Regis College
The Thinking Heart of Jesuit Education
Fall 2013

Preamble

As Regis University embarks on a new era, it is important to keep before us our identity, our sense of who we are. We do so not for nostalgic purposes, but for the purpose of connecting this identity to the changing world in which we live. Given an increasingly complex global economy, a more unstable and fluid world, the fact that our graduates will have many roles in the future, the value of the liberal arts—especially one firmly rooted in our Jesuit heritage—takes on an amplified importance. As the evidence clearly suggests, employers seek those who can think critically, engage in complex problem-solving, and communicate effectively to a diverse and intercultural world. These are skills needed to thrive in the new economy. These are the benefits of a liberal arts education, and specifically of a revitalized Jesuit liberal arts education in Regis College. Our graduates will be prepared not only for their first job, but their fourth and fifth jobs as well. More importantly, our graduates will be prepared to embrace the challenges and wonders of life.

Why the Liberal Arts?

The landscape of higher education is changing dramatically. The entry of large state universities into the online market, the emergence of MOOCs (soon to be offering credit bearing courses), the growing criticism of traditional modes of education in the media and political discussions, and the increasing expectations of students, parents, and employers that a college education should primarily be a pathway to a career or job are just a few of the challenges that have put many institutions of higher education on the defensive. But these challenges also offer profound opportunities. To seize these opportunities, institutions that share a vision of the centrality of the liberal arts (including the social and natural sciences) need to articulate clearly the goals and values of a liberal education. For Regis, this means reflecting on our Jesuit tradition as we trace our liberal arts roots back to their origins in Ignatian humanism.

One crucial goal of such an education is to have a humanizing effect on our students. The question remains how best to achieve such a goal. To put it bluntly, how can we avoid turning out graduates who are merely highly trained technicians equipped to pursue a wide range of employment opportunities? We do want to prepare our students for jobs and careers, but we also want to educate people for life, a life of human flourishing, a life dedicated to the service of others, and a life characterized by ethical responsibility and spiritual awareness. Such an education can only be achieved where the liberal arts are the heart of the endeavor. What are the central elements of such an education? How do we achieve the goal of a humanizing experience? Foundationally we need to graduate students who can think critically, speak convincingly, and write cogently. But building on that foundation, we need to graduate students who can think imaginatively, speak inspiringly, and write creatively. We want students who have developed an historical sensibility as well as an appreciation for literature, language,
and the fine arts. We want students who understand the social and political forces that contextualize our shared life. We want students who have a basic awareness of the findings of modern science. We want students who have developed an ethical awareness and a reflective appreciation of the philosophical and religious traditions that are our common heritage. This set of goals and outcomes should permeate the entire curriculum. It is essential that the distributive core program be enriched and deepened by both the integrative core and the majors themselves. The development of the integrative core here at Regis was a major step forward. It is evidence of the creativity needed to reimagine our identity without losing it.

In a culture that increasingly celebrates only the utilitarian aspects of higher education, it behooves Jesuit schools to stand strongly for their commitment to educating the whole person. After all, if you lose your heart, you die.

**Opportunities for Regis**

**Looking Back: A Culture of Innovation:**

In 2009, Regis College introduced a new core curriculum signaling its commitment to the evolution of the liberal arts and recognition of the importance of integration. The Regis College core is arguably giving new and distinctive vitality to a sustaining Jesuit ideal: contemplation-in-action. While revising a core curriculum is by no means novel in education, Regis’s commitment to supporting and expanding the core in the face of contemporary challenges truly is:

1) Our **foundational core** invites students into the work of an academic community by strengthening the core competencies in written and oral communication that makes participation in shared inquiry possible. Faculty from every department on campus teach these high-impact first-year classes, acculturating students to the interdisciplinary character of our core. In addition, first-year writing professors also serve as advisors and mentors, contributing to retention and to our commitment to *cura personalis.*

2) Our **distributive core** makes learning more comprehensive by pairing and sequencing courses and by supplementing curricular offerings with linked, para-curricular fieldwork and service-learning. We are increasingly exploring mission-driven and innovative approaches to the distributive core, such as the English Department’s shift to a social justice theme for all Intro to Lit courses, or the linked Philosophy and Religion introductory courses which use an interdisciplinary cohort model.

3) Our **integrative core** was radically changed in our core revision. The Integrative Teaching Institute, supported by the Keck Foundation, has been universally acclaimed by the faculty and has brought high impact changes directly to the classroom, including team-based learning, enhanced service learning components, team-teaching, and innovative course design. Two-thirds of our faculty will have graduated from the Institute by the summer of 2014, helping to shift the culture toward a focus on integrative learning college-wide. Assessment results have been clear on the effectiveness of our integrative core offerings. Feedback from these assessments has directly impacted both course development and classroom teaching. Furthermore, results reveal that students are achieving the goals of the integrative core in all areas. See Appendix 3 for the year 2 report to the Keck Foundation.
The culture of innovation embodied in these changes not only revitalizes the curriculum for students in the College, but enhances the education for students in all colleges of Regis University. Whether it is business, computer science, teacher education, or health care, these fields benefit greatly when grounded in the liberal arts tradition. Study after study affirms that employers believe that all college students should acquire broad knowledge in the liberal arts in addition to a specialized field of study. A recent survey reveals that 93% believe that “a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems” is more important than a candidate’s undergraduate major (Hart Research Associates, April 2013). Our re-imagined core curriculum provides just such an education, and should continue to ground the liberal arts foundations of our professional programs—both those currently in place as well as those proposed in any structural realignment within the University.

