

Supplemental Information Report

Submitted to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

By

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The Catholic University of America
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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Commission Action	3
Overview of Catholic University	3
A Brief History of Catholic University	3
Catholic University Today	4
Context of the Report	5
Substantive Narrative and Analysis	8
Evaluation of Student Achievement	8
Summary of Actions and Evidence Presented	8
Catholic University's Assessment Process	8
Annual Academic Program Assessment Key Findings Reports Academic Year 2019-20	10
Future Plans	10
Evaluation of Student Achievement in General Education	11
General Education at Catholic University	11
Catholic University's General Education Assessment Goals	12
Catholic University's General Education Assessment Plan	12
Measures	12
Assessment Procedures	12
Plan for the Continuous Improvement of the Liberal Arts Curriculum	14
Continuous Improvement of the Assessment Plan	14
Conclusion	16

Introduction

Commission Action

This Supplemental Information Report (SIR) describes the action steps that The Catholic University of America has taken following the July 1, 2020 action letter from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

The action letter requested the submission of the SIR by April 1, 2021 to document the “implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement (Standard V) and (2) implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in general education (Standard V).”

In the MSCHE Team Report, Catholic University was instructed that “high priority must be given to the development and implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate all relevant processes contributing to the academic mission. This process can utilize existing models, such as those in place prior to the suspension in 2017, as well as newly designed ones” (p. 17).

Overview of Catholic University

A Brief History of Catholic University

On March 7, 1889, Pope Leo XIII formally established Catholic University as a graduate and research center with his apostolic letter *Magni Nobis Gaudii*. The University officially opened as an institution of higher education in 1887. When the University opened for classes in November 1889, the curriculum consisted of lectures in mental and moral philosophy, English literature, the sacred scriptures, and the various branches of theology. At the end of the second term, lectures on canon law were added.

At the time of the founding of the University, the modern American university was still in its infancy. The Johns Hopkins University, founded in 1876, had been the first in the country to dedicate itself not only to the preservation of learning and teaching, but also to the advancement of knowledge through research in the manner of the Prussian universities of the 19th century. Very soon, the conduct of research and the training of graduate students to carry it out became the hallmarks of university status.

Catholic University developed in this manner, which became the principal channel through which the modern university movement entered the American Catholic community. In 1900, Catholic University was among the 14 institutions offering instruction for the doctorate that formed the Association of American Universities, a group of leading research institutions. In 1904, undergraduate programs were added to the offerings of the University.

The life of The Catholic University of America has been more or less coterminous with this movement, seen now on an international scale. A particularly visible contribution of the University to the Church in the United States and to the nation at large has been its preparation of teachers, many of them diocesan priests or members of religious communities of men and women, for service in schools, seminaries and colleges throughout the country. The expansion of the University into the arts and sciences began with the opening, in 1895, of what were called at the time the "faculties for the laity." Three years later, the School of Law was established. A structural evolution led to a comprehensive academic reorganization in 1930. In that year, in accord with patterns that had become general in the United States, the College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences were established. The School of Engineering and Architecture was also a product of this reorganization.

Several schools have been added since the 1930 reorganization:

- The division of the original School of Sacred Sciences into a School of Sacred Theology and a School of Philosophy in 1937;
- The incorporation of the National Catholic School of Social Service in 1947 and the integration of the former Columbus University in 1954;
- The establishment of the School of Religious Studies in 1973;
- The merging of the College and Graduate School into a single School of Arts and Sciences in 1975;
- The return of the School of Education to departmental status in the School of Arts and Sciences in 1986;
- The devising of the original School of Engineering and Architecture into a School of Engineering and a School of Architecture and Planning in 1992;
- The re-establishment of the School of Canon Law within the University in 2002, with the remaining academic units of the former School of Religious Studies becoming programs in a newly-established School of Theology and Religious Studies;
- The establishment of Metropolitan College as a separate school in 2006;
- The creation of the Tim and Steph Busch School of Business and Economics in 2013;
- The return of the School of Library and Information Science to departmental status in the School of Arts and Sciences in 2013;
- The return of the Department of Economics to the School of Arts and Sciences in 2018;
- The merging of the school of music with the departments of drama and art to create the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art in 2018.

