Monitoring Report to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
from
KEAN UNIVERSITY
Union, NJ 07083

Dr. Dawood Farahi, President

Dr. Jeffrey Toney, Chief Academic Officer
Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer

February 27, 2014

Subject of the Follow-Up Report:

To accept the monitoring report and the institution's response to third party comment and to note the visit by the Commission's representatives. To note that the institution is now in compliance with Standard 6 (Integrity), Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), Standard 12 (General Education), and Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning) and to reaffirm accreditation. To request a monitoring report due by March 1, 2014, documenting evidence of (1) steps taken by the Board to regularly review and balance the roles and relationships among multiple constituencies as well as the structures and processes through which they participate in governance, and (2) steps taken by the leadership of the various constituencies to regularly articulate a shared vision about the mission of the institution (Standard 6); (3) the development and implementation by all non-academic units of assessment processes that use substantive and direct measures to evaluate and improve outcomes related to unit as well as institutional mission and goals, and (4) the development and implementation by the written proce of written procedures for the regular and systematic use of assessment results in planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal (Standard 7); and (5) clearly articulated general education outcomes that are assessed in an organized, systematic, and sustainable manner, consistent with the institution's overall plan for assessing student learning, with assessment results that are utilized for curricular improvement (Standard 12). A visit will follow submission of the monitoring report. The Periodic Review Report is now due June 1, 2017.

MSCHE Action, November 15, 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to the Monitoring Report **1**

Standard 6: Integrity **3**

Steps taken September 2012 - February 2014 11

Next Steps 20

Standard 6 Conclusions 21

Standard 6: Integrity Appendices 23

Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness **24**

Actions: September 2012-February 2013 25

Next Steps 29

Actions: September 2012-February 2014 32

Standard 7 Conclusions 34

Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness Appendices 35

Standard 12: General Education **36**

Actions: September 2012-February 2014 39

Evidence of Student Learning in General Education 41

Next Steps 47

Standard 12 Appendices: 49

Conclusion **50**

Introduction to the Monitoring Report

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has requested Kean University provide documented evidence that the institution shows continued compliance, with specific attention to five components within Standard 6 (Integrity), Standard 7 (Institutional Assessment), and Standard 12 (General Education). This Monitoring Report is the University's response to those requests. All the issues raised in the Commission's action letter to the President on November 15, 2012 are addressed in the report that follows. The University has also used the Visiting Team's report of September 13, 2012 to augment its work.

The evidence within this report demonstrates that Kean University continues to be an institution operating with integrity. It has an effective, efficient and sustainable institutional assessment process that is directly aligned to the University's mission and its new Strategic Plan and that directly informs institutional planning. Kean uses data gathered from both non-academic and academic units to pursue thoughtful change at the institutional level, within each unit, and within the classroom. Additionally, this monitoring report provides documentation of a clear set of General Education Student Learning Outcomes that are systematically and directly measured to support the Kean student's learning experience.

The September 2012 Visiting Team report found that Kean University met Standards 6, 7, 12 and 14, making Kean University compliant in all MSCHE standards. Further, the team "was deeply impressed by the degree of passion for the mission expressed by so many members of the community" (Visiting Team Report, September 2012, p. 2). The "care and concern for students…was clearly evident" (p. 4). The team also noted that Kean University is "an institution in the midst of dynamic transformation" (p.4); this is still true today. Kean University continues to move forward. Since the last Monitoring Report, the University has commenced teaching on its own instructional site in China; applied for this site to be reclassified as an additional location by the MSCHE; and on November 21, 2013 received formal approval for the reclassification following a visit by Dr. Michael Middaugh. Inspired by the President's Vision 2020, the University Planning Council has led the University to an ambitious new seven year Strategic Plan that reaffirms the institution's commitment to its mission whilst setting an ambitious agenda for the future. The assessment process that was put in place prior to the last Monitoring Report has therefore been tested by repetition of the assessment cycle, and also by institutional change. The process met these tests and continues to evolve as expertise and experience in assessment grows. The institution is now in its third assessment cycle. This monitoring report details the completion of the first two cycles at the institutional level, within non-academic units and within General Education. It documents the plans for the third cycle for non-academic units, interim results in General Education, and outlines any adjustments that have occurred in the overall system. In addition, it reaffirms the ongoing engagement of the Board of Trustees in the governance and oversight of the varying constituencies of the University, and the activities of the whole community in sharing the common vision of Kean University's mission.

