The University of Scranton

Scranton, Pennsylvania

Design for Self-Study

Prepared for the

Middle States Commission on Higher Education

May 2017

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I. Introduction

A private, coeducational university located in northeastern Pennsylvania, The University of Scranton is situated on a 58-acre urban campus, located in the heart of the city of Scranton, a community of 75,000 within the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton metropolitan area of approximately 560,000. The University is, by tradition, choice, and heartfelt commitment, a Catholic and Jesuit University,[1] one of the 28 colleges and universities which make up the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) consortium. In 2013, the University of Scranton proudly celebrated its 125th anniversary.

U.S. News & World Report's "Best Colleges" has ranked the University of Scranton among the 10 top master's universities in the North for 23 consecutive years; in the 2017 edition, Scranton placed sixth and was also recognized for "Service Learning" as well as one of the "Best Colleges for Veterans." In the last 10 years, Scranton students earned five Truman Scholarships, 11 Goldwater Scholarships and a Mitchell Scholarship. Since 2009, 34 University of Scranton students have been awarded Fulbright scholarships.

Academic Structure, Enrollment, and Programs

The University is categorized as a Master's (Larger Programs) institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. Although primarily serving undergraduate students, the University offers a robust graduate and professional degree portfolio, including two professional practice doctoral degrees. The University is comprised of three colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), the Kania School of Management (KSOM), and the Panuska College of Professional Studies (PCPS). In addition to the three academic colleges, the Dean of the Library and Information Fluency provides leadership for the faculty and programming of the Weinberg Memorial Library (WML), and oversight for the University's Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). The University frames its approach to student learning in terms of its commitment to *cura personalis*, a Jesuit way of proceeding that emphasizes the care and development of each individual. Many learning outcomes reflect various attributes of learning and experience emphasized in the Jesuit educational tradition.

Applications and acceptances continue to rise steadily. The University's total enrollment reached 5,380 students in fall 2016. Of this number, 3,867 are undergraduate students, the vast majority of whom are full-time. 1,513 graduate students enrolled in fall 2016; of these, 670 are on-campus and 843 are enrolled in online programs. The majority of Scranton students (62%) are residential. The University enrolled 123 international students in the fall of 2016.

The CAS is the largest college, enrolling 1,540 degree-seeking students in 2016. 1,336 students enrolled through the PCPS, and 877 through the KSOM. The undergraduate retention rate as of

[1] See: http://www.scranton.edu/about/jesuit-tradition/index.shtml .

fall 2016 is 87%. The University historically has not had large transfer student populations; in fall 2016, 55 total undergraduate transfers were enrolled.

Racial diversity amongst Scranton students has increased over the past several years, rising to 17% in fall 2016. 48% of these students are Hispanic or Latino. By contrast, since the University's 2008 Self-Study, the minority population among the full-time faculty has decreased from about 10% to 6%.

There are 299 full-time and 146 part-time faculty at the University as of fall 2016. The student to faculty ratio is 12.8 to 1. Among the full-time faculty, 70% were tenured in fall 2016. 32% were at the rank of full professor, 33% associate, 18% assistant, and 2% lecturer. 15% are faculty specialists. A collective bargaining unit for full-time faculty, the Faculty Affairs Council (FAC), which is a local chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), was organized in 1969. The union was accredited by the NLRB in 1974.

There are over 60 programs[2] of study in 26 departments at the University; the University offers graduate degrees and several types of certification in 29 subject areas. Programs with the highest undergraduate enrollment include nursing, exercise science, occupational therapy, biology, accounting, finance, and business administration. Of these programs, many hold programmatic accreditations: in the PCPS, six out of seven departments have programs with specialized accreditation, and KSOM is accredited by the AACSB. In the CAS, the Department of Chemistry adheres to the standards established by the American Chemical Society, and the undergraduate programs in Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, and Computer Engineering are accredited by ABET. In February 2016, the University's Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice & Criminology received certification from the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

Administrative Structure

The University administration includes the Office of the President and five major divisions headed by vice presidents or vice provosts (Academic Affairs, Finance & Administration, Institutional Advancement, Student Formation and Campus Life, and Enrollment Management & External Affairs). In addition, the positions of General Counsel and University Secretary and the Chief of Staff to the President report directly to the President. All of these positions, with the addition of the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Chief Information Officer, and Executive Director of the Jesuit Center serve on the President's Cabinet. The University's Dean of Students reports to the Vice Provost for Student Formation and Campus Life. In fall 2016, a total of 611 full-time staff and administrators were employed at the University, 33 of these in administrative roles. There are 48 part-time staff employed.

The University's Board of Trustees currently consists of 29 members (23 male, six female, 23 alumni, five members of religious communities, 18 holders of advanced or professional

2 This figure includes all programs of study available, including those that do not lead to degree.

degrees). Each member of the Board serves for a three-year term with a limit of two successive terms. The Faculty Senate, Staff Senate and Student Senate each play a role in the shared governance of the institution.

The Mission, Vision, and Goals of The University

As stated in the University's Mission, The University of Scranton is a "Catholic and Jesuit university animated by the spiritual vision and the tradition of excellence characteristic of the Society of Jesus and those who share in its way of proceeding, a community dedicated to the freedom of inquiry and personal development fundamental to the growth in wisdom and integrity of all who share in its life." Our vision is to "provide a superior, transformational learning experience, preparing students who, in the words of Jesuit founder St. Ignatius Loyola, will '*set the world on fire'."* Together, our Mission and Vision statements are the foundation for both institutional goals and our goals for student learning.

