Overview and Discernment
Date of Visit: February 25-27, 2008

Regis University
Self-Study for Comprehensive Accreditation Evaluation

Regis University Accreditation Webpage:
www.regis.edu/about-regis/who-we-are/accreditation-statement
Higher Learning Commission Criteria

- Mission and Integrity
- Planning for the Future
- Student Learning and Effective Teaching
- Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
- Engagement and Service

Self-Study Highlights to Date

- Six task forces of 75 Regis faculty and staff met from September 2005 through May 2007.
- Over 700 Regis students, faculty and staff participated in focus groups.
- External focus groups were conducted with community agencies, alumni, and employers.
- Development—project completed and sent to the Higher Learning Commission.
- January/February—creation of physical and virtual resource rooms.

Common Themes Between 1998 and 2007 Focus Groups

- Pride in University mission
- Jesuit Catholic nature of the University—Regis is either too Catholic or not Catholic enough
- Strong sense of University community
- Different styles and contributions of the three schools (now colleges) are valued
- Respect for service learning across schools and Regis University’s community engagement
- Pride in innovation of the University
- Concerns about University endowment
- Pride in campus facilities
- Space needs—with a twist in 2007—types of classrooms for a variety of learning models

Articulated Themes of the Community Not Found in 1998

- Technology has drastically changed and captivated our lives, and will continue to do so, requiring ongoing capital investment.
- The world will continue to change rapidly.
- There is a growing sense of the importance of Regis University’s values in education.
- Assessment has become a major University commitment.
- Siloed students are changing/will change Regis University.
- Distributed enterprising of student preparedness for college-level work and increased need for student academic support.
- Respect for progress made in diversity but a hunger for more to reflect the world we live in.
- Strong interest in what Regis University desires to be for the future.
- Strong interest in Fr. Sheeran’s succession and what kind of leadership the University will seek.
- Strong interest in what Regis University desires to be for the future.
- Respect for progress made in diversity but a hunger for more to reflect the world we live in.

Regis University Libraries in a partner in lifelong learning, supporting faculty, students, community, alumni, online learners, and the emergence of new doctoral programs.
- Faculty development in college-centric, pedagogic, funding, and Sabbaticals vary across the colleges. There is a desire on the part of some faculty for more comprehensive, university-wide faculty development through a center for teaching excellence, where faculty from different colleges could learn best practices from one another. Affiliate faculty would also receive support from the center and interact more fully with the University community.
- The University demonstrates that students are partners in learning, particularly through institutional funding for student research and publications.
- Regis University has a proven commitment to service learning and justice education. Diversity is not yet reflected as strongly in faculty as in the student body. The University intends to build upon its diversity initiatives, including continuing efforts to hire more minority faculty.
- The University has recently created an institutional review board (IRB) for ethical compliance in research. It sought and received a federatedwide assurance (FMA) and also has an animal Welfare Assurance.

