

Progress Report to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education Of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Introduction and Institutional Overview

Saint Joseph's College submitted its Interim Report in August 2016. In 2017, CIHE requested a progress report on three areas of concern: the integration of academic programs; the assessment of student learning and the implementation of its multi-year budget and integration of financial and strategic planning. The purpose of this progress report is to address the ways the College has been implementing structures to support new organizational designs, practices, and procedures for assessment of student learning and success and financial viability.

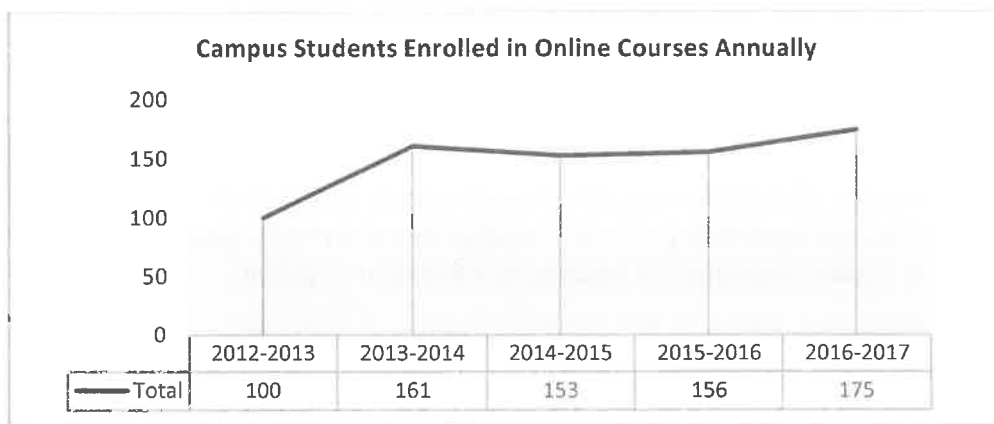
The College continues to address both internal and external challenges and opportunities. While we recognize our shared heritage and past successes, we also work to embrace the future's potential. Saint Joseph's College recently has undergone a number of changes, each addressed in this report. In 2012, Dr. Jim Dlugos assumed the presidency of the college and under his leadership, a new organizational structure was implemented with the goal of integrating and supporting institutional functioning bodies while delineating lines of responsibility. The College has worked to merge two formerly distinct entities financially, organizationally, and academically: on-campus and online academics.

In 2014, the College's Board of Trustees approved a new strategic plan, "Sustaining the Promise: Towards Saint Joseph's College Second Hundred Years." This institutional-level plan provides structure and flexibility as the College grows and evolves, and it includes the following initiatives: Stewarding Our Enrollment; Strengthening the Faculty and Staff Community; Enhancing and Diversifying Our Revenue Streams; Developing a 21st Century Educational Program; Preserving and Extending Our Legacy; and Institutionalizing Our Commitment to Excellence. A new Saint Joseph's College website launched in 2015 reflects the improvements. These and other institutional changes are being made to address the ongoing challenges of the College's tuition dependency and shifting demographics in northern New England, as well as to fully embrace our potential to innovate in the twenty-first century.

Areas of Focus

Integration of Academic Programs

Saint Joseph's College has worked consistently towards integrating infrastructure and student support systems for the on-campus and online academic programs. Notably, a number of indicators demonstrate general acceptance of online offerings as part of the on-campus programs, as well as the capability of our systems (operational and academic) to accommodate the flexibility provided. An increasing number of on-campus faculty teach online, and the number of campus students enrolled in online courses shows a dramatic and consistent increase since the 2012-2013 academic year.



There are several additional indicators of integration. The College recognizes online program directors and online full-time faculty as voting members of the Faculty Senate, thus integrating online and on-campus representation on Standing Committees, task forces, and work groups. Teaching occurs across multiple-modalities, such as hybrid, flipped, and immersion classes. All online and on-campus programs have aligned their general education courses and new course proposal procedures. The College continues to provide integrated student support through the Learning Commons and the Offices of Financial Aid, Registrar, and Enrollment. We have broadened the scope of offices that traditionally have served primarily on-campus students to include students enrolled in online education, such as the Offices of Student Success, Academic Center for Excellence (ACE), Community Based Learning (CBL), Career Development, and Study Away.