This report begins with the University's response to Standard 6, followed by responses to Standards 7 and 12.

UNIVERSITY PROFILE AS IT RELATES TO THE MONITORING REPORT

Kean University, located in Union, New Jersey, was founded in 1855 as a Normal School for the public school system of the City of Newark, New Jersey. Kean University was among the first institutions of public higher education in the state's history, and it is currently one of twelve institutions that make up the New Jersey State System of Higher Education. Kean has maintained accreditation status from the Middle States Commission of Higher Education since 1960, and formally received university status on September 26, 1997. Kean University is a public, cosmopolitan institution serving highly diverse undergraduate and graduate students in the liberal arts, the sciences, and the professions. The University dedicates itself to the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of the approximately 15,000 students enrolled. Of this number, approximately 2,300 are graduate students, the majority of whom attend on a part-time basis. Additionally, over half of the students currently at Kean will be the first in their families to obtain a college degree.

Kean University takes seriously its mission to provide access and opportunities for academic success and upward social and economic mobility to its widely diverse population. As a comprehensive institution, Kean seeks to prepare students to live within and contribute to a 21st century global environment marked by diversity, change, and expanded opportunities for learning and growth. This is reflected in the institution's mission to ensure that operations are student centered, that student learning reflects a global perspective, and that creative and critical thinking are incorporated into learning objectives across disciplines. The Student Learning Outcomes of each academic program and the goals and objectives of administrative units and programs that support student learning are aligned with the outcomes defined in the University's mission, thus assuring that students achieve the targeted outcomes during their years of study at Kean and beyond.

Standard 6: Integrity

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) determined Kean University complies with this standard, and all MSCHE Standards of Excellence, and reaffirmed the University's accreditation at its session on November 15, 2012. (Letter from MSCHE to Dr. Farahi dated November 15, 2012). This action followed a monitoring report and a team visit, both in September 2012. The commission further requested a Monitoring Report due March 1, 2014 demonstrating the institutions response to each of the recommendations made by MSCHE's September 2012 Visiting Team.

RELATIVE TO STANDARD 6, MSCHE HAS REQUESTED DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF:

- Steps taken by the Board to regularly review and balance the roles and relationships among multiple constituencies as well as the structures and processes through which they participate in governance

- Steps taken by the leadership of the various constituencies to regularly articulate a shared vision about the mission of the institution

The Kean University Board of Trustees and the University administration regularly demonstrate the highest commitment to institutional integrity. This section of the Monitoring Report relies in part on a brief understanding of the history behind the Commission's request, provided herein.

BACKGROUND

In September 2012, Kean University submitted a comprehensive Monitoring Report to the MSCHE, which included a specific section on Standard 6: Integrity. A visiting team from MSCHE followed up with a thorough review and verification of the monitoring report. The site visit, which took place on September 13 and 14, 2012, included detailed discussions with representative constituents including members of the Board of Trustees.

The Visiting Team's report on Standard 6 noted the following:

> *Kean University is an institution in the midst of dynamic transformation. The team heard significant pride in and support for the institutional mission in meetings with many different leaders and constituents. The care and concern for students, which is the heart of the purpose of accreditation, was clearly evident in the team's discussions and review of materials.*
>
> *At the same time, the team observed specific changes resulting from broad institutional transformation have posed conflict and struggles for Kean that are not easy to resolve and will require continuing earnest collaboration across and among all constituencies.*

In every meeting, the team heard expressions of appreciation for the Middle States' process that helped Kean University achieve greater clarity of its institutional approach to issues of assessment and integrity (Visiting Team Report, September 2012, p.4).

These observations describe where Kean was in September 2012. When the 2012 Visiting Team determined that the University met this standard, they noted that they had "probed the Board's understanding of its responsibility for establishing a clear tone of the highest commitment to institutional integrity" and that they were "satisfied the Board understands its responsibility and is able to demonstrate such commitment."