Our new strategic plan, "The Scranton Plan 2015-2020: An Engaged, Integrated, Global Student Experience*,"* articulates the University's institutional goals[3]. This plan guides the University's on-going efforts to improve the education and formation of students in the Catholic, Jesuit educational tradition through learning experiences that are transformative and reflective. Integrated teaching and learning opportunities across disciplines and programs aim to emphasize understanding, discernment and action in a global context. The plan includes several goals related to assessment and continuous improvement, in particular, calling members of the University to "embrace an integrated approach to the improvement of student learning and formation." A specific objective of the plan is the successful implementation of a "Comprehensive Plan for the Assessment of Student Learning." The "Comprehensive Plan" describes the University's approach to student learning assessment, including the means by which institutional and program learning outcomes, including those for general education, are assessed[4]. To guide implementation of "The Scranton Plan," the University community has adopted seven strategic planning principles to articulate concrete and clear directions for the continuous improvement of administrative structures and processes. Several of the planning principles respond to economic pressures facing higher education; a final principle addresses and affirms our understanding of ourselves as a community: "Preserve and strengthen the University's sense of community as one of our most valued assets and a core differentiating characteristic, emphasizing genuine concern for one another, transparency, communication, engagement, equity, and shared governance in the conduct of University affairs."

Engagement with our community, region, and the world through educational opportunities and service has been and remains an important way in which we pursue our mission. This engagement takes place in many forms, such as faculty research, community-based learning initiatives, and the service contributions of our students, faculty, and staff. In recognition of

[3] See: www.scranton.edu/strategicplan.
[4] See: www.scranton.edu/assessment.

these achievements, the University was one of just 652 colleges in the nation named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for 2015**,** the highest federal recognition colleges and universities can receive for their commitment to volunteering, service learning and civic engagement. The University is among just 361 colleges in the nation, and one of only 24 colleges in Pennsylvania, to be named to the Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement in 2015, renewing a designation it first earned in 2007. Scranton is one of only 100 colleges and universities in the nation to be named to Templeton Foundation's Honor Roll of Character-Building Colleges.

Important Changes & Context Since the Last Self-Study

The University's June 2013 Periodic Review Report (PRR) provided an update on University matters since the 2008 Middle States Self-Study, including substantial progress toward meeting recommendations for improvement made at that time. Despite gains in a number of areas, the peer review of the PRR led to the issuance of a warning from the Middle States commission stemming from deficiencies in the University's approach to student learning assessment. The University successfully addressed these deficiencies through its subsequent Monitoring Reports, creating a new Office of Educational Assessment in 2014, operationalizing the Office, the Comprehensive Plan, and related processes in the years since.

The University has seen other significant developments since the last Self-Study, some involving our physical plant, some organizational, and still others with regard to planning:

In recent years, the University has invested more than $240 million in campus improvements, either completed or under way. Rev. Scott R. Pilarz, S.J., and Montrone Halls opened in 2011 to house nearly 400 upperclass students and a fitness center. The new Loyola Science Center was completed in two phases in 2011 and 2012. Edward R. Leahy Jr. Hall, home to the departments of physical therapy, occupational therapy and exercise science, was dedicated in September 2015. In March 2017, the University broke ground on an 11-acre athletics campus in South Scranton, a $14 million dollar project that will expand our athletics facilities and provide recreational space for the local community.

In 2013, led by the Finance Division, the University began a Comprehensive Resource Review process. Guided by a broad-based steering committee, this strategic financial planning exercise has helped the University set and meet cost-saving and revenue growth goals to ensure our financial strength so that a Scranton education remains affordable.

Following an organizational study in 2013, several administrative units reporting to the Office of President were realigned under other administrative areas. The divisions of Student Formation and Campus Life and Enrollment Management & External Affairs were realigned to report to the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The offices of Planning and Institutional Research also now report to the Office of the Provost. The division of Human Resources now reports to the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, as does Information Technology.

In 2015 the University ceased the separate operations of its College of Graduate and Continuing Education, assimilating management for graduate academic programs within existing college and departmental structures, with support provided by Graduate and Continuing Student Services staff. In spring 2016, the University then merged the remaining separate Graduate and Continuing Student Services unit with the Office of the Registrar to form a new Office of the Registrar and Academic Services.

In May 2015, the University's Board of Trustees approved the University's new strategic plan. The plan and the University's Planning & Institutional Effectiveness model guide continuous improvement across all University divisions, departments, and programs.

The University is led by its 25th President, Rev. Kevin P. Quinn, S.J. Late last summer, Fr. Quinn announced that the 2016-2017 academic year would be his last at the University. A search for the 26th President, open both to Jesuit and lay candidates, led to the selection of the Rev. Scott R. Pilarz, S.J., as Scranton's 26th president. Fr. Pilarz served as the University's 24th President from 2003 to 2011. Rev. Herbert Keller, S.J. H'06, Rector of the Scranton Jesuit Community, will serve as Interim President from June 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018. In the meantime, the Board of Trustees has appointed Fr. Pilarz to serve as a trustee, effective June 1, 2017.

In spring 2017, the University will begin a process of Mission Priority *Examen,* a Self-Study and peer review process required of all Jesuit institutions. Launched by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities consortium (AJCU) in 2016 following a pilot period, the *Examen* engages institutions in reflecting on their mission and how it permeates their work as Catholic, Jesuit institutions. The *Examen* is a tool for self-improvement, and given its timing, will serve as an important resource for our Middle States Self-Study, particularly Standard 1.

Preliminary Self-Study Planning

Preparation for the Self-Study began in the spring of 2016, when the president convened a Self-Study Coordinating Committee, including Joseph Dreisbach, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs; Edward Steinmetz, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration; Patricia Harrington, Interim Associate Provost; and Kathryn Yerkes, Assistant Vice Provost for Planning and Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer. The committee serves to assure administrative support for the full Self-Study process. Together with the president, this team prepared preliminary timetables for the Self-Study, a proposed structure for the Steering Committee and Working Groups, and identified potential candidates for Steering Committee co-chairs. In the fall of 2016, Rebecca Beal, Professor and Chair, English & Theatre and Julie Schumacher Cohen, Director of Community and Government Relations, were appointed by the President to serve as Steering Committee co-chairs.