Looking Forward:
Regis College Positioning Statement – By 2020, Regis College, as the heart of Regis University, will be distinguished nationally for its liberating Jesuit spirituality, its distinctive pedagogies in integrative and engaged learning, and the ethical, intellectual, and civically responsible lives of its graduates. We will achieve this reputation by continuing to emphasize exceptional teaching and a strong collaboration between our faculty, students, and community. Grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, the College will graduate “men and women in service of others” by providing them with educations that foster critical thinking and ethical inquiry. The College will continue to provide learning communities that reflect the multicultural and complex realities of the larger world. The College will seek to grow to a size that will assure the vitality of its programs while maintaining an unwavering focus on student learning. Its caring, intellectually rigorous faculty will focus not only on its students’ intellectual needs but on cura personalis – care for the whole person. The College looks forward to advancing this future in the context of the larger strategic planning process at the university.

The Thinking Heart: Enhancing Our Jesuit Core for the 21st Century
Strategic planning offers us an occasion to think together about where liberal arts education at Regis University ought to be moving. In his 2013 Fall Faculty Conference Address, Father Kevin Burke, SJ described Regis College as “the thinking heart” of Regis University. Obviously, as the heart of the institution, Regis College promotes the liberal arts, but how does our distinctive Jesuit mission help us to plot a trajectory into our future?

There is good reason to rejoice in the work of current pedagogical efforts in the liberal arts core curriculum of Regis College. On the one hand, the core curriculum hews closely to its traditional mission of helping students by drawing their attention to great questions and fostering in them habits of mind which allow for a greater and freer responsiveness to those questions. The need for such forms of excellence clearly lies where it always has: in the urgency of seeing a complex world as it is. On the other hand, there is strong evidence that Regis has also taken seriously the call for a faith that does justice and has worked to put the promotion of justice at the center of our educational mission. We will continue in our efforts to infuse education at Regis with a prophetic spirit, looking past the world as it is to the world as it might be.
The thinking heart of the College should nurture faculty to student, faculty to faculty, college to college and University to community relationships. They should continue to foster the ethic of collaborative, experiential, and interdisciplinary work we currently pursue. Regis College already enjoys a strong culture of collaboration across these networks and relationships. Our vision for the future should be that such a culture—one inviting to a wide range of faculty teaching and research as well as student learning styles—become the signature of how Regis College faculty, students and community members work together in a spirit of inquiry. Working in concert with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Regis, the College looks to develop our curriculum in the following ways.

**Enablers:**

1) *Learning communities with substantial faculty involvement:* One of the strengths of Regis College is the relationships that our faculty has with students. Learning communities established and taught by Regis College faculty could be means of attracting and retaining students as well as deepening the academic and emotional levels of inquiry and understanding. One example of such a learning community is the En/Route Program. En/Route places students in an environment in which they are learning to serve and serving to learn. By combining community service and reflection with academic coursework, we hope to educate the whole person: hands, heart, and head. Additional learning communities might be focused around enhancements to the First-Year Experience and First-Year Reading programs.

2) *Interdisciplinary Faculty Pods:* In our goal to deepen our integrative coursework we may create “pods” that involve multiple (3-5) faculty members from a variety of disciplines working with a larger numbers of students (60-70) over sustained periods of time (two-three semesters) to address either distributive or integrative core requirements. Pod-like models would be designed to give faculty and students opportunities to engage in meaningful experiential education, rigorous and intentional interdisciplinary inquiry, and sustained examination of academic and community-based questions.

3) *Enhancements to the college experience:* A central component of a vibrant college experience can be seen in opportunities aimed at supplementing the educational experience. Such opportunities might include Genius Grants which provide stipends for undergraduates pursuing educational or research experiences over the summer. Another such enhancement might be expansion of the Inspired Thinkers Series, which had its debut this fall with Robert Gupta’s amazing presentation to the entire university community. Opportunities to collaborate across classes, colleges, and communities on high profile speakers would both energize our integrative commitments and provide life-blood to our thinking heart.
Fostering Collaboration: Developing Integrative Centers and Institutes

In order to deepen the integration of learning necessary for the 21st century college student, we encourage the faculty to develop an academic culture rooted in Ignatian pedagogy, one built upon the experience-reflection-action paradigm. This model could be nurtured through the establishment of Integrative Learning Centers focused around specific issues and areas of study, thus providing collaborative opportunities to revitalize the liberal arts at Regis University across all colleges. These centers would enhance our curriculum by providing real-world “laboratory” space for students, faculty, and the community to work on pressing needs in society.

The Center for the Study of War Experience is a good model to build upon. In addition to bringing in a significant endowment, the center has ties to the core curriculum in the form of our Stories from Wartime class within our Search for Meaning integrative theme. One of the most popular of our integrative offerings, the course brings students face-to-face with frontline soldiers and airmen, war widows, and peace activists in meaningful conversation. The Center has also facilitated nationally acclaimed research projects and enabled strong connections between students, faculty, and community. The following initiatives emerge as particularly strong candidates for inclusion in the plan to grow our endowment.

Enablers:

1) Center for Economic, Environmental and Social Justice: this center could unite disciplines across colleges in interdisciplinary projects. For example, this center might sponsor a project for finance and peace and justice students focused on the fossil free campaign - http://gofossilfree.org/ --or it might get scientists and sociologists involved in crafting assignments shared across courses in the pod model outlined above, or in more conventional class pairings. More on this initiative can be found in the report of the Business Programs Solutions Group.

2) Center for Urban Agriculture: The purpose of the Center for Urban Agriculture will be to introduce students to the ethical, theoretical and pragmatic reasons for producing food and building community food systems as well as the practical skills to collaborate with others in their chosen communities to achieve these goals.

Many opportunities exist for collaborative work across disciplines, using urban agriculture as a lens for analyzing and responding to many of the challenges mentioned above. Institutions of higher education have been slow to examine the possibilities for how education in an ecologically-grounded urban agriculture could contribute significantly to the achievement of outcomes unique to integrated liberal arts pedagogy. Regis University should be the leader in such endeavors.