During the yearlong process leading to the September 2012 Visiting Team report, the Board of Trustees embraced a more proactive role in demonstrating their understanding of shared governance and their willingness to play a leading role in fostering communication among the University's diverse constituencies. Board members hosted listening sessions with faculty leadership, union leadership, student leaders, alumni, community leaders and professional staff to gather an enhanced understanding of the challenges and the opportunities at Kean. These sessions provided valuable perspective and feedback for Board members, all of whom expressed the benefits of such sessions in further informing their policymaking and oversight responsibilities.

Indeed, in its September 2012 report, the Visiting Team stated its belief that "the Board's commitment to a series of meetings with campus constituencies communicates a level of respect for each constituency that helps to build trust and confidence in the campus community and the institution's leadership." Among the "Significant Accomplishments" listed in the September 2012 Visiting Team Report was that, "The Kean Board of Trustees has demonstrated [a] clear understanding of its responsibility to exert leadership to ensure integrity throughout the campus" (Visiting Team Report, September 2012).

As part of their discussions with the Board of Trustees, Visiting Team members advised the Board members on the importance of maintaining the momentum it had developed with the leadership of various campus constituencies. Team members at the same time also emphasized the importance of the Board maintaining a governing role in such sessions rather than getting involved in day-to-day management. What follows are examples of the steps Kean has taken since that visit to strengthen our commitment even further.

RELATIVE TO STANDARD 6, MSCHE HAS REQUESTED DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF:

- Steps taken by the Board to regularly review and balance the roles and relationships among multiple constituencies as well as the structures and processes through which they participate in governance

SUMMARY

The Kean University Board of Trustees continues to engage in a broad range of discussions with

constituencies across the campus. Such engagement is observatory, consistent with the role of the Board as a governing body, not management of day to day operations. Board members are actively engaged in campus activities such as galas, concerts and lecture series, and attendance at meetings of the University Planning Council, the Faculty Senate, the Leadership Council and Student Government organizations. Importantly, Board members also were proactive in the recent Strategic Planning process through continuous engagement with the University Planning Council, including providing input on draft plans under development. The 2013-20 Strategic Plan is a clear example of how different constituencies came together to articulate a shared vision for the institution. The plan, which went through several iterations and review, enables the University to chart out a clear path for its future.

The Board reviews all action letters from MSCHE and is updated regularly on assessment activities. The Board's meaningful engagement in campus activities has promoted continuous institutional improvement. Two recent examples of Board actions are the creation of a Board Governance Committee and an Ombudsman position for the University. Benefits from the Board Governance Committee include Trustee mentorship and assessment, ensuring best practices in governing and in the recruitment and education of newly appointed Trustees. The Ombudsman position is an example of shared governance, as its role is being defined by input from a range of constituencies including the Faculty Senate and the Center for Student Leadership. It will focus on the resolution of individual, organizational and campus issues as they arise.

This section is organized into seven sub-sections, each articulating steps the Board of Trustees has taken in response to this MSCHE recommendation:

1. Meetings with Campus Leadership
2. Board of Trustees Public Meetings
3. Participation in Campus Activities
4. Strategic Planning
5. MSCHE Information
6. Creation of Board Governance Committee
7. Creation of an Ombudsman

1. Meetings with Campus Leadership

Following the report by the Visiting Team, the Board Chair announced that Board members would regularly attend the meetings of key campus organizations as observers. Board members agreed that these observations would further enhance their understanding of issues and opportunities available on campus. In addition, Board members would be in a better position to help balance the roles and relationships among multiple campus constituencies. At the same time, the Board agreed such participation would allow Board members to observe faculty, students, administrators and collective bargaining unit leaders in leadership activities, rather than solely at the Board's public sessions.

Specifically, the Board Chair directed that at least one board member serve as an observer at all meetings of the Faculty Senate, the Leadership Forum and Student Government. The Faculty Senate is the elected, representative body of faculty and professional staff members charged with providing recommendations to the President on such matters as faculty affairs, curriculum, instruction and academic curricula and program issues. Members of the Leadership Forum include Faculty Senate Chair, Chair of the Leadership Forum, leaders from all campus collective bargaining units, Student Government Leadership, and the senior administration of the University, who meet monthly to discuss and potentially address topics of interest. Student Government consists of the elected and appointed leadership of all major student organizations on campus.