The co-chairs attended the Middle States Self-Study Institute in Philadelphia in November 2016. Their recommendations and insights following the Institute were used throughout the fall 2016 semester as they consulted with the Coordinating Committee to identify organizational needs for the Self-Study, solidify the Steering Committee and Working Group structure, select and

recruit Steering Committee members, and address the technological needs of the Self-Study. The Steering Committee co-chairs held individual meetings with the University's deans and vice presidents, conducted presentations to campus groups including the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, the Student Senate, and the President's Council, and they met with potential Steering Committee members. In addition to the Steering Committee, the co-chairs formed two *ad hoc* committees to advise and support the Steering Committee. The first of these, an *ad hoc* Data & Technology Committee, constructed a dedicated section in the University's my.Scranton Web portal to give the Steering Committee access to a document repository where committee members collect, share and archive relevant materials, including the Documentation Roadmap. An *ad hoc* Communications Committee developed strategies for informing and engaging the University community about the Self-Study throughout the process.

Preparation of the Self-Study Design

The Steering Committee met during December and January to draft the Self-Study Design, including the formulation of three research questions. The first asks all Working Groups to analyze the degree to which the University meets the Middle States Standard, including the criteria for each. Standard-specific questions, developed by Working Group co-chairs in consultation with the Steering Committee co-chairs and the Assistant Vice Provost for Planning/ALO, were also developed so that individual groups could study their Standards in the context of the University's strategic plan goals, planning principles, and other key initiatives. To help Steering Committee members develop these questions, the Steering Committee co-chairs consulted with key campus leaders and committees, including the University Planning Committee and University Governance Council, and the full Steering Committee had the opportunity to hear from the University's Provost and Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration about administrative and academic planning priorities, key initiatives and emerging opportunities, and connections of these to the Strategic Plan and Strategic Financial Planning processes.

The Steering Committee co-chairs also consulted with the Working Group co-chairs to develop a question to be addressed by every Working Group. To develop this question, the Steering Committee reviewed the seven standard-specific research questions, identifying key themes and topic areas. These include: the University's Catholic and Jesuit mission; the strategic plan, including planning principles and direct connections to each Standard (as demonstrated in the mapping grid included as Appendix 1); our shared vision of providing a transformational education; and the importance of strengthening community. The Steering Committee also discussed other important areas for exploration, including collaboration and communication leading towards effective decision-making. We believe that this common question will provide threads linking parts of the final Self-Study Report.

In addition, co-chairs assigned to individual Standards consulted with the Steering Committee co-chairs regarding the membership of the Working Groups. A full-day January 2017 Workshop enabled the Steering Committee 1) to review and comment on several components of the

Design draft, including the desired Self-Study outcomes; 2) to learn about the SharePoint technology being used for the document repository during the Self-Study; and 3) to begin identifying the particular strategies for Ignatian discernment which we plan to incorporate into the Self-Study process.

Throughout this process, email communications from the President have apprised members of the University community about the major developments in the Self-Study process. Other channels of communication have been opened as well. A web page has been developed (www.scranton.edu/selfstudy) as a source where University members can find news and supporting documents pertaining to the Self-Study. An email account (selfstudy@scranton.edu) managed by the Accreditation Liaison Officer has also been created to provide a vehicle for the Campus community to send comments, questions, and feedback during the process. Additional channels for the campus-wide distribution of the draft design for Self-Study, drafts of additional reports, and documentation will be created as the Self-Study process unfolds.

Going Forward

In keeping with our own institutional priorities and as suggested in the Middle States Guide to Self-Study, our process will play an integral role in The University of Scranton's continuous improvement efforts. Thus, as we gather evidence about what we have assessed or evaluated, how we have used those assessments to improve our programs, services, and operations, and what we have learned about ourselves as an institution, the Steering Committee, in cooperation with the Coordinating Committee, will share that information with campus leaders, committees, representative bodies, department and program leaders, and other groups already in place on campus so that information and analysis gathered in the Self-Study can directly inform decision making and ongoing improvement undertaken across campus. We expect that the results of this Self-Study, which ends as the University begins to plan its next strategic plan, will both contribute to implementation of our current strategic plan and provide important information as we begin to develop our next strategic plan.

II. Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

The University community shares the following desired outcomes for the Self-Study process:

1. We will demonstrate that The University of Scranton meets the MSCHE accreditation standards through a Self-Study grounded in evidence, marked by analysis of the evidence, and tempered by reflection about how we might most effectively learn from our conclusions to foster ongoing improvement within the spirit of our Catholic and Jesuit Mission.

2. Within the framework provided by the Middle States Self-Study, we will examine key initiatives associated with our Mission and our strategic plan, *The University of Scranton Plan: An Engaged, Integrated, Global Student Experience,* including its Planning Principles, especially identifying challenges and opportunities in the University's readiness to implement such initiatives. In this context, we will suggest how we might capitalize on efforts taking place across the institution that advance our Mission and goals.

3. While we know that the conclusions of our Self-Study Report will contribute to the University's continuing progress, we believe that we can use the process of the Self-Study for institutional renewal, as well. Thus, we will make use of the Self-Study process itself as an opportunity to strengthen our campus community as we involve members from across the institution in an inclusive and transparent self-examination that adopts strategies for discernment derived from our Ignatian traditions, foundation and identity.

III. Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and the Working Groups

The University of Scranton's Middle States Self-Study Report Steering Committee is made up of 19 faculty and staff and administrative members, including: two Co-chairs; 14 members who co-chair Working Groups, each examining one of the seven Standards for Accreditation; the University's Accreditation Liaison Officer who chairs the Working Group on Compliance; and two *ad hoc* members representing the University's Office of Educational Assessment and the Office of Institutional Research. The Steering Committee is assisted in its work by an administrative assistant, and by two committees, the Data & Technology Committee and the Communications Committee, with a student intern serving on the Communications Committee.