Appendix 2 details a more developed proposal for the Center for Urban Agriculture. Additional reference to this initiative can be found in the plan for re-development of the Marycrest property from the College for Health Professions.
3) **Center for Southwest Studies or Center for Ignatian Humanisms**: Although each of these centers is still in its formative stages, its charter will be similar to the other enablers imagined in this section—to provide a space to help students make connections between who they are and how they can serve the world in ways that integrate the broad learning of the liberal arts with specialized sets of skills. Rooted in our rich Jesuit heritage, each of these centers would foster inquiry into areas where Regis University might pioneer fresh ideas and distinctive approaches to timeless problems.

**Cultivating Diversity: Creating a New Learning Community for the 21st Century**

Our ability to recruit and retain a diverse student population in Regis College is crucial to the vision we articulate above. Although this is a multi-faceted challenge—one involving institutional commitments in terms of financial resources, support services, and an unwavering dedication to student learning and success—it is one that our Jesuit heritage calls insistently upon us to meet in the next decade. The revitalization of the liberal arts at Regis University inspires us to think specifically about Hispanic Serving Institutions and First Generation Students.

Regis has already experienced a change in demographics. In 2002, the Regis University Latino population was approximately 8.4 percent. Since then the university has seen a nearly 60 percent increase in its Latino student enrollments, most significantly with the current 20.4 percent in Regis College. How prepared are we to accommodate those changes? Moreover, how do we not accommodate these changes based on the mission of our university and the fundamental principles of Jesuit education?

Not only are colleges and universities experiencing a shift in racial and ethnic demographics, they are also witnessing a growing demographic in college attendance of first-generation students. According to a study by the Department of Education, almost half of the college student population is made up of first-generation students (Lynch 2013). Of those students, nearly half of all Latino students are considered first generation while forty-five percent of Black, 32 percent of Asian American, and 28 percent of White students are considered to be first generation. Clearly, these students can come from any racial and ethnic group and may come from families who speak languages other than English; furthermore, these students may come from cultures outside of the United States and may be accustomed to different educational systems. The following initiatives also emerge as strong candidates for inclusion in our plan to grow our endowment.

**Enablers:**

1. **Becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)** through full membership in the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU): Given the predicted demographic growth and the rate of change at Regis, it is possible that we could become an HIS (designated by having 25 percent of total enrollment as Hispanic) by 2020. This full membership will allow access to federal and private funding and would make Regis University eligible for a variety of programs such as pre-collegiate programs, leadership programs for students, faculty research programs, undergraduate and graduate research internship and fellowship programs – all of these geared to assist and build the university’s ability to
better serve the Latino student population. This designation will also prove helpful in the continued recruitment of students and faculty of color. In addition, the designation opens up a development opportunity for the largely untapped philanthropy of the Hispanic community.

While the challenges of being designated an official Hispanic Serving Institution are considerable and may not be immediately realizable, the university should work at achieving the spirit of such a designation.

**Assisting and Retaining First-Generation Students:** There is a growing body of research on generating student success (Kuh, *et al.*, 2010) that affirms the strategies necessary to align institutional efforts with student success. Regis College has been ahead of this trend with its commitment to these students through . . .

- Our partnerships with Arrupe Jesuit High School, the Porter-Billups Leadership, and the *Sociology of College Success* course to engage with these students early in their high school experiences, to connect them with enhanced scholarship opportunities, and to prepare them for college admissions and success;
- Our college transition courses that assist the students in their first year of adjusting to college life and that engage them with faculty who can intervene early if they experience challenges;
- Our mentoring program that connects them with faculty and staff who were themselves first-generation learners.

Our initial success with these students drives us to develop further support efforts for them and to recommend to the University that it promote sustainable financial aid strategies to ensure their access to this Jesuit educational experience.

**Innovative New Program Development and Enhancement for the 21st Century**

Mark Roche, in his highly acclaimed book *Why Choose the Liberal Arts*, observes: “In an age that is increasingly focused on competitiveness, credentialism, and getting ahead in the work-a-day world, the most effective defense of a liberal arts education surely emphasizes its practical value. Fortunately, the record is clear.” Employers consider a liberal arts education an incredible asset, as statistically demonstrated in *It Take More than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success* (Hart Research Associates, April 2013). As a Jesuit institution, our particular challenge is to help students see their call to serve the world and recognize the convergence of a person’s gifts and the world’s needs. This convergence of skills and talents in relationship with real needs in the world is the source of our program initiatives. A student may find his or her deep gladness meeting the needs of the world through art, business, medicine, social work, research, teaching and many other things. One challenge of Jesuit liberal arts traditions of education is to help students make those connections between who they are and how they can serve the world in ways that integrate the broad learning of the liberal arts with specialized sets of skills.
We look to new program development and enhancement in Regis College to extend the liberal arts through integrative and transformative learning opportunities that prepare students to meet the challenges of the world. These new programs expand opportunities for students to develop skills and competencies that enable them to translate their experiences from educational contexts to the various contexts of their professional, personal, civic, and spiritual lives.

**Enablers:**

1) **New and Enhanced Programs:**

New programs and program enhancements within Regis College should strengthen and build on the liberal arts mission of the college. This is true especially in cases where the new program might be seen in other contexts as a separate kind of education that does not really need or benefit from the liberal arts, such as business or social work. Retaining an integrative liberal arts culture across new programming meaningfully distinguishes Regis’ offerings from many other regional programs in these fields.

