Vice-President, the expectations of the Joliet Diocese and the founding Congregation, the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, are considered in framing the goals and objectives of the University.
Other critical components of this decision making process emanate from the Vice President’s Council, whose membership includes the Vice President for Business Affairs, Vice President for Enrollment Services, Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost), Vice President for Development, Vice President for Academic and Information Services and the Vice President for Mission and Ministry. These individuals all receive input and guidance from the entire university community. Further advice and council comes from the President’s Cabinet that is comprised of the Vice Presidents mentioned above as well as the Dean’s and senior administrators representing Student Life, Athletics, Physical Plant, Information Services, Public Relations, Alumni Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness, Human Resources and Business Affairs.

Other arms of the University providing input to our processes are Strategic Planning, University Ministry and the Charism Council. Their roles are in direct correlation with the objectives, “Affirm and communicate our Catholic and Franciscan values.” (Refer to AQIP Category Eight for further details regarding Charism Council).

In addition to the input channels described above, the University has established the following units for the specific purpose of identifying and addressing community needs:

- Solutions, an office tasked to carry out environmental scans and network with local businesses in order to identify the needs of external stakeholders. The Solutions staff then provides solutions to these needs using University faculty and student expertise.
- A Hispanic Community Outreach Coordinator who communicates and collaborates with the local Hispanic community to identify ways the University can serve this population.
- The Regional Education Academy for Leadership (REAL) identifies and serves the teacher education needs of K-12 school districts

**2P3 - Communication of Expectations Regarding Objectives**

The context for USF objectives in addition to helping students learn is the religious foundation upon which the University was built. The University of St. Francis is rooted in its Catholic, Franciscan tradition which strives to infuse all endeavors with the precepts espoused by the founding congregation, the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate and became the values of the University:

- Respect, a reverence for all life and humankind
- Compassion for all people, always
- Service in the spirit of St. Francis
- Integrity in our work and interaction

These values are communicated in many ways to the employees, beginning with new employee orientation which teaches about Francis and Clare and how their values live today. At the beginning of every academic year all employees are invited to "We Are One Day" celebrating the richness of the USF community, setting the theme for the year and bringing in a speaker to bring passion to a new year of serving students. We have embraced the concept of Servant Leadership and many of these principles are incorporated in the 360 degree evaluation of our
leaders. Our commitment to service to the University and surrounding community is evaluated in administrator evaluation and in the faculty tenure process.

In August of 2004, the President formed the Catholic Franciscan Charism Council with appointed members from the University community, the founding congregation and the Diocese. It is the Charism Council who developed the Servant Leader Attributes and Tools for Discernment for Decision-Making. These tools actualize the mission of the University into actionable outcomes. In addition, there are references to communication, shared decision-making, and articulating the mission, value and beliefs in other aspects of the Servant Leader Attributes.

Students understand USF values and mission through orientation sessions for freshmen and transfers. A community Mass where classes are canceled is held the first week of every semester. In September, we celebrate Founder's Day with our founding congregation. Besides orientation and daily mass, the Charism council has been brainstorming of how to help our students learn about those who came before them. We will be discussing ways that majors can take on research projects as part of their experience in history, the arts and in service through internships and teaching experiences in our Catholic schools. The University has had a social justice speaker series which brought speakers such as Helen Prejan to campus to talk about issues of justice. We have developed a major in Criminal and Social Justice to take our commitment a step further. There is more work to be done but we have begun to live the values of USF.

2P4 - Assessment and Review the Appropriateness and Value of Objectives

Through reporting relationships with the Dean’s, Vice Presidents and senior administrators the needs of faculty and staff are taken into consideration relative to the stated objectives. The current AQIP team is comprised of the President, Vice President of Academic Affairs (Provost), the Vice President for Admission and Enrollment Services, Vice President for Academic and Information Services, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Executive Director of Financial Aid Services, Dean of Students, Director of Academic Resource Center, Executive Director of University Relations, and Professor of Nursing and MSN Coordinator. These individuals represent a huge cross-section of the institution and feedback is solicited to be used in these processes. (Refer to AQIP and Quality Improvement Structure)

The Assessment Council recognizes that USF has not undertaken a meaningful assessment of our Catholic and Franciscan values. The Council has plans use embedded assessment in the general education curriculum and assess required artifacts in the proposed e-portfolio.