Members of the Steering Committee were invited to serve by the president. These individuals were identified by the Steering Committee co-chairs after extensive consultation with the Coordinating Committee. Working Groups are being assembled through a collaborative process involving the Steering Committee, its co-chairs, and the Coordinating Committee. To identify potential members, the Steering Committee co-chairs consulted with campus governing bodies (the Student Senate, the Staff Senate, the Faculty Senate) to identify volunteers, and with deans, administrators, and the Coordinating Committee for additional recommendations. The co-chairs recommended potential candidates to each set of Standard Co-chairs. These, in turn, are recruiting potential members for their particular groups. Five of the Working Groups are including student members identified for the work by the Student Senate, and through other recommendations.

Other University members with special expertise needed by one or more Working Groups will be identified in the course of the Self-Study and listed as "Resource People" in the "Middle States Self-Study Documentation Roadmap" (hereafter called "Documentation Roadmap.")

Members of the Steering Committee, Working Groups, and *ad hoc* committees represent the campus community, including faculty, administrators, staff, and students. The Jesuit Center will provide resources to help the Steering Committee and Working Groups better integrate Ignatian discernment into their deliberations. Contributors to the work of the Self-Study, including the Coordinating Committee, Steering Committee, clerical staff, supporting *ad hoc* committees, and Working Groups are listed below. Members of the Board of Trustees will be engaged in the Self-Study process in several ways; they will review core documents (including the Design), contribute content and insights to those Requirements and Standards which address the functions of the Board, and review and approve the draft Self-Study Report at various stages. It is expected that Board members will be particularly involved in helping to address the content and recommendations of Standards 1 (Mission and Goals) and 7 (Governance, Leadership & Administration).

In addition, the Steering Committee will maintain regular connections with standing university committees, including the University Planning Committee and the University Governance

Council, to ensure a strong link between the Self-Study and ongoing university planning and deliberative processes.

Middle States Self-Study Coordinating Committee

Joseph H. Dreisbach, Ph.D., Interim Provost, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Patricia Harrington, Ed.D., R.N., Interim Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Edward J. Steinmetz Jr., C.P.A., M.B.A., Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration

Kathryn A. Yerkes, M.S., M.A., Assistant Vice Provost for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer

Middle States Self-Study Steering Committee

The members of the Steering Committee include two chairs, one selected from the full-time faculty, and one from the staff and administration; co-chairs for Working Groups aligned with each of the Middle States Standards, again with one co-chair for each standard from the full-time faculty and one from the staff and administration; *ad hoc* members representing the Office of Educational Assessment and the Office of Institutional Research. The University's Accreditation Liaison Officer also serves as a member and leads the Working Group for the compliance portion of the Self-Study.

Steering Committee Co-Chairs:

Rebecca S. Beal, Ph.D., A.M., Professor, English, Chair of the Department of English & Theatre through January 2017

Julie Schumacher Cohen, M.P.A., Director of Community and Government Relations

Working Group 1 (Standard 1: Mission and Goals):

Matthew Meyer, Ph.D. M.A., Dr.Phil., M.T.S., Associate Professor, Philosophy

Lauren Scott Rivera, J.D., M.E., Associate Vice Provost for Student Formation & Campus Life and Dean of Students

Working Group 2 (Standard 2: Ethics and Integrity):

Maria J. Oreshkina, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor, Education, Director of Graduate Programs in Education

Patrick Donohue, B.S., Assistant Vice President for Budget & Financial Planning

Working Group 3 (Standard 3: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience):

David A. Rusak, Ph.D., Professor, Chemistry

Jean Lenville, M.S., Assistant Dean & Acting Associate Dean, Weinberg Memorial Library

Working Group 4 (Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience):

Robyn Lawrence, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor, Accounting, Director of the MBA Program

Helen M. Wolf, Ph.D., M.S.Ed., M.A., Executive Director for Campus Ministries

Working Group 5 (Standard 5: Educational Effectiveness Assessment):
Steven J. Szydlowski, D.H.A., M.H.A., M.B.A., Assistant Professor, Health Administration & Human Resources, Director of the Graduate Health Administration Program
Eugeniu Grigorescu, M.S., Director, Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence

Working Group 6 (Standard 6: Planning, Resources & Institutional Improvement):
Paul T. Cutrufello, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor, Exercise Science and Sport, Chair of the Department of Exercise Science and Sport
Jennifer LaPorta, J.D., Executive Director, Office of Equity and Diversity

Working Group 7 (Standard 7: Governance, Leadership & Administration):
Jean Wahl Harris, Ph.D., M.A., Professor, Political Science
Murli Rajan, Ph.D., M.Comm., M.B.A., Associate Dean, Kania School of Management

Working Group 8 (Compliance Report):
Kathryn A. Yerkes, M.S., M.A., Assistant Vice Provost for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer

Ex officio Members:
Educational Assessment:
Mary Jane K. DiMattio, Ph.D., R.N., Associate Professor, Nursing, Director of the Office of Educational Assessment

Institutional Research Data and Information:
Robyn Dickinson, M.Ed., Director, Office of Institutional Research
Valerie A. Taylor, M.P.H., Senior Research Analyst, Office of Institutional Research

Clerical Support: Linda Scherer, Administrative Assistant, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Middle States Self-Study *Ad hoc* Committees

Data & Technology Committee:
Susan Bowen, M.A., Chief Information Officer
Robyn Dickinson, M.Ed., Director, Office of Institutional Research
Jean Lenville, M.S., Assistant Dean & Acting Associate Dean, Weinberg Memorial Library
Valerie A. Taylor, M.P.H., Senior Research Analyst, Office of Institutional Research
Richard Walsh, M.B.A., Assistant Provost for Operations, Provost Administration

Communications Committee:
Laura C. Richards, M.S., A.B., University Editor, Public Relations
Stacy M. Smulowitz, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Communication
John J. Sailors, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Management, Marketing & Entrepreneurship
Samantha Yagozinski, English major / Entrepreneurship minor, Student Intern

Working Group Members

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

Co-chairs: Lawrence Kennedy, Ph.D., Professor, History (through January 2017). Matthew Meyer, Ph.D., M.A., Dr.Phil., M.T.S., Associate Professor, Philosophy; Lauren Scott Rivera, J.D., M.E., Associate Vice Provost for Student Formation & Campus Life and Dean of Students