Catholic University Today

Catholic University is located in Washington, D.C. It is a private, non-profit institution that is committed to being a comprehensive Catholic and American institution of higher learning. Today the private and coeducational university has approximately 5,300 students enrolled in the 12 schools (architecture and planning; arts and sciences; business; canon law; engineering; law; professional studies; music, drama, and art; nursing; philosophy; social services; and theology and religious studies). The schools of canon law, philosophy, and theology and religious studies are ecclesiastical faculties.

All of the schools offer graduate and/or professional degrees, and students can choose from 103 master's programs and 66 doctoral programs; 10 of the schools offer undergraduate degrees, and students can choose from among 3 associate's programs and 74 bachelor's programs. As of fall 2020 there were 5,366 enrolled students: 3,055 undergraduate students and 2,311 graduate students, 402 of whom are law students. 96.0%, 62.4%, and 69.2% of the undergraduate, graduate, and law students, respectively, were enrolled full-time.

Catholic University continues to be a foundational Catholic educational institution in the United States and maintains its unique status as the bishops' university. When Catholic University was established, its governance was delegated by the bishops to a Board of Trustees. Under the current bylaws, revised in December 2016, the University's governance structure is intended to perfect and make permanent the University's essential character as a Catholic and American institution of higher learning and its role as the national university of the Catholic Church, sponsored by the United States bishops, while significantly increasing lay responsibility and support for the University.

The Board of Trustees consists of no fewer than 20 and no more than 40 trustees, with the archbishop of Washington serving ex officio as the chancellor of the University. In this capacity, the archbishop is the liaison between the institution and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, as well as between the institution and the Holy See. A subset of the Trustees also serves as Fellows. The Fellows hold certain reserved powers designed to preserve the heritage of its unique founding by, and ongoing relationship with, the Holy See and the bishops.

Context of the Report

Since the March 2020 site visit, while working on the instructions in the MSCHE action letter to implement organized and systematic assessments for evaluation of student learning, as well as compiling the documentation to demonstrate implementation, the university has been addressing issues related to COVID. Almost immediately following the visit, we sent students home, and the university as a whole began largely working from home. Also by mid-March, we had repatriated our students studying abroad throughout the world, including students living and studying at our Rome location. We brought first year students to campus in fall 2020 and invited more students to campus for spring 2021. We operated under plans approved by the District of Columbia for [fall 2020](#) and [spring 2021](#).

With an aim to protect the safety and well-being of all staff and faculty and to operate consistently with the university's District of Columbia approved operating plans, all meetings and planning for this SIR have been conducted virtually. The Provost tasked the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies with organizing the writing of this report in their roles as Co-Chairs of the University Assessment Council. Membership of the Assessment Council represents all 12 schools as well as other key offices across campus and includes:

Co-chairs:

- J. Steven Brown, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies
- Lynn Mayer, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies

Provost Office Representatives:

- Anthony Chiappetta, Director of Career Services, Co-Director of the Center for Academic and Career Success
- Herbert Hartmann, Collegiate Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Director, First Year Experience
- David P. Long, Assistant Provost
- Angela McRae, Clinical Assistant Professor of Education, Director, Center for Teaching Excellence
- Jennifer Paxton, Clinical Associate Professor of History, Director, Honors Program

School Representatives:

- Patricia Andrasik, Associate Professor, School of Architecture and Planning
- Eileen Dombo, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean for PhD Program, National Catholic School of Social Services
- Marcie Goeke-Morey, Associate Professor and Undergraduate Program Director, Department of Psychology, School of Arts and Sciences
- Cristina Ionescu, Associate Professor, School of Philosophy
- Twila Lindsay, Assistant Dean, Metropolitan School of Professional Studies
- Gunnar Lucko, Ordinary Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, School of Engineering
- Kurt Martens, Ordinary Professor, School of Canon Law
- Megan Podboy, Nursing Admissions Liaison and Counselor, Conway School of Nursing
- Kevin Rensch, Assistant Dean for Students, Busch School of Business
- Seth Smith, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of History, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, School of Arts and Sciences
- Susan Timoney, Associate Professor of Practice, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, and Director of the Certificate in Pastoral Ministry, School of Theology and Religious Studies
- Patrick Tuite, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Production, Associate Professor, and Head of Masters in Theatre History and Criticism Program, Department of Drama, Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art

Institutional Research Representatives:

- Brian Johnston, Associate Vice President for Planning and Institutional Research
- Edward Trudeau, Director of Planning and Institutional Research

Student Affairs Representative:

- Jonathan Sawyer, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Dean of Students

Student Representatives:

- Carly Jones, Graduate Student in Politics; President, Graduate Student Association
- Gemma Del Carmen, Undergraduate Student, Dual Major in Politics and Psychology; Vice President, Student Government Association
- Gerald Sharpe, Undergraduate Student, Dual Major in Politics and Philosophy Pre-Law; President, Student Government Association

Enrollment Services Representative:

- Danielle Spinato, University Registrar

Substantive Narrative and Analysis

This SIR provides evidence of the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement. Assessment is first discussed in general related to student learning outcomes for each program, graduate and undergraduate. It is then discussed in relation to the general education curriculum. The supporting documentation is linked in this SIR and is available in the Evidence Inventory.

Evaluation of Student Achievement

Summary of Actions and Evidence Presented

To respond to the request to present documentation of the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement, the Provost tasked the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies with coordinating this effort. They initially consulted with Institutional Research and then convened the University Assessment Council to undertake a collaborative approach to documenting the university's processes and producing this documentation. The MSCHE Team Report (p. 17) indicated that the process could use existing models, and this recommendation guided the response by Catholic University to this item.

MSCHE Request	Catholic University's Actions and Evidence
"Implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement (Standard V)"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Updated existing SLO report template to reflect current MSCHE standards in fall 2020● Distributed the updated template and links to previous reports to the Deans and Department Chairs in fall 2020● Directed that academic year 2019-20 reports be submitted by January 2021 to the Vice Provosts● Extended the deadline for academic year 2019-20 report submission until February 2021● Convened the Assessment Council and established Working Groups● Completed a Goals and Key Assessments Finding (KAF) scorecard in February 2021● Plan an in depth review the KAF and the Reports over the spring and summer 2021

Catholic University's Assessment Process

Catholic University has an established process to assess Student Learning Outcomes, with the current process being in place since 2010. In this process, programs and departments are asked to complete a report of key findings each year that assesses student performance on

metrics such as degree completion. The assessments also collect information from each program and department about curricular improvements implemented during the preceding year. At the five-year point, each academic program is asked to conduct a “major assessment” that summarizes findings over the five years, analyzes trends, and describes plans for continuous program improvement. The original templates for these assessments were outlined in Appendix H of the Progress Report to MSCHE submitted on March 20, 2012 by the Provost. The annual assessment process had been put on hold in 2017 during a period of academic restructuring at the university. During the time period 2017-19, programs instead completed comprehensive self studies, which were submitted to the Provost Office for review.

To reinstitute the existing process, as was recommended in the MSCHE Team Report, the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies convened the University Assessment Council and thereafter requested each of the University’s academic programs to submit their existing goals for student learning. They were then asked to update those goals if needed, or to develop goals for any newly established program, and to submit them to the Provost Office in order to make them publicly available on the website and for inclusion in this report.

Additionally, each program was asked to conduct an assessment and write a report of Key Annual Findings for the 2019-20 academic year. Prior to asking each program to engage in this assessment process, the Vice Provosts and Institutional Research reviewed the existing template that had been used prior to its suspension in 2017 and updated it to reflect the current MSCHE accreditation standards. The template and links to previous reports were shared with the Deans and Department Chairs. Initially, they were asked to produce reports by January 2021. However, due to COVID and a resulting change in the spring semester academic calendar, the deadline was extended until February 2021. The Vice Provosts and the University Assessment Council then reviewed the submissions and compiled them for this report. To summarize:

- Each program was asked to submit its Goals and Annual Program Assessment Report for the academic year 2019-20.
- Programs were asked to use standardized templates:
 - The undergraduate goals and assessment template is located [here](#).
 - The graduate goals and assessment template is located [here](#).
- The submissions were tracked and made accessible to the University community via a [Scorecard](#).
- Annual Program Assessment Reports Reports are available to the public on this [website](#)
- An example Undergraduate Report (Physics) is located [here](#).
- An example Graduate Report (The Columbus School of Law) is located [here](#).

Moving forward, each academic program will be asked to conduct a review of their goals and will complete assessment reports for the 2020-21 academic year. These reports will be submitted to the University Assessment Council and the Provost Office in fall 2021. Subsequently, assessment will be conducted each year with Annual Academic Program

Assessment Reports submitted every fall semester thereafter until the university hits a “five-year point.” At this time, each academic program will then conduct a “major assessment” that summarizes findings over the five years, analyzes trends, and describes plans for continuous program improvement.