New and enhanced programs in RC will be characterized by:

   a. **A liberal arts context and culture** that elevates in all study the understanding of human experiences and how they play out in the ways we live

   b. **Interdisciplinary and integrative** curricula and pedagogies.

   c. **Commitment to Jesuit mission** values and priorities, including the priority of supporting students in their quest to live the *magis* in the context of sustainable, meaningful careers and lives

   d. **Translatability:** Providing mechanisms that empower students to accurately and confidently communicate with others the knowledge, skills, and values they gained through their Regis College experience

   e. Connection to *community* and an elevation of the *common good* as discerned in community

Programs under consideration include:

   a. Global Studies/Development Practice
   b. Graphic Design
   c. Sustainable Business
   d. Social Work (BS/MSW)
   e. Music Production
   f. Environmental Science/Studies (BA/BS/MS)
   g. Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing
   h. Continuing education programs for local church and Catholic school professionals.
   i. Applied Brewing Certificate
   j. Irish Studies

2) **Holistic Vocational Development:**

Holistic vocation programs in the mode of the Lilly Programs for Theological Exploration of Vocation (http://www.ptev.org) ask students to think deeply about their passions, talents, skills, and interests, and how they have developed over the course of their Regis education. They would also ask students to identify the specific ways that they want to serve the world and would help students integrate these aspects of their education by articulating
their own sense of purpose and capabilities. These kinds of programs, operating across areas of study and varieties of student experiences, are distinct from the important services in career development. Implementing this kind of programming would support RC’s commitment to integrative education in ways that help students to not only put together a life a service and meaning, but to do so with a clarity and conviction that communicates the power of their educational experiences in the various professional and personal contexts of their post-college lives.

3) e-Portfolio – documenting the value of our students’ education:

Given that employers have long valued the benefits of the liberal arts, it seems counter intuitive that this same form of education is under attack in the popular media. This gap between the value of the liberal arts as seen by students and parents, and that recognized by employers – the very people who will hire our graduates - contributes to this disconnect. To counter that, we must provide our students with a vehicle to document and communicate their knowledge and skills gained. One way to do this is through e-Portfolio.

When considering a reflective assessment practice such as the implementation of e-Portfolios, we must consider aspects that could lead to the success or failure of such a project. The Regis College e-Portfolio Assessment Group has carefully studied the development and implementation of a valid e-Portfolio system. Such a system must be intuitive and easy to use; it must be as “technologically hip” as are our students, yet practical and functional for faculty; it must seamlessly integrate with our student information system, allowing students to easily document components of their education that lead to specific knowledge and skills developed within our core curriculum and majors. The system must be accessible and reliable through Regis.edu; secure, and portable when students graduate. Most importantly, on-going faculty and student training on the technological uses of e-Portfolios along with training in self-reflection and self-assessment are essential. There needs to be reliable and valid data available to translate a student’s years of reflective practice at Regis into a format that is attractive to future employers and vocations.

Additional references to these initiatives can be found in the report of the Experiential Learning Solution Group.

Financial Benefits:

The strategy outlined above would position Regis College as a “destination” college: one known for its innovative Jesuit liberal arts education for the 21st century. Given attention from our University Brand Marketing and newly re-formed admissions unit, we have an opportunity to put forth a distinctive “product” in a location conducive to integrative education. The initiatives above provide an authentic connection to the world in which our students live. Centers would provide numerous major departments a distinctive competitive advantage, allowing faculty to lend their expertise and passion to improving society and appealing to donors who see the value in this type of linkage between academia and the real world. Being designated a Hispanic Service Institution with innovative first generation student programs does the same. Our holistic vocation development
and new programs that stem from that will meet needs yet untapped. All these initiatives will add to additional enrollments, additional alumni, additional endowments and gifts to Regis University.

The revenue potential of these efforts is undeniable. We need only to look inward to recognize this. Our Center for the Study of War Experience has generated an endowment of $500,000 and produces a yearly revenue stream. The Keck Foundation’s grant in support of our integrative education totals over $250,000. If we look outward, the potential is even greater. Notre Dame de Namur University received 10 million in infrastructure grants as a result of their efforts to become a Hispanic serving institution. The University of Loyola, Maryland, received a gift of 1.5 million to create a Peace & Justice Studies program. Whether we are funding endowed chairs to inspire faculty and students, or conducting collaborative faculty development with our Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, or funding student and faculty immersion trips to inner city Denver or El Salvador, these are the types of initiatives that make up the DNA of Regis and can be heralded to our various constituencies. Benefactors of the university will share in the pride of the revitalized liberal arts curriculum at Regis University and be excited by the opportunity to invest in fostering it.

**Why Now?**

Now is the time to be bold. Now is the time to act. Why? Because there is a need, and because Regis is poised to meet that need. Because we are in the right place, at the right time, with the right ideas. As Fr. Nicolas suggests, we should take on works where no others are willing, go beyond what has already been achieved, and break settled boundaries (Nicolas, 2009). Our core education, focused on experiencing life, reflecting on it, and taking action, is at the heart of our distinctive strategy to revitalize the liberal arts.

The landscape of higher education has been “trending” towards the calls for more specialized education, the so-called “crisis in the humanities”, and the framing of educations’ value solely in monetary terms. Some of this is a popular culture bandwagon appeal caused in part by the media echo chamber. However, students and families do want to see the financial outcome of their investment in higher education, a financial realism in an era of economic insecurity. Regis University has never been about following a trend, but about transforming education and society, which we must continue to do with an awareness of the changing climate.

The research is clear that the majority of employers endorse the concept of a liberal arts education. In fact, most would recommend this type of education to their own child or young person they know. They endorse a blended model of liberal and applied thinking, one that “involves students in active, effortful work-practices including, collaborative problem-solving, internships, research, senior projects, and community engagements.” (Hart Research Associates, April 2013) They realize that technical skills become obsolete quickly, but those nourished by the richly humanizing force of Jesuit liberal arts are lasting. Hart research

The revitalized Jesuit liberal arts education at Regis College envisioned above will put our graduates on the road to success; it will prepare our graduates for the many careers in which they find themselves; it will provide them with lives full of meaning; it will allow them to reach their full
potential as individuals, family members, community members, and as men and women in service of others.
APPENDIX 1

Regis College
The Thinking Heart of Jesuit Education

Talking Points for the Value of the Liberal Arts

From *It Takes More Than A Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success*. Hart Research Associates, April 2013. Survey conducted in January 2013 among 318 employers whose organizations have at least 25 employees. Respondents are executives at private sector and nonprofit organizations.