Members: Rev. Patrick Rogers, S.J., Ph.D., M.Ph., M.Div., Executive Director of the Jesuit Center; Marian Farrell, Ph.D., M.S.N., P.M.H.-C.N.S., B.C., C.R.N.P., C.S., Professor, Nursing; Yamile Silva Gualteros, Ph.D., M.A., Associate Professor, World Languages and Cultures and Associate Faculty; Program Director, Latin American Studies; Melissa Ann Wright, J.D., Faculty Specialist in Business Law, Director of Entrepreneurship Program; M. Jayne Lucas, A.B.D., M.A., Director of Liturgy and Liturgical Music; Melissa Starace, Ed.D., M.Ed., Associate Vice President for Annual Fund, Alumni Relations & Operations; Brian Kilner, Environmental Science major**,** Student Representative.

Standard 2: Ethics and Integrity

Co-chairs: Maria J. Oreshkina, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor, Education, Director of Graduate Programs in Education; Patrick Donohue, B.S., Assistant Vice President for Budget & Financial Planning

Members: Rev. Ronald H. McKinney, S.J., Ph.D., Professor, Philosophy; Paul Datti, Ph.D., C.R.C., H.S.-B.C.P., Associate Professor, Counseling and Human Services; Director, Counselor Training Center; Christos Pargianas, Ph.D., M.A., M.A., Assistant Professor, Economics/Finance; Bradley J. Troy, M.S., Director of Residence Life; Mary Kay Aston, M.S., Assistant Vice Provost for Admissions and Enrollment; Stanley M. Zygmunt. M.B.A., Director of News and Media Relations.

Standard 3: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Co-chairs: David A. Rusak, Ph.D., Professor, Chemistry; Jean Lenville, M.S., Assistant Dean & Acting Associate Dean, Weinberg Memorial Library

Members: Susan Carol Méndez, Ph.D., MA, Associate Professor, English; Charles R. Pinches, Ph.D., M.A., Professor, Theology and Religious Studies; Kingsley Gnanendran, Ph.D., MEng, Professor, Operations & Information Management; Lori Bruch, Ed.D., M.S., M.Ed, Associate Professor and Chair, Counseling and Human Services; Robert M. Knight Jr., M.S, Director of Academic Advising, College of Arts and Sciences; Sara A. Laga, International Studies Major, Student Representative.

Standard 4: Support of the Student Experience

Co-chairs: Robyn Lawrence, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor, Accounting, Director of the MBA Program; Helen M. Wolf, Ph.D., M.S.Ed., M.A., Executive Director for Campus Ministries

Members: Melissa Afshari, Assistant Director, Graduate Admissions; Shannon Murphy Fennie, M.S., Director, Center for Student Engagement; Anthony P. Ferzola, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Mathematics; Frank Gilmartin, M.S., Assistant Director and Information Resources Specialist, Center for Career Development; Catherine P. Lovecchio, Ph.D.,

M.S.N., Professor, Nursing; David Martin, M.Ed., Director of Athletics; Robert J. Smith, Ph.D., M.S., Professor, Biology; Anthony Faso, Occupational Therapy major, Student Representative.

Standard 5: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Co-chairs: Steven J. Szydlowski, D.H.A., M.H.A., M.B.A., Assistant Professor of Health Administration & Human Resources, Director of the Graduate Health Administration Program; Eugeniu Grigorescu, M.S., Director, Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence

Members: Nicholas P. Truncale, M.S., Faculty Specialist, Physics/Electrical Engineering; David Salerno, Ph.D., M.B.A., Associate Professor, Accounting; Faculty Member, CAS, TBA; Christina M. Whitney, M.S., Director, Center for Career Development; Jeffrey L. Kegolis, Ph.D., M.S., Director of Student Conduct and Assessment. Student member TBD.

Standard 6: Planning, Resources & Institutional Improvement

Co-chairs: Paul T. Cutrufello, Ph.D., M.S., Associate Professor, Exercise Science & Sport, Chair of the Department of Exercise Science and Sport; Jennifer LaPorta, J.D., Executive Director, Office of Equity and Diversity

Members: Narda Tafuri, M.L.S., M.A., Associate Professor, Library; Rose Sebastianelli, Ph.D., Professor, Operations & Information Management; Robert Waldeck, Ph.D., Professor, Associate Professor, Biology; Mark Murphy, B.S. EE, Director of Sustainability; Jason Wimmer, M.S., Manager Academic & Media Services; Adrian Mihalko, C.P.A, M.A.C.C., Controller; BethAnn McCartney, B.S., Benefits Manager.

Standard 7: Governance, Leadership & Administration

Co-chairs: Jean Wahl Harris, Ph.D., M.A., Professor, Political Science; Murli Rajan, Ph.D., M.Comm., M.B.A., Associate Dean, Kania School of Management

Members: Harry R. Dammer, Ph.D., M.S., Professor, Sociology / Criminal Justice; Ryan Sheehan, J.D., M.A., Assistant Director, Jesuit Center; Kim Subasic, Ph.D., M.S., R.N., Associate Professor, Nursing; Lori Nidoh, M.B.A., Director of Marketing Communication; Patricia L. Tetreault, M.B.A., S.P.H.R., S.H.R.M.S.C.P., Associate Vice President for Human Resources; Juliana Melara, Psychology major, Student Representative.

Working Group 8: Compliance Report

Chair: Kathryn Yerkes, M.S., M.A., Assistant Vice Provost for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer

Members: Julie Ferguson, Registrar; William R. Burke, M.B.A., Director of Financial Aid; Robert Farrell, J.D., General Counsel; Robyn Dickinson, M.Ed., Director, Institutional Research; Anitra McShea, Ph.D., M.A., Vice Provost, Student Formation & Campus Life

IV. Charges to the Working Groups

The Self-Study Working Groups share the following general charge:

> **Each Working Group will produce a report on a single, assigned Standard. The report, an evidence-based and analytic study, highlighted by examples of best practices and identifying areas for improvement, will demonstrate that the University is meeting the Standard assigned to the Working Group and show that the University is engaged in ongoing improvement aligned with its mission.**

To fulfill this charge, each Working Group will first address, in the context of its Standard, two research questions common to all Working Groups.

