

Regis University

Self-Study for Comprehensive Accreditation Evaluation

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

Regis University Accreditation Webpage:
www.regis.edu>about Regis>who we are>accreditation statement





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Higher Learning Commission Criteria

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

Self-Study Highlights to Date

- Six task forces of 75 Regis faculty and staff met from September 2006 through May 2007.
- Over 700 Regis students, faculty and staff participated in focus groups.
- External focus groups were conducted with community agencies, alumni, and employers.
- Christmas project completed and sent to the Higher Learning Commission.
- January/February creation of physical and virtual resource rooms.

Common Themes Between 1998 and 2007 Focus Groups

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

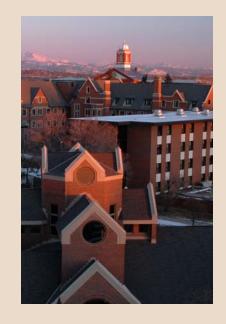
Articulated Themes of the Community Not Found in 1998

- Technology has drastically changed and captivated our lives, and will continue to do so, requiring ongoing capital investment.
- The world will continue to change rapidly.
- There is a growing sense of the importance of Regis University's values in education.
- Assessment has become a major University commitment.
- Millennial students are changing/will change Regis University.
- Decreased entering student preparedness for college-level work and increased need for student academic support.
- Respect for progress made in diversity but a hunger for more to reflect the world we live in.
- Strong interest in what Regis University desires to be for the future.
- Strong interest in Fr. Sheeran's succession and what kind of leadership the University will seek.
- Many faculty and staff report they are operating at capacity in both teaching and University responsibilities.
- College-focused planning model has brought Regis great success, but as the University grows there may be need for new planning models.
- Desire for more University-wide comprehensive faculty development connecting faculty across the colleges
 who want to learn from each other.

- Regis University has a maturing culture of scholarship. Faculty are active in research, publishing, conference
 presentations, and serve on boards and advisory councils. Many faculty report they are operating at capacity
 in both teaching and University responsibilities, with limited time for scholarship. The academic deans of the
 colleges have expressed commitment to explore this concern.
- Regis University Libraries is a partner in lifelong learning, supporting faculty, students, community, alumni, online learners, and the emergence of new doctoral programs.
- Faculty development is college-centric. Policies, funding, and sabbaticals vary across the colleges. There is
 a desire on the part of some faculty for more comprehensive, University-wide faculty development through
 a Center for Teaching Excellence, where faculty from different colleges could learn best practices from one
 another. Affiliate faculty would also receive support from the Center and interact more fully with the University
 community.
- The University demonstrates that students are partners in learning, particularly through institutional funding for student research and publications.
- Regis University has a proven commitment to service learning and justice education. Diversity is not yet
 reflected as strongly in faculty as in the student body. The University intends to build upon its diversity
 initiatives, including continuing its efforts to hire more minority faculty.
- The University has recently created an Institutional Review Board (IRB) for ethical compliance in research.
 It sought and received a Federalwide Assurance (FWA) and also has an Animal Welfare Assurance.

Criterion 5 — Discernment Engagement and Service

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



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We encourage the continual search for truth, values and a just existence. Throughout this process, we examine and attempt to answer the question: "How ought we to live?"