93% say that “a demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems” is more important than a candidate’s undergraduate major.

More than 75% want more emphasis on critical thinking, complex problem-solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge in real-world settings.

80% say that regardless of major, all college students should acquire broad knowledge in the liberal arts and sciences.

Over 90% say that those they hire should demonstrate ethical judgment and integrity; intercultural skills, and the capacity for new learning.

Educational practices helpful to employers include: conduct research and use evidence-based analysis; gain in-depth knowledge in the major and analytic, problem solving, and communication skills; apply their learning to real-world settings.

Most employers agree that having both field-specific knowledge and skills and a broad range of skills and knowledge is most important for long-term career success.

Employers endorse a blended model of liberal and applied learning. Blended is not classroom based and online, it involves students in active, effortful work-practices including collaborative problem-solving, internships, research, senior projects, and community engagements. Employers consistently rank outcomes and practices that involve application of skills over acquisition of discrete bodies of knowledge.

Majority of employers endorse the concept of a liberal arts education.

Three in four would recommend the concept of a liberal education to their own child or young person they know.
Employers place more weight on experience, particularly internships and employment during school vs. academic credentials including GPA and college major when evaluating a recent graduate for employment.

An internship is the single most important credential for recent college graduates to have on their resume.

When it comes to the skills most needed by employers, job candidates are lacking most in written and oral communication skills, adaptability and managing multiple priorities, and making decisions and problem solving.

The need for recent graduates to adapt and to manage multiple priorities is greatest among employers from the Business, Health, Media/Communications, and Science/Technology segments.

Only 19% of employers look for specific majors while the majority 78% will consider any major.

Employers rank online learning as the least desirable type of education, right below technical and for-profit education. The gap is the greatest for programs in science and technology.

Colleges and Universities should seek to break down the false dichotomy of liberal arts and career development – they are intrinsically linked.

Colleges and Universities should support rich experiential opportunities that truly integrate the liberal arts with real-world leaning such as communication skills and problem-solving skills. These are in high demand, seen as lacking, and seen as a colleges’ responsibility to teach.

Colleges should go beyond a vision of majors articulating to specific careers. While a major matters, it is not a determinant of career entry.
APPENDIX 2

Regis College
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Strategic Visioning Proposal: Center for Urban Agriculture
Dr. Damien J. Thompson
November 4, 2013

Initiative Description:
Urban agriculture has, in the past decade, been promoted as a remedy to issues of global, national and local importance ranging from environmental degradation, poverty, food insecurity and food injustice to employment and economic development. Consumers, as well as policy makers at the federal and local levels have taken notice of burgeoning urban food movements that have taken hold in cities across the United States.

While faculty and students at many non-land grant four year colleges and universities are engaged in research, teaching and advocacy that touch on issues central to urban agriculture, educational institutions and liberal arts colleges, in particular, have been slow to examine ways to fully engage with urban agriculture. However, many opportunities exist for collaborative work across disciplines, using urban agriculture as a lens for analyzing and responding to many of the challenges mentioned above. Institutions of higher education have been slow to examine the possibilities for how education in an ecologically-grounded urban agriculture could contribute significantly to the achievement of outcomes unique to integrated liberal arts pedagogy.

I propose that Regis University develop a Center for Urban Agriculture. The purpose of this Center will be to introduce students to the ethical, theoretical and pragmatic reasons for producing food and building community food systems as well as the practical skills to collaborate with others in their chosen communities to achieve these goals. The Center for Urban Agriculture would operate in the spirit of education for a “major in homecoming” as The Land Institute’s Wes Jackson articulates it. Education for homecoming with the goal, as Stan Rowe states, of “understanding what it means to be human in a living world...we should be asking how the things we construct...connect us to the enveloping Ecosphere...Do they love the ground on which they stand?” Rowe’s emphasis on relationship to and through place resonates deeply with the history of Jesuit and Liberal Arts education. Rowe calls for education to attend to: “the process whereby organisms get established in place, making themselves partners with air, soil, water and other organisms.”

Relation to history of liberal arts/Jesuit education:
Establishing deep roots in particular places has been a key component of the Jesuit educational endeavor since the early 19th century. Following the end of their suppression Jesuit schools
“inserted Jesuits into their surrounding culture to a degree unknown to earlier religious orders.”

In more contemporary times Decree Four of the Society’s Thirty Fourth General Congregation in 1995 states:

> It is part of our Jesuit tradition to be involved in the transformation of every human culture, as human beings begin to reshape their patterns of social relations, their cultural inheritance, their intellectual projects, their critical perspectives on religion, truth, and morality, their whole scientific and technological understanding of themselves and the world in which we live. We commit ourselves to accompany people, in different contexts, as they and their culture make difficult transitions.

The intent to frame the foundation of Jesuit education within particular cultures and places also gains support from the emphasis of classical liberal arts understanding that students necessarily should be folded into locality. This intent also highlights the necessity to engage students not in questions of culture as given, but in questions of culture as dynamic and given the challenges of the twenty-first century and beyond, in need of transformation. In fact students will have the skills to understand the context and experience of engaging in the life of a place reflect on how those local particularities should inform their actions, and how to evaluate those actions based on local, national and global considerations. The result is informed citizens who understand that their own lives are intimately interconnected with both human and ecological systems and that solutions to contemporary challenges will depend on strengthening these relationships.