Research Questions Common to All Standards:

> **1) With regard to your Standard, how does the University meet the Standards for Accreditation listed in *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation*, including all attributes and activities identified in the Standard's criteria?**
>
> **2) Consider, in light of your Standard, in what ways The University of Scranton is facilitating intentional communication, broad collaboration and/or meaningful reflection with relation to the programs, activities, or initiatives? How could the University improve its efforts in ways that align with our Catholic and Jesuit Mission, particularly for building or strengthening the campus community?**

Each group will also address one research question specific to the Standard. Because each of the following research questions aligns with aspects of the University's strategic plan, *The University of Scranton Plan: An Engaged, Integrated, Global Student Experience*, it will be useful for all groups to review the document "University of Scranton Strategic Plan Goals, Planning Principles, and College and Divisional Support Plans Mapped to Middle States Standards for Accreditation" (Appendix 1).

Research Questions Particular to Each Standard:

Standard I: Mission and Goals

> "How does the University, through academic and co-curricular activities, demonstrate its Catholic and Jesuit commitment to the poor, marginalized, and those seeking justice and how can it do so even more effectively?"

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity

> “How does The University of Scranton, including through its Institutional Planning Principles, exercise the ethic of care for the whole person to support transformative experiences of its members?”

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

> "The strategic plan calls for increased opportunities for experiential learning, including global engagement, for our students. How are we already addressing this aim, and how could we do so more effectively and efficiently?"

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience

> "How effectively are the University's student support policies, procedures and activities integrated and implemented in a collaborative way across campus divisions to support our goals for a transformational educational experience?"

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment

> "Our strategic plan challenges us to 'invite and inspire students to reflect upon and assess their own learning and development.' To what degree are we currently meeting this challenge? What obstacles impede our progress, and how do we overcome them?"

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

> "How has the University demonstrated responsible stewardship in prioritizing and allocating the necessary resources to continue to provide an affordable, accessible and transformative educational experience to students?"

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration

> "How well do the University's policies, procedures and practices contribute to inclusive, transparent, and responsive governance, leadership, and administration and a more engaged and committed University community?"

Working Group VIII: Compliance

> "Is the University in compliance with the accreditation-relevant federal regulations articulated in this cycle of Self-Study compliance review?"

Each of the seven standards-based working groups will develop, on the basis of its report, a short list of prioritized recommendations for institutional renewal and future improvement. The Working Groups will utilize documentation that has been gathered through the Documentation Roadmap (included as an appendix). This document was initially compiled by the University's Institutional Research Office and shared more broadly with the University's President's Council (including the President's Cabinet, Deans, and other key administrators) for their input. The Roadmap will continue to be refined throughout the Self-Study process.

In the process of completing its report, each Working Group will be responsible to meet deadlines established for all working groups; to share the drafts of its report with the Steering Committee and campus community at defined points in the Self-Study process; to meet with and discuss the report with the campus community in at least one town-hall style meeting; and

to consider and, where appropriate, incorporate responses to its draft into subsequent versions.

The practice of Ignatian discernment, integrated through workshops and ongoing involvement by the University's Jesuit Center, will be implemented in the Self-Study process both at the Steering Committee and Working Group levels. This discernment model will be used to motivate a spirit of reflection and collaboration. We intend that this will help group members and the Steering Committee as a whole to build skill sets that they can use to identify, work through, and finalize their recommendations. Ignatian discernment is rooted in gratitude for one's institution and colleagues; it proceeds by integrating affective and imaginative faculties into a process of deliberation, and it welcomes all participants to identify and express areas of concern (desolation) and comfort or agreement (consolation), with the goal of reaching consensus.

The following timeline is to be used for working group reporting, spring 2017 through spring 2018:

Spring 2017

- Working Group co-chairs meet with designated resource persons, including representatives from the Office of Institutional Research, review the Documentation Roadmap and consider additional evidence needed in preparation for the fall research process.

Summer 2017

- Working Group co-chairs continue preparation work; they prepare and present an overview presentation on their Standard for their Working Group members at an August workshop; they consider how to organize their Working Group process, including timing of meetings; assigning roles and responsibilities; integrating Ignatian discernment (utilizing campus resources).

September to December 2017

- Working Groups meet regularly. This phase of the work will be dedicated to research and analysis. Thus they will review and analyze evidence pertaining to their Standard, in the process identifying any gaps in evidence pertaining to the Criteria or research questions associated with their Standards. Working Group members may conduct interviews, both with those resource persons identified in the Self-Study Design and with other key campus individuals. Working Group chairs will consult with Steering Committee co-chairs throughout; a progress report outlining major findings, describing key themes of their analysis, and alluding to major points of reference, will be due for review by the Steering Committee co-chairs by December 1.

December 2017 to January 2018

- Working Groups continue to review evidence and assess information provided. Working Group chairs prepare draft report, **due January 31.**

February 2018

- Revision and feedback process in consultation with Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

March 2018

- Working Groups address feedback from Steering Committee Co-Chairs and incorporate any additional research. **Revised drafts of Working Group Reports due March 31 or sooner.**

April 2018

- Campus Review of the Revised Drafts. Working Group co-chairs and members participate in town hall forums on each Standard's working group reports; Working Group co-chairs incorporate feedback.

May 2018

- Individual Working Groups meet with the Steering Committee co-chairs to provide feedback.
- **Final Drafts due May 31 or sooner**.