Criteria 5—Discernment

- Engagement and Service

- Regis University’s connection to the Catholic community is intentional and widespread. In particular, its contributions to regional, national, and international Jesuit and Catholic organizations demonstrate a commitment to mission and identity.
- Regis University community involvement is widespread and often reflects individual interests of faculty and staff, and a high level of commitment on the part of the Regis community. Because many projects and partnerships arise from individuals or departments, some activities may lack sufficient coordination or shared planning.
- Regis University is viewed as a resource by many organizations in the metropolitan area. Some faculty and staff have begun to feel that community requests have exceeded the University’s capacity to respond. To guide faculty and staff in evaluating community requests, the University needs to develop more of a university-wide vision, intentional planning, and coordination efforts with a stronger emphasis on identified community needs, and with guidelines which identify contributions, academic programs, and financial implications.
- Regis University is confident that it is meeting community needs in many areas by the positive response of its community and business partners and by the continued request for new engagements.
- The University has invested heavily in engagement and service through increased staff and program funding. Service learning programs are expanding their models to incorporate not only direct service but also community-based research, organizational consultancy, and advocacy.
- Ongoing evaluation of community engagement must frequently happen in individual colleges or programs and is most mature in those programs with specialized accreditation requirements. There is insufficient university-wide evaluation as to whether the University is addressing identified community needs when it takes on new activities or if those projects remain in importance to existing efforts.
- The University needs to consider evaluating its community engagement and service, perhaps every three to five years, as it has done for the purpose of the self-study. It needs also to consider ways in which to centralize data about the University’s engagements. The University may also wish to consider a staff position to coordinate community partnerships and affiliations, policies, and evaluations.
A Decade of Accomplishments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Student population</th>
<th>University credit hours</th>
<th>Annual budget</th>
<th>University enrollment</th>
<th>Academic grants</th>
<th>Comprehensive campaign</th>
<th>Minor student population</th>
<th>Minority faculty</th>
<th>Minority affiliate faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>133,612</td>
<td>$44 million</td>
<td>14 $14 million</td>
<td>$202,000</td>
<td>$16 million</td>
<td>1,485</td>
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<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>218,768</td>
<td>$120 million</td>
<td>$40 million</td>
<td>$2.6 million</td>
<td>$82 million</td>
<td>2,863</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>165</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Continued financial health for over thirty years
- Maturing assessment culture in all three colleges
- University mission installed across curriculum, faculty, staff, students, and alumni
- Over 900 affiliations across the community and workforce
- Significant growth in terminally degreed faculty in all three colleges
- Core curriculum is under review in light of new skills and knowledge appropriate to the 21st century
- The University has expanded global awareness in its curriculum, from individual courses to new degree programs
- Not nationally recognized scholarship and publications by Regis University faculty
- The University is responsive to new markets and serves the community and changing workforce needs through significant library growth and service to students, faculty, and community (including online resources and services)
- A Decade of Accomplishments

### The Regis University Self-Study Team

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### Kathleen Schroeder
Director — Ignation Spirituality Programs
Chair: Mission and Integrity

We encourage the continual search for truth, values, and a just existence. Throughout this process, we examine and attempt to answer the question: “How ought we to live?”
The University continues efforts to enhance diversity, particularly in full-time faculty recruitment and a pervading sense of inclusion within the Regis University community. The University has committed significant resources to the growth of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. Between being Jesuit and Catholic have been effective, but on-going efforts are required as new members are welcomed into the University community. All three colleges and University Libraries provide both opportunities and significant financial support for faculty hiring, orientation, and ongoing development of faculty and staff. The University has intentional processes for hiring, orientation, and ongoing development of faculty and staff. It has articulated and funded its commitment to diversity. The University will need to meet and exceed current diversity goals in order to reflect fully a diverse world for its learning community and to remain competitive. The University is a leader among Jesuit colleges and universities in Jesuit-lay collaboration. The University has experienced success through effective decentralized college and department planning; cultures with achievement of goals consistent with priorities established by the University Strategic Plan. The University is able to leverage colleges and departments as needed to support its academic mission. The University is now recognized as one of the largest providers of online education in the country. The University has enjoyed continuous financial health for over thirty years. It has more than doubled its endowment in the last two years and completed its largest comprehensive campaign in University history. The University must give serious consideration to creating a University-wide culture of planning, evaluation and implementation, including the addition of administrative positions, planning boards, structural supports, and more effective means of communicating the University Master Plan, which currently focuses only on the Lowell Campus. The University has experienced success through effective decentralized college and department planning and increased student academic support needs. The University has made strides in this area and at the same time recognizes there is room for improvement. The University needs to continue to incorporate rewards and incentives for mission behavior and to continue its attention to the assessment of mission effectiveness and contributions in annual reports and evaluation processes. It is increasingly difficult for faculty and staff to find spaces in their lives for reflection. The University must be aware of the demands of its growth upon staff and faculty. Diversity is implied in the University mission statement but a revision could make the University’s commitment to diversity more explicit.