2P5 - Determining Faculty and Staff Needs Relative to Objectives

One means of determining faculty, administrator and staff needs is the Administrators & Staff Council (ASC) that supports the mission and values of the University of St. Francis through representation of the staff and administrators. The ASC promotes the welfare of the University and the employees it represents; provides an effective means of communication among staff and administration concerning university issues; provides a forum for discussion of university issues, policies, and procedures; provides a role in governance; seeks professional development opportunities; recommends changes to salary, benefits and working conditions; and promotes professional and social collegiality.
The Faculty Compensation Committee and Faculty Affairs Committee are yet another means of determining faculty needs. Other information regarding Determining Faculty/Staff Needs can be found in Category 4, 4P5 (Determining Training Needs) and 4P9 (Evaluating Employee Satisfaction). For example, they determined that a compensation review was required by Human Resources which lead to this becoming an AQIP Action Project. Human Resources has also recognized the compensation adjustment for administrators and staff needs to be addressed in the next review phase.

2P6 – Incorporating Information on Faculty and Staff Needs in Readjusting Objectives

As a Catholic Franciscan institution, we have two objectives, firstly to “Affirm and communicate our Catholic and Franciscan Values and” secondarily to “Access and share resources through community partnerships” are key areas in the category of Other Distinct Objectives. As shown below, we have added questions to the NSSE study to directly compare our student stakeholders responses with students attending other Catholic institutions. This seems to be the best way to determine if we are accomplishing these objectives with this constituency. We will continue to look for both quantitative and qualitative measures that directly compare our situation with other similar institutions. This area of assessment is an ongoing effort that will continue to persevere through our AQIP involvement.

Reaching out to the community is an inherent part of our Catholic Franciscan mission. USF also realizes that through accessing and sharing resources, we can extend our capabilities with all stakeholders. We feel that the significant achievements listed under the results stated below show both a high degree of commitment to our Other Distinct Objectives and also evidence a great deal of success. We also believe that by undertaking and being successful with these partnerships and collaborations, we are providing professional development opportunities for faculty as we offer unique learning opportunities for students that would not necessarily be available otherwise.

USF has membership in both the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCY) and the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities. Each year, conferences occur where member institutions share information as to how they communicate their distinct mission and identity. Presidents from member groups also communicate on a regular basis to share information. This information is used to benchmark USF with comparable institutions as it pertains to Other Distinct Objectives.

RESULTS (R)

2R1 – Measurement of Accomplishing Major Non-Instructional Objectives and Activities

A significant percentage of USF measures for the other distinctive objectives have been qualitative. Multiple influences including, AQIP, have catalyzed an increase in quantitative tools and data analyses. Other distinctive objectives are now assessed both qualitatively and quantitatively with a commitment for increasing quantitative data collection. For example, the “Community Engagement” process was a dramatic experiential event. The initial community resistance to the USF Campus Master Plan was transformed, albeit painfully, to alliance and support. A critical aspect of the Master Plan was the purchase of the houses surrounding the campus. It is difficult to achieve this goal if the home owners refuse to sell, as was the case prior to the community engagement process. Subsequent to the community involvement meetings,
homeowners voluntarily contacted the University to discuss home sales with the result of 45 residential and commercial properties purchased by USF since 2004.

Unequivocally, the University has been more intentional in its measurement of Catholic/Franciscanism as an underpinning to University life and learning. Table 2.2 depicts the measurement methods.