The eighth working group will begin the process of compiling necessary Compliance Report documentation and resources during the fall of 2017. During the following winter and spring semesters, the Compliance Working Group chair will vet a draft of the compliance report with members of the administration and key committees to identify information and/or policy gaps. A final version of this report, along with required documentation, will be prepared during the summer of 2018 for review by the President's Cabinet in the early fall. As several of the *Requirements for Affiliation* must be addressed via the Working Groups of particular standards, the chair of the Compliance Working Group will coordinate with respective group chairs to ensure their own draft reports capture the necessary information to verify compliance.

V. Organization of Self-Study Report

The University of Scranton's Self-Study will be organized with three major divisions:

- An Introduction describing The University of Scranton, its Mission and current strategic plan, *The University of Scranton Plan: An Engaged, Integrated, Global Student Experience*. The introduction will also describe the aims and scope of the Self-Study, including an analysis of major issues facing the University at this stage of its development.

- The Body of the Report will be organized in seven parts, following the order of the Seven Standards for Accreditation, and thus beginning with Mission and ending with Governance. Each part will open with a paragraph-long précis, followed by the body of the report, and ending with a list of recommendations and suggestions in light of the Standard addressed.

- The Conclusion of the Report will combine and prioritize the recommendations, and draw connections between the issues facing the University identified in the Introduction, the recommendations of the Report's Body, and suggest how the University can continue to engage in on-going improvement and institutional renewal.

- Per Middle States guidelines, the required Compliance Report will be submitted under separate cover during the fall prior to the 2019 Self-Study peer visit.

VI. Editorial Style and Format of All Reports

Working Groups Reports will submit Individual reports as Word Documents using the following style and format.

- The title page will include the complete Standard Name and number (as a Roman numeral), the names of the Working Group co-chairs, the names of the Working Group members, and the date of the report's submission.
- Headers after the first page will list the Standard Name (abbreviated) and its number (Roman numeral), as well as page number. A footer on the first page will include the page number, centered.
- The body of the Working Group report will provide documentation of evidence and examples using in-text citation (MLA style, available under the "References tab" in Word).
- The report will end with a section of Recommendations (fewer than five) as well as Suggestions for ongoing institutional improvement.
- The Working Group report will be accompanied by a bibliography in MLA style (available under the "References tab" -> "Bibliography" -> Works Cited in Word).
- The report will feature 1" margins, will use Calibri font, 12 pt. type, and will be double-spaced.

The final Self-Study Report will follow the same general editorial style and format guidelines as those of the Working Group reports with the following additions/changes:

- The title page will follow the format for Middle States Self-Study Reports (e.g., submission by the University President and Accreditation Liaison Officer, etc.)
- The Report will include a Table of Contents referring to major sections and subsections.
- Additional pages will indicate the names, academic titles, and institutional positions of those involved in the work of the Self-Study.
- Individual sections of the Report will open on new pages, with titles; footers on these pages will follow the format for Working Group Reports; headers for the rest of the Report will follow the format for Working Group Reports.
- The Report will support evidence and examples with reference to the Documentation Roadmap.
- The Self-Study co-chairs, who will co-author the final report, retain all editorial prerogatives in the style and format of the final Self-Study Report.

VII. Timetable for Self-Study 2016-2019[5]

The University's timeline for Self-Study was established in the spring of 2016, and modified at two key stages: (1) following the co-chairs' attendance at the fall 2016 Self-Study Institute, and (2) following the formation of the Steering Committee, and that group's discussions refining the research, analysis, and reporting period.

Summer 2016

- University receives invitation to attend the fall 2016 MSCHE Self-Study Institute
- University President Appoints Self-Study Co-Chairs

Fall 2016

- Steering Committee Members[6] selected
- Steering Committee Co-chairs attend the Self-Study Institute held to orient institutions beginning the Self-Study process (October 31 – November 1)
- Steering Committee begins Design for Self-Study

Winter 2017

- Self-Study Design Preparation Continues
- Initial Documentation Roadmap (evidence & resources) compiled

Spring 2017

- Working Group Members selected
- Self-Study Design draft is circulated to governing bodies and posted for review by the campus community
- Self-Study Design is finalized and submitted to MSCHE (March 15)
- University hosts MSCHE Staff Liaison preparatory visit (March 31)
- Revised Self-Study Design Submitted, Approved by MSCHE Vice President Liaison (May/June)

Summer 2017

- Working Groups study their MSCHE standard(s), research questions; identify preliminary evidence they wish to consider
- Additional gathering and compilation of evidence and other documentation
- Workshop for Coordinating Committee, Steering Committee, and Working Groups

Fall 2017

Steering Committee, Working Groups review evidence, conduct research, draft preliminary reports

[5] As of March 2017. Timeline may be adjusted as needs arise.

[6] Steering Committee members will serve as chairs of Working Groups for each MSCHE Standard.

Winter (Intersession) 2018

- First Draft Working Group Reports complete (January)
- Co-chairs, Steering Committee review and respond to first draft Working Group reports
- Working Groups continue research, incorporate feedback

Spring 2018

- Steering Committee, Working Groups continue research, prepare revised draft reports
- MSCHE selects and notifies University of the evaluation team chair
- University and team chair select dates for team visit and for the chair's preliminary visit
- Revised Working Group reports complete (March)
- Draft reports shared with University community (April)
- Final Working Group drafts complete (May)

Summer 2018

- Co-Chairs and Steering Committee produces first draft of full Self-Study Report
- MSCHE selects evaluation team members

Fall 2018

- University community reviews draft Self-Study Report (September/October)
- Team Chair makes preliminary visit[7] (October)
- University ALO submits Compliance Report to MSCHE (November)
- President's Cabinet, Board of Trustees Approves Final Self-Study Report (December)

Winter 2019

- Final revisions and editorial changes; Self-Study Report documentation completed (December/January)
- University ALO submits final Self-Study Report to MSCHE, Evaluation Team Chair[8] and Team Members (January)

Spring 2019

- University hosts Evaluation Team visit (March/April)
- University receives and reviews Team report (April/May)
- University writes and submits institutional response to Team report (May)
- Commission reviews Team report, University's response; determines Action (June)

Summer 2019

- University Receives MSCHE Action (July)

[7] Draft report to Visiting Team Chair at least 2 weeks prior to visit.