Annual Academic Program Assessment Key Findings Reports Academic Year 2019-20

The Evidence Inventory contains the Goals and Key Assessment Findings reports and the other documents referenced herein. A summary containing links to individual reports can be found via this [Scorecard](#). In addition, all of the reports are publicly available at <https://accreditation.catholic.edu>. For convenience, links to the school reports are also provided below.

- The reports for all programs are located [here](#).
- Architecture and Planning is located [here](#).
- Arts and Sciences is located [here](#).
- Busch School of Business is located [here](#).
- Canon Law is located [here](#).
- Columbus School of Law is located [here](#).
- Conway School of Nursing is located [here](#).
- Engineering is located [here](#).
- Metropolitan School of Professional Studies is located [here](#).
- National Catholic School of Social Service is located [here](#).
- Philosophy is located [here](#).
- Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art is located [here](#).
- Theology and Religious Studies is located [here](#).
- Honors Program is located [here](#).

Future Plans

The Catholic University of America is committed to maintaining an ongoing assessment process related to the evaluation of student achievement. Specifically, the plans include:

- Review of all updated goals for each program plan during spring 2021;
- Modification of the Annual Template by the Assessment Council during summer 2021;
- Distribution of the Revised Template to the Deans and Program Chairs in August 2021;
- Submission of Annual Assessment Reports for academic year 2021-22 by each program in November of 2021 with publication of Reports to the Catholic University website by December 2021;
- Submission of Annual Assessment Reports for each subsequent year in the fall semester;
- Submission of Major Assessment Reports in 2024.

Evaluation of Student Achievement in General Education

To respond to the request to present documentation of the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in general education, the Provost tasked the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies with coordinating this effort. They initially consulted with Institutional Research and the General Education Curriculum Committee and then convened the University Assessment Council to undertake a collaborative approach to documenting the University's processes and producing this documentation. Catholic University's General Education Curriculum, The Liberal Arts Curriculum, was first introduced in 2018, so Catholic University will not graduate its first class of students who have taken it until spring 2022.

The full [Assessment Plan](#) is available for review. The supporting documentation is linked in this SIR and is also available in the Evidence Inventory.

Summary of Actions and Evidence Presented

MSCHE Request	Catholic University's Actions and Evidence
"Implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in general education (Standard V)"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the goals and outcomes of the General Education Curriculum ● Write measurable outcome statements ● Map goals and outcomes to curriculum ● Map goals and outcomes to measures ● Establish benchmarks ● Engage in data collection ● Develop a continuous improvement plan

General Education at Catholic University

In 2017, a new Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC) was approved by the Academic Senate, after it was developed by the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) and approved by the Undergraduate Board. The LAC draws on the richness of the Catholic intellectual tradition and is closely linked to the Mission of the University. The LAC is framed around a series of "Enduring Questions" that are foundational for an integrated understanding of reality and provide a framework to address contemporary issues. The LAC consists of foundation and focus area requirements that create a shared core with the flexibility to support professional undergraduate degree programs.

The GECC has continued to be an active committee at the University. It oversees the implementation and oversight of the LAC. It meets on a regular basis to review the goals of the curriculum, review and approve courses, and oversee assessment. Membership has been devised to allow each of the nine undergraduate schools to be represented while also incorporating members from each disciplinary area of the LAC.

Catholic University's General Education Assessment Goals

Catholic University approved a set of [goals and outcomes](#) prior to the development and implementation of the Liberal Arts Curriculum, which is focused on Enduring Questions. Goals encompass three core areas of student development: knowledge, skill, and character. These goals and outcomes have been extended into measurable outcome statements and then [mapped](#) to curriculum areas and to assessment measures with benchmarks.

As the University has reached year 3 of implementation of the curriculum, we are beginning to go through an iterative process of revising the goals and outcomes and mapping them to the Enduring Questions. The plan is to update the goals and outcomes by fall 2021.