Table 2.2 Tools for measuring Catholic/Franciscan values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirm Catholic Franciscan Values</th>
<th>Measurement Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common student learning objectives</td>
<td>Annual Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Personal Growth</td>
<td>NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>CIRP (Cooperative Institutional Research Program) &amp; National Survey of Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Integration</td>
<td>Mission Integration Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charism</td>
<td>360 Degree Survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2R2 – Performance Results for Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

- Results for community interaction are quite vividly portrayed by the support the University has received subsequent to the concerted community engagement process utilized for the Campus Master Plan. The City of Joliet now deems USF ‘the anchor of the near west side’. Most recently USF received a multimillion dollar grant to establish a health care clinic on the University property. Achievement of this grant award required support from community and government agencies at multiple levels.

- The University partnered with the Groundwork Domestic Violence Shelter, the Housing Authority of Joliet, Joliet Public Schools District 86, Lamb’s Fold Women’s Center, Provena Saint Joseph Medical Center, Senior Services Center of Will County, Silver Cross Hospital, United Way of Will County, Will County Health Department/Will County Community Health Center and the Will-Grundy Medical Clinic to create the University of St. Francis Health and Wellness Center. This was made possible by such resources as a $2.1 million Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Division of Nursing, Nursing, Education, Practice and Retention Grant award (#D11HP07363-01-00) to manage, staff and operate the Health and Wellness Center for five years. Harrah’s Foundation has supported the University of St. Francis Health and Wellness Center with a $50,000 gift. The Health and Wellness center is open to all, but will primarily serve school children, senior citizens and domestic violence victims. Some 2,550 people could be served by the center each year. The primary care clinic is also the first nurse-managed clinic in Will County, and is at the forefront of a national trend. Nurses on the University’s College of Nursing and Allied Health faculty run the center.

- The University of St. Francis in collaboration with Joliet Grade School District 86 is participating in a $6.99 million grant program from the U.S. Department of Education’s Teacher Quality Enhancement Program (TQE) awarded to the Associated Colleges of Illinois (ACI). USF collaborated with ACI and seven other deans/chairs of education to develop a vision of transforming teacher preparation in high-need urban schools. The result is ACI’s new Center for Urban Research in Education which will explore
Educational issues affecting diverse metropolitan regions. USF as part of the ACI initiative will collaborate with more than 40 other partners—from high-need school districts and community colleges to major businesses—to develop and launch new strategies for preparing teachers for high-need schools. The new center will coordinate these projects, disseminate new ideas and best practices across the initiative’s partners (and nationwide); offer teacher and faculty professional development programs; promote technology in teaching and learning; provide technical assistance to partner schools and colleges; recruit business partners to the initiative; and develop new projects to serve high-need schools in the future. USF is developing projects for center funding, including pre-service teachers immersion experiences at Farragut and A.O. Marshall Professional Development Schools (Joliet School District 86), where master teachers will model best practices for candidates as they work side-by-side teaching curriculum designed to improve achievement by Joliet’s students. Four community colleges including Joliet Junior College, will partner with ACI institutions to create new links that ease the transition from lower division classes at community colleges to teacher education programs at ACI member colleges and universities.

- In 2006-2007, the Charism Council proposed two documents to the president for his approval. The first being "Characteristics of Servant Leadership" and the second a "Discernment Process for Decision-making". Both have been approved by the president. The Charism Council includes two representatives from the community, one a Franciscan Friar from St. John’s Parish and the other a representative from the Diocese of Joliet.

- The Personal Counseling department of the University has chaired a Campus/Community Cooperative. The Campus Security Act requires that colleges and universities develop both preventive as well as response capacities relative to violence on campuses. The purpose of this Cooperative is to bring together the mental health resources of other area colleges and university counseling departments as well as local mental health provider agencies, to assist one another in doing both prevention and response services relative to violence.