Assessment of Student Learning

Saint Joseph's College works diligently to strengthen and vary the means of assessing student-learning outcomes institutionally, programmatically, and course-specific. Below, we offer examples of assessment methods and initiatives that are ongoing, new, or enhanced.

First Year Experience

The First Year Experience (FYE) program continues to be a successful component of student learning and academic support. FYE and its accompanying Peer Mentor program are assessed annually through detailed student reviews and instructor and peer mentor feedback, and continuous improvements are implemented. One adjustment made to the FYE program has been the creation of sections of FYE specifically designed for students with undeclared majors, which incorporate ways to engage students early on and help them identify majors, so that their academic paths will be clearer for them and thus will increase persistence to graduation.

Core Curriculum Outcomes Assessment

The Dean of Undergraduate Studies, in collaboration with department chairs, has been instituting several new practices for the assessment of the Core Curriculum, the Institutional Learning Outcomes, and the Annual Program Reviews. The College has begun using e-portfolios to track the assessment of learning outcomes. Where previously there had been separate Annual Program Reviews for on-campus and online divisions, these have been revised and merged into one form and procedure for all campus programs.

Post-Graduation Assessment

The Gradleaders Outcomes Survey was implemented more intentionally after a lag indicated a weak assessment of SJC graduate placement. The most recent graduating class (2017) had a response rate of about 45% (or 109 respondents of 241). The survey captures post-graduation experiences, primarily focused on employment. For example, 68% of students were employed post-graduation. For graduates planning to continue their education, approximately 47% were entering healthcare fields.

Student Persistence

In fall 2016 a new initiative to support student persistence was started: creation of a Student Intervention Team (SIT). Representatives from Campus Life, Academic Affairs, the Counseling Center, Student Housing, and the Health and Wellness Center meet weekly to address the needs of at-risk students. Additionally, in 2017 the Office of Student Success Initiatives and Financial Aid were brought together under one director to allay the disconnection experienced by students considering leaving the College, often due to financial concerns.

Online Outcomes Assessment

Regarding assessment of outcomes, several examples of recent initiatives in the Online Programs include the following:

- The Master of Health Administration (MHA) and the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs have mapped program objectives and competencies to the College's Institutional Learning Outcomes and are focusing on measuring achievement. Also, part

of the MHA program requires students to self-assess their competencies at the entry into the program and again at the capstone;

- The Interdisciplinary Studies Program (IDS) has begun a student self-reflective component that prompts learners to assess their work in the interdisciplinary program. The results will be monitored and reported in the Annual Program Review, and they will inform changes that need to be made at the course and program levels, such as including and identifying benchmarks, creating a plan for data analysis, exploring key findings, developing recommendations, and identifying periods for implementation.

Institutional Learning Assessment and Planning

The Institutional Outcomes and new Core Curriculum are aligned among online and campus programs. Use of e-portfolio has been implemented in all courses in the Core Curriculum, with initial training on assessing outcomes through e-portfolio. Further, all new course and program proposal forms have been revised to include evidence of alignment to institutional, department, program, and core curriculum outcomes (see Addendum).

A revised Annual Program Review and Planning Report, to be implemented in spring 2018, addresses academic outcomes for both on-campus and online programs through a similar report structure/form and includes persistence and retention plans. For online programs, the report includes an additional emphasis on financial outcomes data, as well as program and resource planning for the next fiscal year. Resource planning generally consists of enrollment projections and faculty compensation based on previous years' performance, as well as new program and course revenue and resource cost projections. The planning process associated with this report includes vetting through the online programs' Management Team. The process will allow for more accurate planning of resources and ongoing evaluation throughout the year, as is appropriate for the dynamic nature of online programs with continuous high enrollments over a twelve-month period, rather than the two semesters associated with most traditional on-campus programs.

Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) Status

The BSIT Program Director resigned in May 2017. Immediately following, the Director of Health Administration Programs, whose area of expertise is Health Information Management, agreed to serve as Interim BSIT Program Director in order to assure a quality education for currently enrolled BSIT students to complete the program successfully.