The Center for Urban Agriculture would place Regis in the vanguard of colleges and universities that are recognizing the importance of agriculture, and especially a reimagined agriculture, to our communities and the ecologies within which they exist. We will be providing students with skills centered on problem solving, design and food production that will last them a lifetime in addition to putting them firmly onto a track of engaged leadership and a lifetime of learning. Most valuable to the university will be the graduates who truly embody Jesuit values and provide a template for how these values can be framed, articulated and most importantly lived in the 21st century.

**Trends in support:**

Urban agriculture and “local food” are terms that have gained traction in the consciousness of activists, academics, community organizers, students and policy makers. This traction has led to a number of features in the popular media, municipalities are examining changes to zoning, tax, land tenure and other laws as well as convening Sustainable Food Policy Councils and task forces to investigate the efficacy of more integrated bioregional food systems.

On March 19, 2013 Pope Francis, in his formal installation Mass at the Vatican, issued a call “to all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life,” to be “protectors

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1 A History Rooted In Mission: Jesuit Higher Education in the United States, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, 8 (2010) [online]
http://www.ajcunet.edu/Assets/Publications/File/A%20History%20Rooted%20in%20Mission.pdf
of God’s plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment.” This is the distinctive approach and ethos that the Center for Urban Agriculture will embody.

In 2011 the U.S. Department of Agriculture granted researchers from NYU and Penn State University $453,000 over three years to engage in a research project titled “The State of Urban Farming in the U.S: Enhancing the Viability of Small and Medium Sized Commercial Urban Farms.” This study will investigate the growth of urban agriculture through interviews with stakeholders in 15 cities. The USDA projects that the agricultural, food and renewable resources sectors of the U.S. economy will generate an estimated 54,400 annual job openings in food, renewable energy and environmental work by 2015. These occupations include but are not limited to: Crop Management Consultant, Land Use Manager, Precision Agriculture Specialist, Organic Agriculture Entrepreneur, Renewable Energy Crop Producer, Restoration Forester, Seed Producer, Market Gardener/Garden or Farm Manager/Farmer, Sustainable Agriculture Consultant, Fresh Produce Manager/Buyer/ Farmer’s Market Manager, Researcher/Instructor/Extension Agent/Farm Advisor, Chef/Restaurateur, Sustainable Landscape Design/Nursery Sales/Garden Center

In a recent report, the Association of American Colleges and Universities identified Essential Learning Outcomes for a liberal education that will prepare students for twenty-first century challenges. Of those twelve essential learning outcomes the Center for Urban Agriculture will be able to emphasize the following: knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving, civic knowledge and engagement-local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, foundations and skills for lifelong learning.

I am currently collaborating with faculty from Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions along with developers of Aria Denver on a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation that will assist in the transformation of the former Marycrest convent site at 52nd and Federal into a community that incorporates sustainability into all aspects of the project from appliances to urban agriculture. At present, Regis University would stand to benefit significantly from a one acre production farm less than a 15 minute walk from our campus. The partnership between Regis and Aria would eliminate what is normally the greatest single hurdle to agriculture programs in urban settings: land. Even if our grant application is not successful there will be some form of urban agriculture on the site and the developers are excited about the possibilities of working in partnership with Regis and are in full support of this proposal.

The Center for Urban Agriculture presents Regis University with a significant opportunity. We have the opportunity to step into the vanguard as a leader among four year universities, liberal arts colleges and our Jesuit peer institutions as we embrace our current and future challenges by responding to them creatively. Erosion of invaluable topsoil, pollution of surface and groundwater, loss of biodiversity, loss of cultural diversity, the erosion of rural and urban communities and the diminished health of our children demand that we take responsibility not only for our actions but also for the manner in which we choose to respond, the part of ourselves we choose to respond with. These challenges require that we respond from a place of wholeness and thus the future of education will demand exactly the type of boundary blurring interdisciplinary course of inquiry
that speaks to not only the how, but also the why, of food production with a keen understanding that agriculture and culture are linked in ways that necessitate not only knowledge of plant typologies but also of community organizing, conflict management and systems based approaches to problem solving.
APPENDIX 3

Regis College
The Thinking Heart of Jesuit Education

REPORT TO THE W. M. KECK FOUNDATION FROM
REGIS UNIVERSITY

Report Date: July 2013
Current Reporting Period: From: July 1, 2012 To: June 30, 2013

GRANTEE
Regis University

INSTITUTION NAME:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION OR TITLE:
Imbedding Integrative Learning in the Curriculum: Building and Sustaining a Faculty Development Model

PROJECT LEADER (Name, title, phone, email):
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PROJECT TIME PERIOD: From: July 1, 2011 To: June 30, 2014

1. NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Write a brief summary of the most significant accomplishments of the project to date within the context of the proposed goals and timeline. Please do not repeat last year’s progress, but relate new progress to the aims outlined in the original application.):

As we outlined in the Project Overview form of the proposal and reported last year, we have 5 major goals for this project. Although each goal will be achieved incrementally over the three years of the grant, our second year (2012-13) has sustained the momentum we began with last year (2011-12), especially as accomplishments are mapped against the project goals. Specifically, the following summary addresses significant accomplishments this year in terms of each of the major goals:

1) Prepare 48 new or revised courses, 12 in each of the four themes. Once again we had a very successful year in terms of meeting this outcome. In the first year of the grant (reported last year where we had a slightly higher number of participants) faculty developed or revised 22 courses across all four themes (Global Environmental Awareness, Diversity and Cultural Tradition, Justice and the Common Good, and the Search for Meaning). This year, our cohort again included applications across all four themes, and the faculty participants will be designing and revising 17 courses over the summer for presentation to the Dean and their colleagues on August 20th and 21st. By theme, the distribution of courses being prepared is: Environment, 3 (total to date, 9); Justice, 3 (total, 10); Diversity, 5 (total, 10); and Meaning, 6 (total, 10). This cohort of participants also included a couple of faculty who did the one-week pilot version of the Integrative Teaching Institute (ITI) while it was still in the proposal phase, and we invited them back for the full two weeks based upon the strength of their applications. As it turns out, each of them are actually
working on two courses concurrently, one that will be taught next fall, and the other next spring. In sum, after two years of the grant, we are clearly on track to achieve the development or significant revision of 48 courses, having already developed 39 in the first two years. We are pleased with the balance across the various themes, as well as by the richness of the courses being developed. As one Institute participant noted: —I wish I could take all of these courses: they sound so engaging!