- The University of St. Francis has chaired and initiated an effort to bring the following groups together:
  - University of St. Francis Counseling and Security Departments
  - Lewis University Counseling, Health and Safety Departments
  - Joliet Junior College Counseling Department
  - Will County Health Department’s Behavioral Health Services Div.
  - Family Counseling Services of Will and Grundy Counties
  - Morning Star Counseling Services
  - Crisis Line of Will and Grundy Counties
  - Crisis Intervention team of Provena St. Joseph Medical Center
  - In 2007 The “Quest for Authentic Manhood” was brought to the University by leaders in another Catholic organization, “The Fishers of Men Ministry.” It is a program that helps young men prepare spirituality for the rest of their lives. The program is now being offered in the form of a three credit hour theology elective course at the University.
• In 2008, the University of St. Francis began hosting an after school mentoring program for “Big Brothers/Big Sisters” that brought together local area grade school students. Every week 10 grade school students are matched up with 10 college students who get to know each other, help with homework and play games. The program runs throughout the school year.

• USF Business Solutions, a resource center for business and community partnerships at the University of St. Francis began in 2004. Since its inception, the center has worked with over 200 organizations, connecting them with University resources through a variety of training, consulting and conferencing services.

• Assessment Overview of Continuing Education and Seminars – During 2008-09, USF Solutions offered continuing education programs to area businesses and industries to include such topics as: Grant Writing, Business Writing, Effective Public Speaking, Retirement Planning, Conflict Resolutions, Marketing Strategies, Networking for Women, and Project Management. The assessment rubric developed for workshops and seminars is a 5 point Likert Scale.

• In general, most participants in business writing, grant writing and public speaking seminars found the information to be useful and materials easy to understand. Additionally, instructors were knowledgeable and the programs were informative. The overall mean score (mean of the means) on participant satisfaction for these seminars was 4.2. In other workshops/seminars such as Marketing Strategies in Tough Times, Conflict Resolution, Networking for Women and Project Management, the overall mean score on participant satisfaction was 4.57. Most participants strongly agree that learning outcomes were achieved and were pleased with the level of interaction and application of content.

• Assessment Overview of Facility Use and Event Hosting – USF facility use/event hosting offered by Solutions to outside organizations includes conferencing, meetings, organization staff retreats, parties/receptions and special use purposes. An assessment rubric was used to evaluate the following criteria: customer service, food service, facility and room set up, pricing, and overall experience. In general, clients were satisfied with the level of customer service they received and the quality of food service provided for the event. Occasionally, a few clients indicated they somewhat disagreed with the quality of facilities, but most of these issues were related to room set up. All clients indicated a high level of satisfaction with regard to meeting their expectations and quality of the event experience.

• Assessment Overview of Client Satisfaction with Survey Research Projects – Assessment results on survey research projects is limited to park district clients. Data collection is in progress with other types of clients. Survey research projects were related to facility and program planning, marketing research and strategic planning. All clients were well satisfied with services provided, data analysis and quality of the final report. All park district clients indicated that services met their needs and that they would use Solutions on future research projects.

(Further reference to community partnerships can be found in AQIP Category Nine—Building Collaborative Relationships—9R1)
2R3 – Performance Results Compared to Other Higher Education Institutions and Other Organizations Outside of Higher Education

The following Freshman/Senior data is from the 2006 NSSE study. The data depicted below are the mean scores with St. Francis compared with Catholic colleges and universities that we selected, as well as comparison data selected by NSSE as our Carnegie peers. The final column represents how USF matched with all institutions subscribing to the NSSE process. The data depicted below only references differences that were noted as significant in the NSSE study. One significant observation is that USF freshmen have participated in community service or volunteer work more than freshmen at other Catholic schools or all of the NSSE schools. Also USF students rated well compared to other schools in developing a personal code of values and ethics and a deepened sense of spirituality. However, USF students did not compare well in regards to being aware of opportunities for volunteering and community service.

Enriching Educational Experiences

Which of the following do you plan to do before you graduate from your institution?