Unfortunately, this was the second BSIT program director to resign since the program began two years ago. Taking into consideration the lack of consistent program leadership, we decided to pause admissions to the program. It seemed prudent to take this action as we once again assess the viability of the BSIT at our institution. We currently have thirteen students enrolled in information technology courses. Two of these students are enrolled in the full BSIT, with the rest taking courses either in one of our certificate programs or our IT minor. Our Interim Program

Director has maintained strong relationships with faculty in the program, and we are serving the current students as they pursue their courses of study. Admissions to this program will remain paused until we make a decision about whether this program is truly viable at our institution.

Integration of Financial & Strategic Planning

The initial Multi-Year Financial Plan covered the period from FY15 through FY19 and was submitted to the CIHE as part of the Strategic Plan included in the Interim 5-Year Report. We have included another copy with this report. For reasons detailed below, the Multi-Year Financial Plan has not been updated since it was initially developed, although subsets of it have, including a multi-year capital plan.

Assumptions Underlying the Plan's Projections

At the time of the financial plan's development, the College was 93% student revenue dependent; therefore, the clear majority of the revenue projected was to come from student enrollments in our on-campus and online programs.

O programs: During the development of the coming year's budget, enrollment projections for returning students are calculated using the current year's actuals and historical retention data, which are tracked for each class every year. New student enrollment projections are based on several factors, including the number of applications and acceptances, historic yield rates, and the predicted impact of the financial aid/scholarship model being used. The College uses Maguire Associates to assist with financial aid modeling and predictive analytics. For "out years," the enrollment projections are a combination of calculated values for classes that are already enrolled and projections that align with the strategic enrollment targets identified in the Strategic Progress Calendar.

Online programs: Enrollment projections for online students are made at the individual program and degree levels. Until recently, the assumption underlying these projections was "regular growth." However, with increased competition for online learners and other emerging dynamics in this space, that is no longer a viable assumption. As of January 2018, the College is partnering with Collegis, Inc. for admission and recruitment marketing and enrollment support for the online programs. The College also has begun developing retention/persistence and related data at the program and degree levels, so that we will have reliable historical data to use in projecting online enrollments.

Given the evergreen nature of the Strategic Plan and its emphasis on flexibility and accountability, the 5-Year Financial Plan numbers will be updated with each year's actuals and subsequent adjustments made to the out years. The College recognizes that the integrity and long-term viability of this process depends on accurate current year and historical data, realistic forecasting, and the presence of a team in the area of finance and administration to monitor and update the plan.

The College experienced a number of recent changes in finance and administration personnel that have complicated our ability to meet our own expectations in the area of multi-year financial modeling and planning in the short term. In a brief three-month period (March-June 2016), the College lost both our Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and our Controller. In March 2016, the College's then CFO, who had served in that position since the 2013-14 academic year and who developed the initial 5-Year Financial Plan, resigned, and an interim CFO was engaged for the period from April 2016 to June 2017 to allow a thorough search for the next CFO. In June 2016, the College's Controller, who had served Saint Joseph's for nearly a decade, left to pursue another career opportunity. The loss of these two resources complicated the transitions between CFOs and the business and finance functions of the College. In July 2016, the Assistant Controller was promoted to Controller and began working with the Interim CFO, and in July 2017, a new CFO joined the College's leadership team.

During the various transitions described above, the College undertook several projects designed to improve our ability to effectively track and report financial data and to use it in budgeting and budget planning. Towards this end, the College included the implementation of Great Plains Financial software.

Going forward the FY18 budget will serve as the basis for the FY19 budget the Board will approve in the spring of 2018 and for a new multi-year financial plan that will be developed over the coming months. This next version of the multi-year planning budgets will incorporate the results of other strategic planning activities that have occurred and that are happening at the College. At its core, the strategic plan, *Sustaining the Promise*, is intended to facilitate a culture change at Saint Joseph's. With its emphasis on collaboration and innovation, the plan intends to extend strategic thinking across the Saint Joseph's College community.

A clear indicator that *Sustaining the Promise* is having this impact is the development of strategic sub-plans that "nest" under the umbrella established by the larger institutional plan. One type of these plans is at the divisional and/or unit level, but there are also other types that speak of opportunities and challenges Saint Joseph's will need to address in the coming year. Examples include the College's Climate Action Plan and our Civic Action Plan.