A quick word about the balance between newly developed and revised courses is again in order this year. A review of course proposals and the development process yields 10 newly imagined courses and 7 substantial revisions for this batch of participants. But we’d like to echo what we shared about the re-design process last year as well. If we consider a course on the Harlem Renaissance that is being —re-designed, for example, and this testimony from the faculty member, we can better understand what’s at stake even in a course that has been taught in a previous incarnation. —What I have learned in the ITI has changed, for the better, not just how I teach all my classes (not those simply in the Integrative Core), but how I see myself as a teacher...[I left the [ITI] thinking of how radically my teaching would change if I followed this new way of thinking. For a moment, it felt daunting—it means completely altering my design and approach to every class I teach—and then it felt energizing. I’m doing this. So when a faculty member completely alters his approach to a class, and re-imagines his role as a teacher in response to this new approach, is the course —re-designed or entirely new? Technically, we’ll continue to count the course as revised, but in terms of key integrative learning outcomes—and perhaps in terms of transformative learning more generally—the course now presents a new learning experience for both the faculty and students. Finally, we’re grateful for the enthusiastic response from faculty in terms of the ITI and we already have a waiting list for potential applicants for our final year of the grant (AY 2013-14).

2) Explore and develop innovative pedagogies that foster genuine integration. This is a goal that the ITI has sought to foster since we began piloting it three years ago, and we remain committed to exposing faculty to a robust balance of practical, yet innovative, pedagogies throughout the two weeks of the Institute. We deliberately added two sessions this year that explored various high impact practices (the first was an experiential learning presentation moderated by our Service Learning staff that included community partners, student responses, and detailed application strategies from two veteran faculty members; the second built on a presentation done by our Writing Program Director and our new Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at a regional conference that focused on inquiry-based learning and the ways in which critical thinking and writing can enhance such learning) with an eye toward providing practical pedagogical tools for faculty as they develop their courses. Although one of the external experts (John Bean from Seattle University) that we invited to come as a presenter was unable to work us into his busy schedule, we did use his book (Engaging Ideas: The Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom) for these sessions to good effect. As one participant noted, —I appreciated Bean’s pragmatism, while another lauded the —chance to read Bean’s Engaging Ideas as an outstanding addition to the syllabus.

Based on the strong positive feedback from last year’s ITI, we again invited Rolf Enger, Director of Education at the Air Force Academy, to conduct a morning-long workshop on —Backwards Course
Develop an assessment model for integrative courses by building on the efforts of participation in the 2010 Wabash Study. We’re now in the second year of a comprehensive assessment of the Integrative Core, and our feedback from both students and faculty continues to affirm that the type of integrative learning underway in these courses is indeed transformative for students. Initially triggered by our participation in the Wabash Study, the Regis College efforts to assess integrative education have moved well beyond the charter of that study over the past year. Under the leadership of our Associate Dean for Planning, Research, & Assessment, John Hickey, the assessment model for the Integrative Core has matured into a comprehensive process. With additional methods added this year, the combination of assessments (outlined in detail below) provides us a rich trove of information from which to continue to develop our integrative core curriculum. The assessments give faculty information on whether the goals of the integrative core are being realized by students and offer direct feedback that can be used to strengthen the course in subsequent offerings. As a reminder, we expect faculty to offer each course they develop for the integrative core at least three times, but we expect the course to evolve with each subsequent offering. Finally, assessment results are incorporated into our integrative core course proposal protocols and thus guide the approval process for future courses. Specifically, we are using the following elements to assess the Integrative Core:
Focus Groups – At the end of each semester, students from like-themed courses are invited for a discussion of their experience. While not statistically representative of the broader student population, these groups offer insights into how students felt the goals of the course were achieved.

End-of-semester Integrative Core Supplemental Student Evaluation – Students are asked to complete a supplemental end-of-semester evaluation in addition to the standard course evaluation forms. These surveys ask students to reflect on three goals of our integrative core – course theme, integration, and broader course impact. These supplemental evaluations, along with the faculty self-evaluation, triangulate well with focus group findings in providing a balanced account of how the classes were perceived.

Faculty Self-Evaluation – Faculty are provided an end-of-semester self-evaluation to help them reflect on the alignment of course design, activities, and assignments as they work together to achieve the goals of the course.

Standard end-of-semester course evaluation – The traditional end-of-semester course evaluations are a good tool for faculty to compare responses from their integrative core offering to their other offerings. Because we ask faculty to experiment with new teaching strategies and methods in the Integrative Core courses, these evaluations are viewed with that in mind.

Document Analysis – Faculty submit a sample of student work on a substantial paper or project from their integrative core courses. The student work is evaluated side by side with the theme protocols, course syllabi, and assignment to assess if the goals of the theme and course are evident across all artifacts.

Feedback Loop — Faculty and students are provided with results of assessment activities several times throughout the academic year. Specifically,

ITI Presentation – Assessment results are provided on the opening day of the summer Integrated Teaching Institute. Participants at the institute are developing new integrated core courses over the course of the summer allowing for integration of assessment results directly into course development.

Each semester, theme coordinators provide faculty with results from the document analysis in one-on-one meetings. These sessions are focused directly on improvement of course syllabus and assignments that are more closely linked to the goals of the integrated core.