[8] Draft to Visiting Team Chair at least 6 weeks prior to Team Visit. Target Date: January 31, 2019.

VIII. Profile of the Visiting Evaluation Team

In light of its character as a Catholic, Jesuit institution, the University of Scranton suggests that the Chair of the evaluation team be familiar with the mission and goals of Catholic higher education. Likewise, it would be helpful for the team membership to include one or more faculty members who are familiar with Jesuit educational principles.

It would be especially useful if the team includes some members with experience with similarly-sized institutions, and which incorporate professional schools with a traditional liberal arts curriculum. Also helpful are team members with experience in institutions that have a history of strong, effective shared governance.

Note: As requested, a copy of the University's Institutional peer/competitor list has been provided to the University's MSCHE Vice President Liaison for use in helping to identify members of the visiting team.

IX. Self-Study Communication Plan

The University of Scranton is committed to robust, transparent and inclusive communication throughout its Middle States Self-Study process. The objectives of this communication are to regularly update the campus by conducting outreach to key campus constituencies and, through particular strategies outlined below, to inform and solicit feedback from the entire University community. Moreover, we want the University community to understand how the Middle States Self-Study relates to the University's core mission and strategic plan and encourage faculty, students, staff and University leadership to see the process as an opportunity to collectively reflect and analyze our activities with the goal of ongoing improvement. A primary communication tool will be the University's Self-Study web site (www.scranton.edu/selfstudy). A dedicated email address (selfstudy@scranton.edu) has been created to assist in gathering input and questions from campus constituents.

To meet these goals, the following communications plan has been developed by the Self-Study co-chairs together with an *ad hoc* communication committee comprised of a specialized group of faculty, staff and a student intern, and approved by the Steering Committee and Coordinating Committee as part of the Self-Study Design.

Objectives	**Audiences**	**Methods**	**Timing**	**Office/person Responsible**
ONGOING Communication				
To Provide Regular Updates to University Leadership	President, President's Cabinet, Deans	Regular meetings and communication with Self-Study co-chairs and Coordinating Committee	Throughout the Self-Study and at key points	Steering Committee Co-Chairs; ALO
To Provide Regular Updates to Key Campus Constituencies	Students, Faculty, Staff/Administration, Trustees through representative bodies and key committees	Presentations and Email Updates to Governing Bodies (Presidents' Cabinet, Faculty, Staff and Student Senates and Board of Trustees) and other key committees and groups (President's Council, Faculty Affairs Council, University Planning Committee, University Governance Committee)	Throughout the Self-Study and at key points	Steering Committee Co-Chairs; ALO
To Provide Regular Campus Updates	All Students, Faculty, Staff/Administration, Trustees	An ongoing series of announcements and updates to the campus community through	Throughout the Self-Study and at key points	Steering Committee Co-Chairs; Committee

		campus emails and utilizing a My.Scranton portal tab/channel dedicated to the Middle States Self-Study and My.Scranton announcements, the University's Middle States website, and other campus modes of communication.**		Intern; Steering Committee Members (as ambassadors)
TARGETED Communication				
To Solicit Campus Feedback About the Self-Study Design	A. Key Campus Groups/Committees B. All Students, Faculty, Staff/Administration, Trustees C. Key Campus Groups/Meetings	Email the Self-Study Design Draft to Key Groups asking for their Feedback. Post the Design on My.Scranton portal and announcements and emails to selected groups. Meetings with/presentations to the Board of Trustees, Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates	February/March 2017 March 2017 March 2017	Steering Committee Co-Chairs Steering Committee Co-Chairs Steering Committee Co-Chairs; ALO
To Prepare Campus for Middle States Staff Liaison Visit	All Students, Faculty, Staff/Administration, Trustees	Campus emails, direct invitations to groups and individuals included in meeting agenda; creation of targeted communications, FAQs, campus posters, and interactive student/campus engagement strategies.	March/April 2017	ALO; Steering Committee Co-Chairs; Committee Intern
To Gather Feedback about Working Group Reports	All Students, Faculty, Staff/Administration, Trustees	Circulate the drafts (by Standard) electronically to the campus community through a link and announcements on the My.Scranton portal, followed by targeted meetings with/presentations to the	Spring 2018	Steering Committee Co-Chairs; Steering Committee Members

		core representative groups, and "town hall" forums, including 2-3 guiding questions for discussion.		
To Gather Feedback about the Draft Self-Study	All Students, Faculty, Staff/Administration, Trustees	Circulate the drafts electronically to the campus community through a link and announcements on the My.Scranton portal, followed by targeted meetings with/presentations to the core representative groups, "town hall" forums, and interactive student/campus engagement strategies, including 2-3 guiding questions for discussion.	Fall 2018	Steering Committee Co-Chairs; Communication Committee

Governance Bodies, Stakeholder Groups and Committees who will be engaged throughout key points of the process:

- Governing Bodies: Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Senate (government)
- Stakeholder Groups: President's Council (Group of campus administrators who meet bi-annually), Faculty Affairs Council (faculty union)
- Key Committees: University Planning Committee (comprised of various faculty, staff and students and chaired by the Provost), University Governance Committee (comprised of representatives of the governing bodies and convened by the Provost), Dean's Conferences (includes College Dean with Department Chairs), Academic Chairpersons

A variety of communication channels will be used to share information, progress updates, draft documents and calls for feedback, and other announcements. In addition to the Middle States Self-Study website, these will include tools such as the my.scranton intranet portal, Royal News weekly emails, internal electronic media postings, and mass emails.

X. Appendices

Appendix 1: "University of Scranton Strategic Plan Goals, Planning Principles, and College and Divisional Support Plans Mapped to Middle States Standards for Accreditation"

Appendix 2: "Middle States Self-Study Documentation Roadmap"