Catholic University's General Education Assessment Plan

Measures

Catholic University has developed a set of measures that have been mapped to the goals, outcomes, and measurable outcome statements. The measures include:

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Catholic Identity and Mission Assessment Survey (CIMA)
- Course Rubrics: FYE English 101 Rubrics
- Course Grade Reports
- Capstone Grade Reports
- Curricular Area Annual Reports
- Center for Academic and Career Success (CACS) Annual Reports
- Student and Faculty Focus Groups

We are currently exploring the use of additional measures, including:

- Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) Rubrics
- Course Rubrics: FYE Philosophy 201 and 202, FYE Theology and Religious Studies 201, Theology and Religious Studies 202, Capstone

Assessment Procedures

Catholic University is committed to the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in general education.

1. **NSSE Data** will continue to be collected by Institutional Research and will start to be reviewed by the GECC on an annual basis in the first committee meeting of the fall semester to determine if benchmarks have been met to inform curriculum revision. Standard University NSSE reports will be used as a starting point.
 - a. Data from 2015, 2016, and 2017, before the implementation of the curriculum, will be analyzed to establish a baseline.

- b. Data from first-year students from 2018, 2019, 2020 will be analyzed to determine if benchmarks are being met.
 - c. Data from seniors from 2018 and 2019 will be used as a baseline (2020 and 2021 will be omitted due to COVID); senior NSSE data will be included in the plan in 2022 when the first cohort of students in the LAC are seniors.
- 2. **CIMA Data** will be collected by IR and reviewed by the GECC on an annual basis in the first committee meeting of the fall semester to determine if benchmarks have been met to inform curriculum revision.
 - a. CIMA first-year students and senior data will be reviewed during summer 2021 to determine if these data are effective in measuring outcomes for this purpose.
- 3. **Annual Reports** will be submitted to the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies to be reviewed by the GECC in the first meeting of the fall semester to determine if there are implementation issues and to inform curriculum implementation revision.
 - a. CACS will be asked to submit their first report in summer 2021 to pilot test the Report Template; they will then submit annual reports each summer in following years to be reviewed by the GECC each fall semester.
 - b. Curricular Area Reports will be pilot tested in summer 2021 with Fine Arts, Literature, and History/Politics; subsequently, each area will submit a report on an annual basis to the GECC which will be reviewed in the fall semester.
 - c. All reports will be submitted for review by the GECC to the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies every summer, and the GECC will determine how the data inform continuous improvement of the LAC.
- 4. **Focus Groups** will be convened by the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies to inform the GECC regarding curriculum implementation.
 - a. Faculty focus groups will be held once a year.
 - b. SGA will be contacted in spring 2021 to facilitate curriculum based focus groups; the plan is to hold one each year.
 - c. Capstone instructors will be asked to consider adding a focus group experience to solicit specific feedback on the curriculum.
 - d. Focus group data will be compiled by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and will be shared with the GECC for continuous improvement of the LAC.
- 5. **Grade Reports** will be compiled by the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies at the conclusion of each academic year; the grade reports will be shared with the GECC once they are created.
 - a. [Grade data](#) for FYE courses have exported from APS for the academic years of 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20; it will be exported annually for review to determine if the benchmark of 80% of students receiving a grade of B or better has been met and will be compared with grade analysis from Institutional Research if needed.
 - b. Grade data has been exported from APS for the academic years of 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 for other LAC curricular areas.
 - c. Grade data will be exported for capstones and comprehensives starting in 2021-22.

6. **Rubric data** will be compiled in a manner still to be determined for review over the summer by the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies.
 - a. Data from ENG 101 rubrics will be centrally collected and analyzed from 2021-22.
 - b. Rubrics for TRS 201 will be implemented across all classes in 2021-22 and data will be collected.
 - c. Rubrics for PHIL 201, 202; HSPH 101, 102; PHIL 211, 212 will be developed in 2021-22 and will be used in 2022-23.
 - d. Rubrics will be added to Blackboard Learn to facilitate a central system for collecting data for these FYE courses; it will then be downloaded to our Student Information System, when appropriate, so that it can be accessed for analysis.
7. All data will be compiled into a **LAC Annual Report**, formulated by the GECC in conjunction with the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, that will document whether the LAC has met its benchmarks. If any outcomes are not meeting the set benchmarks, the GECC will recommend a plan to improve the implementation of the LAC, which will be documented in this annual report. The LAC Annual Report will be shared with the Undergraduate Board and the Academic Senate in the fall semester.

Plan for the Continuous Improvement of the Liberal Arts Curriculum

Data will be collected and analyzed on an annual basis. If outcome benchmarks are not achieved, a plan for continuous improvement will be implemented by the GECC in conjunction with the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies. This plan will be documented in the LAC Annual Report which will be produced each summer and provided to the Undergraduate Board and Academic Senate each fall.