Faculty receive a summary of the focus group report for the theme as well as results from the supplemental end-of-semester evaluations.

Students are provided with assessment results through a presentation to the student government and a summary article in the student newspaper.

4) Develop a sustainable structure for dialogue among faculty providing time and resources to collaborate on course design. At its heart, the ITI is all about working closely with colleagues, joining in dialogue with local and national experts on integrative education, and participating in cross-disciplinary collegial conversation about teaching and learning. Our faculty remains hungry for such dialogue, and the ITI participants continue to highlight this aspect of the Institute as a core strength. One participant this year noted on the final day that the —Institute was really great....I can think of no better way to spend eight days than in such meaningful conversation with my colleagues. Another suggests that —the benefits of the Institute are not tied to being exposed to the content. Much more comes from spending time with 17 colleagues, all with their own stories and gifts to share. The sense that this time together is a —gift resonates with many
participants, although another participant confessed that at times it was the kind of gift that kept her awake at night pondering the possibilities of really helping students explore deeply held beliefs and attitudes, sometimes to affirm them and at others to challenge them. Often, the conversation we had with our colleagues did similar work, affirming some assumptions about teaching and learning, but often challenging us to think more fully—more integratively—about such experiences.

Our participants relished the community they built over two weeks, and they look forward to future collaborations with colleagues, both in the course development process for the integrative core, as well as more broadly in their professional lives. One of our junior colleagues put her expectations this way: —The real lasting thing about the ITI, at least at this stage, is now being able to move through Carroll Hall [one of our largest faculty office buildings] and have most of the cohort there, to move around campus and know that there are others who are thinking about improving their teaching according to the possibilities presented in the ITI. It’s fantastic to be part of a community thinking this hard and this radically about their teaching. In summary, then, we continue to believe that the ITI provides a powerful foundation for an ongoing dialogue about teaching and learning, about integrative education, about course design. One added benefit to our cohort this year was including Ken Sagendorf, the new Director of our Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning as an Institute participant. Ken proposed a course under our diversity theme, and participated throughout the two weeks as a vibrant member of the ITI community. Given his larger role in the institution, and the programming activities he will promote in terms of an ongoing dialogue with faculty about teaching and learning, his participation intersects directly with our desire to have a sustainable structure for these conversations in the years ahead.

In short, we’re pleased with our very positive trajectory on this goal. But sometimes a picture is worth many words, so we’ll leave this section of the report with one: —The picture I will remember clearly about these last eight days was being in a room with my colleagues; colleagues who are bright, thoughtful, and love their jobs. We get very few opportunities throughout the year to share with each other our common mission and goals of teaching at Regis. This was a very humbling and rewarding experience for me.

5) Build a culture of integration and collaboration among the faculty. The sustainable structure for dialogue that we highlight via goal #4 above speaks in many ways to the larger cultural shift we see underway in Regis College concerning integration and collaboration. Perhaps the most telling statistic we can report at this point is that over half of all College faculty have now participated in either one of the pilot ITI sessions or in the two full two-week versions that the grant has sponsored. With 51 of our faculty immersed in the conversation, energized by the possibilities, actively collaborating with each other on course design, activities, and assignments, we believe we are well on our way to actually shifting the culture of teaching and learning within the College. We anticipate accepting another 15 participants next summer, bringing our total reach via the ITI to approximately two-thirds of our faculty, which constitutes a critical mass in many ways. Of the faculty who actually teach in the integrative core (perhaps 75% of our total faculty), we will have reached the vast majority (over 85%) by the time the grant ends. Given competing research commitments and other summer obligations, this is likely the highest number we could attain in any case. Yet in order to broaden the reach—and therefore the impact—of the Institute, we have also been collaborating with our Faculty Development Committee on the annual
Fall Faculty Conference. Last fall (year two of the grant), we invited two national experts on higher education and high impact practices (Richard Keeling and Richard Hersh) to address the entire faculty, thereby extending the conversations we’ve had with faculty during our summer sessions to the College at large. A day of powerful dialogue focused on rethinking American higher education ensued, with an intentional focus on integrative teaching and learning as part of that rethinking central in several break-out sessions that afternoon. Although planning for this fall’s conference (October, 2013) is still underway, the Committee has adopted Civic Engagement as the organizing theme for it, and they are partnering with the ITI directors to incorporate the rich resources integrative teaching and learning can bring to this vital dimension of higher education.

In summary, our participants call the ITI —a kind of conversion experience— and it’s one that comes with a shared understanding, enriched vocabulary, and more powerful assumptions about education. One participant notes: “It has been my experience that once you are exposed to and use innovative and integrative methods in class, you cannot go back. So if you are touched to reassess your core courses, you will be moved to reassess your entire pedagogy in a way that I think promotes growth. Interestingly, such epiphanies aren’t limited to novice faculty. One of our participants this year has been teaching at Regis for almost 40 years, and he shares this insight: —What goes on in this Institute can, should, and dare I say MUST bear fruit in all our teaching if we are to carry forward the humanizing goal of higher education. And we do indeed see the fruits in the many ways in which faculty are incorporating lessons from the ITI into their courses, both in the integrative core and in other offerings. To cite but one example, two recent ITI graduates have collaborated on a joint introduction to philosophy and religious studies, a paired course, where the same cohort of students is together for two adjacent class periods and they get core credit for both Philosophical Explorations and Religion and the Human Quest (two of our foundational distributive core requirements). The initial feedback from students about the shared enterprise and their learning has been overwhelmingly positive, and we see this as an example of the growing culture of collaboration and integration that is permeating the College. In short, the evidence we have to date, evidence affirmed by both the feedback from ITI participants as well as by the extensive assessment efforts we have directed to our integrative core, certainly suggests that the Institute is indeed bearing the fruit of integration and collaboration, and thereby accomplishing vital cultural change within the College.