0=have not decided, but do not plan to do; 1=done.
Thus the mean is the proportion responding “done” among all valid respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Question</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>St. Francis (mean)</th>
<th>Catholic Colleges &amp; Universities</th>
<th>Carnegie Peers</th>
<th>NSSE 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7b. Community service or volunteer work</td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.35 ** .42</td>
<td>.37 * .38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** and * denote NSSE significance; percentage indicates Effect Size

Educational and Personal Growth

(1=very little; 2=some; 3=quite a bit; 4=very much; ** and * denote NSSE significance; percentage indicates Effect Size)

To what extent has your attendance at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSSE Question</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>St. Francis (mean)</th>
<th>Catholic Colleges &amp; Universities</th>
<th>Carnegie Peers</th>
<th>NSSE 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11n. Developing a personal code of values and ethics</td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.65 * .26</td>
<td>2.65 * .26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11p. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality</td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>2.06 ** .50</td>
<td>2.05 ** .50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1.92 * .30</td>
<td>1.92 * .30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>St. Francis</th>
<th>Catholic Colleges &amp; Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This institution offers opportunities for volunteering and community service.</td>
<td>FR</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>4.26 ** .41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2R4 – Performance Results for Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives Affect on the Institution and Enhancement of Relationships with Community and Regions

The performance results of Accomplishing Other Distinct Objectives strengthen our institution in several ways:

- Our strong relationship with the City of Joliet will help as we continue to implement the Campus Master Plan.
- The Health and Wellness Center lessens the need for low income health facilities in the city while providing clinical opportunities for our student in nursing and social work.
- The NSSE results show that our students’ awareness of volunteer opportunities is lacking. Although there are many volunteer opportunities such as Big Brothers, Big Sisters and free income tax preparation for low income students, not enough students seem to be aware of them. More publicity of opportunities is needed.
- An ongoing conversation with the Charism Council includes ways to provide more “connections” for students. There are several ideas being discussed for implementation in the next academic year.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

2I1 – Recent Improvements for Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives and Systematic and Comprehensive Nature of Performance Results

Input, dialogue, and commitment are key elements of the current community engagement improvement process. A series of meetings took place to review and revise the current strategic plan and a working strategic plan is now in place. Key performance indicators were established for each USF distinctive objective. The Board of Trustees Retreat and a retreat for Vice Presidents have been held which focused on key performance indicators which will enable more precise measurements of results and further enable continuous improvement. Based on this work a dashboard has been developed with KPI’s for each area of the strategic plan. This dashboard has been in place for one year and will be reviewed by both the Trustee and Vice Presidents group at their retreat in September. Data will continue to be gathered from NSSE and CIRP.

Town Hall meetings initiated by the President take place periodically. Other improvements are noted below:

- The strategic plan initiatives are reviewed once a month by the Vice Presidents. This is a new process that was created this year.
- The initiatives funded by grants are reviewed on an annual basis with accomplishments being reported as a condition of the grant.
- Due to the work by our Recreation Administration department and students for obesity concerns, District 86 has implemented a new physical education curriculum.

Concerted efforts to help foster relationships with the outside community and our stakeholders continually take place. Newly established local community partnerships, such as the Visual Arts Department relocating to the Rialto Theatre in downtown Joliet, student teacher placement,
internships, strong diocesan communication, prominent speaker presentations from the private and public sector, relationships with social services agencies, provide a mobile consulate for Joliet area immigrants, local membership in Gold’s gym for all students and employees, and the recent announcement of the University’s Capital Campaign all contribute to achieving our major objectives, fulfilling our mission and distinguishing our University from other educational institutions. Because of these endeavors, the University of St. Francis is posed to become the pre-eminent university of the Chicago-land metropolitan area.

212 – Culture and Infrastructure Affect on Selection of Processes to Improve Performance Results for Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

Continuous communication between the president, senior management, faculty, administrators and staff are paramount to the improvement of overall performance among the University’s constituency. The President’s Retreat for Vice President’s and Deans, periodic Town Hall Meetings facilitated by the President for all employees, department retreats, yearly “We Are One” days all serve to increase feedback and participation among the USF community. Through these venues, constant ways to improve communication, thereby strengthening the University and insuring success of the objectives, are continually being sought.