- In most cases, especially in the more traditional academic disciplines, faculty have appropriate terminal degrees. In areas such as nursing and business where faculty shortages exist nationally, the University is using a "grow its own" approach by supporting doctoral study.
- At Regis University learning is tailored to the learner. Generally classes are small and students receive individual attention from faculty. In both Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions and the College for Professional Studies the use of standard, modularized course syllabi ensures consistency across class sections and compliance with standards established by specialized accreditation organizations.
- The University has carefully developed University outcome statements that reflect the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of learning. These outcomes have shaped curriculum development and revision. Most recently this is especially evident in Regis College, which has undertaken a major redesign and revision of the core curriculum.
- The quality of the online courses offered in RHCHP and CPS are a source of great pride because of their interactivity, expectations for critical thinking, and academic rigor. Moreover, the high level of faculty and student support services ensures that students at a distance have educational experiences that are fully comparable to the experiences of ground-based students.
- Regis University has built strong community relationships that support and foster excellent learning experiences for students in practice-based programs such as nursing, physical therapy, teacher education, and counseling.
- In the past several years the University has made great strides in all areas of assessment. Assessment processes are most mature in RHCHP, in part because of the requirements of specialized accreditation organizations. Both RC and CPS already have well established indirect measures. Currently they are implementing a wide variety of direct measures and have begun using the results in curricular and programmatic revisions. The addition of full-time assessment directors in both colleges has accelerated
- There is a widespread sense of pride in the campus improvements that have occurred over the past ten years and in the facilities that have been developed to support student learning. The recent renovation of the Science Building provides state-of-the-art science laboratories. The University has also invested significant resources in the gross anatomy lab, the nursing simulation lab, the counseling lab, the Rueckert-Hartman clinical and skills labs, and the computer labs. The dramatic growth the University has experienced has resulted in an acute need for additional space on the Lowell campus. This need is especially noticeable in mid-size classrooms (35-50 students) and in large gathering spaces.
- The University Libraries provides outstanding academic support for faculty and for all students, regardless of learning format or location. This is especially apparent in the infrastructure the library has developed to support distance learners.
- Many faculty recognize that student academic preparedness has declined in areas such as writing, basic mathematics, critical thinking, and oral communication. These changes directly impact teaching because of the increased need to focus on fundamental skills and to offer more academic support services. If the University moves to develop a more comprehensive support program for adult students, tuition pricing policies may need to be revised to help defray the incremental costs.

Criterion 4 — Discernment Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

- Regis University has a commitment to the recognition of excellence. The University benefits from diverse faculty and staff contributions to the body of knowledge. The University has a variety of publications and communications about its commitment to values, acquisition, and application of knowledge.
- The University is responsive to new markets and serves the community and changing workforce needs through new degrees and programs, including international partnerships. University centers advance the learning experience and connect the resources of University and community.
- The University has expanded global awareness in its curriculum, from individual courses to new degree programs. The core curriculum is under review in light of new skills and knowledge appropriate to the 21st century. Online learning has internationalized the student body and advanced the University as an international presence. The University needs to ensure that globalization is increasingly evident in courses and programs.

A Decade of Accomplishments

	1998	2007
Student population	10,000	16,000
University credit hours	133,612	218,768
Annual budget	\$44 million	\$120 million
University endowment	\$14 million	\$40 million
Academic grants	\$202,000	\$2.6 million
Comprehensive campaign	(1980s) \$16 million	\$82 million
Minority student population	(2000) 1,485	2,863
Minority faculty	(2001) 8	24
Minority affiliate faculty	(2001) 88	165

- Continued financial health for over thirty years
- Maturing assessment culture in all three colleges
- University mission instilled across curriculum, faculty, staff, students, and alumni
- Over 900 affiliations across the community and workforce
- Twenty-five new majors
- Eight new extension campuses
- State of the art learning labs
- Review of the core curriculum
- Strengthened programs in the sciences, music, and the arts
- Significant library growth and service to students, faculty, and community (including online resources and
- Nationally recognized online learning programs in the College for Professional Studies and the Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions
- International academic partnerships including the National University of Ireland, Galway, the Ateneo de Manila Jesuit University of the Philippines, and the ITESO Jesuit University in Guadalaiara, Mexico
- Significant investment in digital plant, Lowell Campus physical plant, and extension campuses
- St. John Francis Regis Chapel, student townhomes, restoration of Main Hall, Carroll Hall, and Science Building
- For the past thirty years, Level I and II coaches have been required to graduate 92% of all athletes that complete athletic eligibility at Regis. No coach has ever failed to achieve this goal. The head basketball coach has seen a 94% graduation rate over his 31 years at Regis. Over the past seventeen years, women's basketball has achieved a 100% graduation rate
- Two doctoral programs (proposed Doctor of Pharmacy will be a change of status agenda item in February)
- Nationally recognized scholarship and publications by Regis University faculty
- Significant growth in terminally degreed faculty in all three colleges

The Regis University Self-Study Team

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Standing within the
Catholic and United States
traditions, we are inspired
by the particular Jesuit
vision of Ignatius Loyola.