**Emerging Issues of the Future**

- **Diversity**
- The rising cost of tuition and tuition dependency
- Vision and planning
- Succession planning
- Increased responsibilities upon faculty and staff as a consequence of University growth, 24/7 culture, and increased student academic support needs
- **Changing student characteristics and needs**
- **Student academic support**
- **21st century facilities and learning environments**
- **University-wide comprehensive faculty development**
- **The Catholic nature of the University**
- **Technology – the demands of currency and funding**
- **Increased direct measures of student learning in the College for Professional Studies and Regis College**
- **More centralized data gathering**
- **Clearer guidelines for community engagements**

**Criterion 1 – Discernment**

**Mission and Integrity**

- University mission continues to animiate the University community and is widely understood and embraced. The University has intentional processes for hiring, orientation, and ongoing development of faculty and staff with respect to University mission. The University is a leader among Jesuit colleges and universities in Jesuit-lay collaboration. Within a heterogeneous community of faculty, staff, and students, attempts to address the perceived differences between Jesuit and Catholic have been effective, but on-going efforts are required as new members are welcomed into the University community. The University has articulated and funded its commitment to diversity. The University’s entrepreneurial spirit and environmental scanning have enabled it to be responsive to workforce demands with new quality programs while remaining solidly grounded in a liberal arts tradition. The University is now recognized as one of the largest providers of online education in the country. The University has experienced success through effective decentralized college and department planning and increased student academic support needs. The University has made strides in this area and at the same time recognizes there is room for improvement.

**Criterion 2 – Discernment**

**Planning for the Future**

- **Regis University exhibits clear commitment to mission in the growth of new academic programs and mission development of faculty and staff.** It has articulated and funded its commitment to diversity. The University will need to meet and exceed current diversity goals in order to reflect fully a diverse world for its learning community and to remain competitive.
- **The University has experienced success through effective decentralized college and department planning; cultures with achievement of goals consistent with priorities established by the University Strategic Plan.** The University is able to leverage colleges and departments as needed to support its academic mission.
- **The University’s entrepreneurial spirit and environmental scanning have enabled it to be responsive to workforce demands with new quality programs while remaining solidly grounded in a liberal arts tradition.** The University is now recognized as one of the largest providers of online education in the country.
- **Regis University has enjoyed continuous financial health for over thirty years.** It has more than doubled its endowment in the last two years and completed its largest comprehensive campaign in University history.
- **Grant funding has increased to an average of over $1 million annually.** At the same time, the University remains tuition driven and faces continuing pressures to find new markets and revenue sources amid rising expenses. The University must give serious consideration to creating a University-wide culture of planning, evaluation and implementation, including the addition of administrative positions, planning boards, structural supports, and more effective means of communicating the University Master Plan, which currently focuses only on the Lowell Campus.
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- **Regis University exhibits clear commitment to mission in the growth of new academic programs and mission development of faculty and staff.** It has articulated and funded its commitment to diversity. The University will need to meet and exceed current diversity goals in order to reflect fully a diverse world for its learning community and to remain competitive.
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**Criterion 3 – Discernment**

**Student Learning and Effective Teaching**

- **Regis University learning community incorporates the University’s mission and Jesuit Catholic nature in curricular, student services, and faculty development.** This is evident throughout the colleges and results in a learning environment characterized by an atmosphere of open discussion, respectful disagreement, and values-centered education.
- **The faculty of Regis University, whether full-time, part-time, or affiliate, are academically and professionally strong.** Systems in place for faculty hiring have enabled Regis University to recruit faculty who are experts in their disciplines and who also embrace the University’s mission and values. Processes are also in place to improve faculty diversity. The University has made strides in this area and at the same time recognizes there is room for improvement.
- **All three colleges and University Libraries provide both opportunities and significant financial support for faculty development.** In addition, among the faculty there is growing interest in developing opportunities for inter-colleges sharing and collaboration so that faculty can learn from one another, share best practices, and avoid curricular redundancy.