The Climate Action and Sustainability Plan was developed by the Sustainability Task Force and approved by the Board of Trustees in 2015 and moves the College toward carbon neutrality by 2036. The Plan serves as our road map, guiding actions and establishing goals that reinforce and build upon key areas of the College's strategic plan, such as building a diverse, multigenerational learning community; ensuring financial stability; and stewarding the campus environment. The Plan outlines ten domains of sustainability. Each domain includes current practices, goals and strategies, and metrics by academic year. Having objectives, strategies, and metrics by year allows us to build the expenses related to these activities into the multi-year planning budgets. It also allows us to keep track of our various strategic commitments and to prioritize them appropriately in our planning activities.

A third type of strategic sub-plan focuses on our “core competencies,” including areas such as human resources and information technology, which impact every office and function at the College. The objectives, tactics, and metrics associated with the strategic goals in these areas also will be incorporated into the multi-year planning budgets.

Finally, in order to establish a structure for effective and sustainable decision-making at the College and to fulfill another strategic commitment, we are currently in the midst of a college-wide governance project that should establish a new set of all-college committees by the fall of 2018. These committees will roughly parallel the revised committee structure adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2016 and are intended to allow focused, consequential conversations among the various constituencies at the College on strategic and “directional” decisions.

Saint Joseph's College is pleased to share our progress on these specific areas, for we are committed to high standards of institutional discipline and practices, as we continue to innovate and engage in continuous improvement. We look forward to receiving the Commission's response to this report, and we are available to provide any additional information or clarifications needed.

Addenda

New Program Request Form

Saint Joseph's College
New Program Request Form

Curriculum and Rationale:

1. Program Name:
 - Outline the curriculum.
2. Number of Credits for Program:
3. Rationale:
4. Program Description(s) that will appear in the catalog (write in present tense).
5. Admission requirements:

Outcomes and Integration:

6. How does the proposal align with institutional, program, and course outcomes? Using the following table, map the outcomes and show alignment.

Institutional Outcomes	Program Outcomes – must be measurable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and apply the ethical and moral dimensions of students' particular field of study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate effective communication skills in both written and oral formats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate competency in programmatic content and career preparation through applied and/or experiential learning opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in responsible citizenship, social justice, and environmental stewardship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate critical thinking skills and the ability to analyze and evaluate information from diverse sources and perspectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

7. Integration (Comment on how this degree or major will be integrated with the SJC mission, academic plan, and existing programs).

Planning, Resources, and Needs:

8. Semester start date and timeline for development of new courses (if applicable, map the timeline out over a four-year cycle):

9. Needs Assessment/Anticipated Enrollment (Include projection of initial enrollment, potential for enrollment growth, and if proposing a program, information regarding competitor programs, their admission requirements, tuition, fees, etc.):

10. Accreditation Requirements (Include licensing, certification, or special requirements. Does this degree or major require NEASC review?):

11. Impact on enrollment of other programs:

12. Need for additional Faculty or Staff (Specify the number of new full and/or part time faculty and timeline for hiring):

13. Additional Equipment/Facilities needed:

Signature of Chair or Program Director

Date

Signature of Dean

Date

New Course Request Form

**Saint Joseph's College
New Course Request Form**

1. Course Name:
2. Course Level (e.g., 100, 200, 300, etc.); registrar will assign numbers:
 - Sustainability Course _____ Yes _____ No
 - If “yes,” _____ sustainability “focused” or _____ sustainability “related.”
3. Number of Credits:
4. Rationale:
5. Course Description that will appear in the catalog (write in present tense).
6. Prerequisites:

Outcomes and Integration:

7. Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

8. How do the course outcomes align with institutional and program outcomes? Using the following table, map the outcomes and show alignment.