Terminally Degreed Faculty (including those FT faculty in doctoral studies)

	FT	Affili	iate
Graduate Programs			
CPS Graduate Teacher Education	80%	30%	
CPS MA Counseling Psychology	100%	33%	
CPS MA Liberal Studies	100%	47%	
CPS MBA	75%	30%	
CPS MNM	100%	24%	
CPS MSCIT	63%	13%	
CPS MSM	100%	50%	
RC Graduate Teacher Education	83%	55%	
RHCHP Ethics	100%	57%	
RHCHP HSA	100%	67%	
RHCHP Nursing	87%	23%	
RHCHP Physical Therapy	100%	54%	
Undergraduate Programs			
CPS Undergraduate	36%	24%	
CPS Undergraduate Teacher Education	0%	9%	
RC Undergraduate	97%	40%	
University Libraries	100%		

Emerging Issues of the Future

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

Criterion 1 — Discernment Mission and Integrity

- University mission continues to animate the University community and is widely understood and embraced.
- The University has intentional processes for hiring, orientation, and ongoing development of faculty and staff
 with respect to University mission.
- The University is a leader among Jesuit colleges and universities in Jesuit-lay collaboration.
- Within a heterogeneous community of faculty, staff, and students, attempts to address the perceived differences
 between being Jesuit and Catholic have been effective, but on-going efforts are required as new members are
 welcomed into the University community.
- The University has committed significant resources to the growth of a diverse student body, faculty, staff, and
 programs. The University continues efforts to enhance diversity, particularly in full-time faculty recruitment and
 a pervading sense of inclusion within the Regis University community.

- The University needs to continue to incorporate rewards and incentives for mission behavior and to continue
 its attention to the assessment of mission effectiveness and contributions in annual reports and evaluation
 processes. It is increasingly difficult for faculty and staff to find spaces in their lives for reflection. The
 University must be aware of the demands of its growth upon staff and faculty.
- Diversity is implied in the University mission statement but a revision could make the University's commitment
 to diversity more explicit.

Criterion 2 — Discernment Planning for the Future

- Regis University exhibits clear commitment to mission in the growth of new academic programs and mission
 development of faculty and staff. It has articulated and funded its commitment to diversity. The University will
 need to meet and exceed current diversity goals in order to reflect fully a diverse world for its learning
 community and to remain competitive.
- The University has experienced success through effective decentralized college and department planning
 cultures with achievement of goals consistent with priorities established by the University Strategic Plan.
 The University is able to reorganize colleges and departments as needed to better support its academic mission.
- The University's entrepreneurial spirit and environmental scanning have enabled it to be responsive to
 workforce demands with new quality programs while remaining solidly grounded in a liberal arts tradition.
 The University is now recognized as one of the largest providers of online education in the country.
- Regis University has enjoyed continuous financial health for over thirty years. It has more than doubled its endowment in the last ten years and completed its largest comprehensive campaign in University history. Grant funding has increased to an average of over \$1 million annually. At the same time, the University remains tuition driven and faces continuing pressure to find new markets and revenue sources amidst rising expenses. The financial aid discount rate for Regis College and traditional Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions students shows a pattern of increases in recent years.
- Regis supports the priorities of its libraries, physical plant, digital plant, student life, athletics, and student services as being critically important for student success. Lowell campus space needs remain acute. Funding for the digital plant will continue to require substantial investment in order to remain viable in a 21st century learning environment. Consideration should be given to incorporating extension and regional campuses into the University Master Plan, which currently focuses only on the Lowell Campus.
- The University must give serious consideration to creating a University-wide culture of planning, evaluation and implementation, including the addition of administrative positions, planning tools, structural supports, and more effective means of communicating the University Strategic Plan. More centralized data collection and analysis could benefit the institution for academic reviews, accreditation reports, longitudinal studies, assessment, and planning.

Criterion 3 — Discernment Student Learning and Effective Teaching

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

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