Continuous Improvement of the Assessment Plan

Through the process of documenting how The Catholic University of America has approached the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in general education, the GECC has determined that there are some aspects of the plan that should be addressed to modify the plan for the academic year 2021-22. Specifically, improvements should be made to the statement of goals and outcomes, the assessment of comprehensive and capstone course data, the assessment of technological literacy, and the use of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement.

First, one such area to be improved is the statement of Goals and Outcomes. As we have implemented the LAC over the past three years and have begun the assessment process, the GECC has determined that the Goals and Outcomes statement should be updated as they were written prior to the adoption of the LAC. In particular, the GECC determined that the Goals and Outcomes should be mapped to include the Enduring Questions. The revision process commenced in fall 2020 and will continue until they are presented to the Undergraduate Board and the Academic Senate for approval. The GECC anticipates completing this project by fall

2021. Once approved, the next step for the Goals and Outcomes will be to map them to existing measures and determine whether additional measures are necessary.

Second, another area is the assessment of data collected via the capstone courses or the comprehensive measures. Both of these are currently used for the assessment of student learning outcomes in the different undergraduate programs. At present, capstone and comprehensive data help to evaluate whether or not students have demonstrated “A rigorous knowledge of a particular discipline and of the methods of inquiry proper to it.” While this is useful data related to this one outcome statement, we feel that there is the potential to collect data pertinent to skills cultivated by the general education curriculum in the capstone. During the fall 2021 semester, all departments and schools will be asked to submit documentation to the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies that includes the syllabus for the capstone course if offered, the description of how the comprehensive requirement is met (exam, paper, project, etc), and the rubrics currently in use for evaluating performance in the capstone or on the comprehensive. These documents will be reviewed and shared with the GECC during the spring 2022 semester to determine if there are any commonalities to capitalize on for the implementation of a rubric to assess the attainment of outcomes in the capstone or through the comprehensive. A sample rubric will be piloted in spring 2022 in selected courses.

Third, through the process of developing the Assessment Plan, we determined that the measure identified for the technological literacy outcome is not sufficient. The GECC should identify additional measures for this concept as part of the continuous improvement of the Assessment Plan.

Fourth, to further improve the Assessment Plan, Catholic University plans to explore the use of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). According to Indiana University, the FSSE collects data from instructors on effective teaching practices and to add context to the student engagement data collected through NSSE. FSSE also collects information on student participation in high impact practices, using 10 scales: Higher-Order Learning, Reflective and Integrative Learning, Collaborative Learning, Discussions with Diverse Others, Student-Faculty Interaction, Effective Teaching Practices, Quality of Interactions, and Supportive Environment. The FSSE will be reviewed by the GECC to make a recommendation to the Assessment Council in consultation with the Center for Teaching Excellence. The Assessment Council will then make a determination on whether the University should implement it for the academic year 2021-22 with instructors in the FYE. And, if the decision is made to implement it, which topical module to include: Inclusiveness and Engagement with Cultural Diversity, Experiences with Writing, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and Teaching Professional Development.

Conclusion

As demonstrated throughout this SIR, The Catholic University of America pledges to maintain its commitment to fostering a culture of assessment as described in Standard V, related to the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement.

The University has already undertaken the following measures and actions to ensure the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement:

1. The Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies have re-constituted and re-convened the University Assessment Council, which has been further subdivided into working groups focused on specific areas of assessment.
2. The University conducted a comprehensive update of its annual assessment process through the following steps:
 - a. All academic schools, departments, and programs have been instructed to return to the University's previous practice of completing Annual Academic Program Assessment Reports. This report assesses student performance on metrics such as degree completion while also including significant curricular improvements implemented during the academic year.
 - b. This Annual Academic Program Assessment Report, which had been in place since 2010 as the University's "Report of Key Annual Findings" but had been suspended in favor of comprehensive program self-studies during the University's academic restructuring, follows the template submitted to MSCHE in March 2012, with updates included as appendices to this SIR for [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) goals, respectively. This update to the Annual Academic Program Assessment Report also reflects current MSCHE accreditation standards.
 - c. Each academic program conducted a Report of Key Annual Findings that included program goals and annual assessment for the 2019-20 academic year. These reports were submitted to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and the University Assessment Council in February 2021. This deadline was pushed back from its original fall 2020 deadline due to the University's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - d. The results of the 2019-20 findings were made accessible to the University community via an online [Scorecard](#), and to the public via a [University website](#).