Institutional Outcomes	Program Outcomes	Course Outcomes – <i>must meet at least one Institutional Outcome, but does not have to meet all.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and apply the ethical and moral dimensions of students' particular field of study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate effective communication skills in both written and oral formats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate competency in programmatic content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

and career preparation through applied and/or experiential learning opportunities.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in responsible citizenship, social justice, and environmental stewardship. 	•	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate critical thinking skills and the ability to analyze and evaluate information from diverse sources and perspectives. 	•	•

Planning, Resources, and Needs:

9. Semester start date and timeline for development of new course (if applicable, map the timeline out over a four-year cycle):

10. Frequency of Offering:

11. Needs Assessment/Anticipated Enrollment (Include projection of initial enrollment and potential for enrollment growth)

12. ___ Major Requirement ___ Elective ___ Satisfies Core Requirements

13. Impact on enrollment of other courses:

14. Need for additional Faculty or Staff (Specify the number of new full and/or part time faculty and timeline for hiring):

15. Additional Equipment/Facilities needed:

Signature of person developing course

Date

Signature of Chair or Program Director

Date

5-Year Financial Plan

Appendix E Strategic Financial Plan Summary 2014 - 2019	2014 <u>2015</u> <u>Budget</u>	2015 <u>2016</u> <u>Projected</u>	2016 <u>2017</u> <u>Projected</u>	2017 <u>2018</u> <u>Projected</u>	2018 <u>2019</u> <u>Projected</u>
Revenues					
Student Revenues, net of aid	\$35,041,745	\$35,213,583	\$38,437,321	\$39,508,339	\$41,898,678
Gifts, Grants, and Releases	\$1,441,745	\$1,504,951	\$1,568,105	\$1,618,105	\$1,668,105
Investment Income	\$350,390	\$199,859	\$167,919	\$163,839	\$167,539
Other	\$1,261,980	\$1,746,981	\$1,751,982	\$1,857,108	\$1,862,362
Total Revenues	\$38,095,861	\$38,665,374	\$41,925,327	\$43,147,392	\$45,596,685
Expenditures, Natural Classification Groups					
Compensation					
Salaries & Wages	\$20,399,157	\$20,050,841	\$21,156,807	\$21,583,647	\$22,001,076
Benefits	\$5,208,937	\$4,991,583	\$5,312,531	\$5,461,923	\$5,616,045
Total Compensation	\$25,608,094	\$25,042,424	\$26,469,338	\$27,045,570	\$27,617,121
General Operating Costs	\$8,301,751	\$8,676,455	\$9,350,638	\$9,818,347	\$10,032,651
Utilities	\$1,199,552	\$1,154,291	\$1,282,398	\$1,400,708	\$1,431,864
Contingency	\$175,209	\$704,272	\$1,153,120	\$1,382,792	\$1,675,947
Total Expenses & Other Outflows	\$35,284,606	\$35,577,442	\$38,255,494	\$39,647,417	\$40,757,583
EBIDTA	\$2,811,254	\$3,087,932	\$3,669,833	\$3,499,975	\$4,839,102
Debt Service	\$1,848,315	\$1,843,653	\$2,620,447	\$2,601,752	\$2,567,709
Cash Flows Before Capital	\$962,939	\$1,244,278	\$1,049,386	\$898,223	\$2,271,392
Annual Allotment, funded by Operating Budget/Reserves*	\$925,000	\$979,500	\$1,088,500	\$1,252,000	\$1,470,000
subtotal	\$37,939	\$264,778	(\$39,114)	(\$353,777)	\$801,392
New Capital Projects	\$5,575,000	\$425,000	\$42,200,000	\$100,000	\$1,100,000
Cash Flows After Capital	(\$5,537,061)	(\$160,222)	(\$42,239,114)	(\$453,777)	(\$298,608)
Debt Service Coverage Ratio (min 1.2)	1.5	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.9
Other Information					
Interest Expense	\$875,271	\$838,862	\$1,450,382	\$1,391,458	\$1,344,755
Depreciation	\$1,928,000	\$1,974,250	\$2,020,500	\$2,066,750	\$2,113,000
Accounting Income **	\$7,983	\$274,819	\$198,951	\$41,767	\$1,381,347
Proforma Sources					
Proforma Borrowing	\$0	\$0	\$12,500,000	\$0	\$0
Quasi Endowment	\$5,575,000	\$425,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Difference: Other Sources Required					
Philanthropy, bridge loans	\$0	\$0	\$29,700,000	\$100,000	\$1,100,000