Moving forward, the University will undertake the following measures and actions to ensure the continued implementation and execution of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement.

1. Each academic program has been asked to review its goals and program standards for the 2020-21 academic year in light of its annual assessment of the 2019-20 academic year. Subsequently, each academic program will complete the Annual Academic Program Assessment Report to be submitted to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and the University Assessment Council in the fall 2021 semester, using the updated goals as the starting point for assessment, while also incorporating degree completion and curricular improvements made during the year.
2. Moving forward all program assessment, including the updating of goals and curriculum as warranted, will be conducted with Annual Academic Program Assessment Reports submitted every fall semester thereafter until the University hits a five-year point, which is anticipated in the 2023-24 academic year.
3. All Annual Academic Program Assessment Reports will be evaluated annually by the University Assessment Council, and suggestions on improvements in key metrics such as degree completion will be offered to academic programs.
4. At the five-year point, each academic program will conduct a “major assessment” that summarizes findings over the five years, analyzes trends, and describes plans for continuous program improvement as per our existing process.
5. Following the Major Program Assessment Report in fall 2024, academic programs will return to Annual Academic Program Assessment Report submissions.
6. Future plans for assessment also include modifications to the Annual Template by the University Assessment Council in Summer 2021, the distribution of the modified Annual Template to the academic programs in August 2021, the submission of all Academic Program Assessment Reports by November 2021 and their publication in December 2021, and the submission of Academic Program “Major Assessment Reports” in fall 2024.

By implementing these measures, as per the MSCHE action letter, Catholic University has documented the “implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement (Standard V).”

As also demonstrated throughout this SIR, The Catholic University of America pledges to maintain its commitment to fostering a culture of assessment as described in Standard V, related to the implementation of organized and systematic assessments of student achievement in the general education curriculum.

The University has already undertaken the following measures and actions to ensure the implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in the general education curriculum:

1. The University has mapped our set of goals and outcomes, which had been developed before the implementation of the University’s Liberal Arts Curriculum focused on Enduring Questions, to both curriculum areas and assessment measures.

2. Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) has been evaluating and revising the General Education Curriculum Assessment Plan. These revisions include the following actions:
 - a. Refining the broad and specific goals of the general education curriculum;
 - b. Evaluating courses submitted to the General Education Curriculum Committee and updating course listings to match either foundation or elective level status;
 - c. The GECC has been developing a capstone assessment rubric, which will be piloted in the 2021-22 academic year.
3. The University has continued to collect data through the National Survey of Student Engagement. Data from this survey are available on our [website](#) from 2008 to 2019. Questions from this survey have been mapped to goals and outcomes.
4. The University added the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) Catholic Identity and Mission Assessment (CIMA) survey to its annual data collection procedures in the academic year 2020-21. Questions from this survey have been mapped to goals and outcomes.

Moving forward, the University will undertake the following measures and actions to ensure the continued implementation and execution of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in the general education curriculum:

1. The General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) will finalize the iterative process of revising the goals and outcomes and mapping them to the Enduring Questions for the fall 2021 semester.
2. Each curriculum area will submit an Annual Report to the GECC. They will review which courses approved for the curriculum in each area have been offered and identify areas of strength and necessary improvement in achieving area goals.
3. The GECC will share the results of the Annual Reports by the curriculum areas with the relevant schools and departments and suggest changes to course offerings as needed.
4. The Center for Academic and Career Success (CACCS) will submit an Annual Report to the GECC.
5. The GECC will review grade distribution reports in key classes within the curriculum, including departmental capstone and comprehensive examinations.
6. The GECC and University Assessment Council will review the capstone assessment rubric and modify/revise as needed for the 2022-23 academic year.
7. The GECC will utilize data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) into the assessment of stated general education curriculum goals, working in cooperation with the University Assessment Council.
8. The GECC will incorporate the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) Catholic Identity and Mission Assessment (CIMA) data into the assessment of stated general education goals.
9. Focus groups will be held with faculty and students during the curriculum implementation phase.

By implementing these measures, as per the MSCHE action letter, The Catholic University of America has documented the “implementation of organized and systematic assessments that evaluate the extent of student achievement in general education (Standard V).”