In announcing this directive, the Board Chair emphasized the importance of Board members observing the work, the discussions, the issues, the challenges and the success stories of this broad range of campus constituencies. She noted the importance of using such forums as a means of information gathering, but emphasized the assignment as observatory in nature, not participatory.

Since the inception of this program, Board members have attended all 45 scheduled meetings of the above-mentioned groups. In Appendix 6.1, the Board provides its record of attendance at each meeting. Board members today are a more visible presence on campus; many report an overall positive result from the attendance at such sessions, noting the observations often lead to better-informed discussions and decision-making at Board committee meetings and public sessions. This practice continues.

2. Board of Trustees Public Meetings

As noted in the University's previous monitoring report, open public meetings of the Board of Trustees serve as conduit through which information is shared with the University community, and the community has an opportunity to communicate with Trustees. Since the Commission's decision in November 2012, the Board has held five regularly scheduled public meetings and one special public meeting. These public sessions provide regular opportunities for the general campus community and the leadership of key campus organizations--the Faculty Senate, the University Planning Council, Student Government, the Leadership Forum--to present issues, concerns and news to the Board. Each speaker is encouraged to provide their comments in writing in advance of the board meeting, and is provided with three minutes of public speaking time. All members of the Board are provided with copies of the public comments in advance of the Board meeting (when provided) or at the meeting when distributed by the speaker. The Board does not impose any limit on the number of speakers at a public session. The Board also regularly posts its meeting agendas and the minutes of its Public Sessions on the Kean website, in compliance with best practices and New Jersey regulations. These documents are available at http://www.kean.edu/KU/Board-of-Trustees. In Appendix 6.2, the Board provides the full list of persons, with their affiliations, who registered to speak at public sessions from December 2012 through the present.

Additionally, each public session of the Board of Trustees features presentations by faculty, students and professional staff on key programs, initiatives and success stories at the University. Such presentations range from the College of Education's work on the award-winning "Share the Keys" initiative to help prepare high school students to be better drivers; to presentations of award-winning work created by the students and faculty of the Robert Busch School of Design; to the development of a special "app" to track and report power outages by students and faculty in the Computer Science and Criminal Justice programs. The time devoted to these presentations gives the University's colleges, centers of excellence, students, alumni and leaders of new campus initiatives a great opportunity to share with the Board and the public those initiatives that support the University's shared mission and shared vision of access and excellence. These presentations are an estimated 10-20 minutes each, providing students, faculty and professional staff alike with time to provide a comprehensive overview of services and programs. These presentations also inform the Board of closing the loop activities that take place in support of the University's strategic objectives.

In Appendix 6.3, the Board provides a list of campus constituents who made feature presentations on their programs and initiatives at public meetings of the Board of Trustees from December 2012 through the present.

3. Participation in Campus Activities

Board members also recognize that the heart and spirit of a campus community cannot always be measured through structured meetings and official settings. Indeed, Kean's strengths, diversity and pride are most easily experienced and shared in the academic and social activities that define the University's mission of providing a world-class experience for students and faculty alike. Throughout the year, Board members regularly participate in dozens of campus activities--as speakers, audience members, contributors and fans. Since the November 2012 Commission action, Board of Trustees members have been active participants in programs, conferences and events developed, hosted and/or sponsored by Kean University, including:

- Opening Day Addresses and Receptions
- Faculty and Student Research Days
- Annual Conference on Human Rights hosted by the Human Rights Institute at Kean University
- Kean Athletics Competitions
- University Homecoming
- Graduate and Undergraduate Commencement Ceremonies
- African-American Studies Commencement Ceremonies
- Honors Convocation
- Wenzhou-Kean University Advisory Board
- Grand Opening of Kean Ocean Gateway Building

- Grand Opening of Wenzhou-Kean University Campus
- Kean University Annual Gala
- New Jersey Lieutenant Governor's Debate
- Graduate and Undergraduate Open Houses
- Kean University Annual Golf Outing
- Governor's Ball at Liberty Hall Museum
- Concert Programs at Enlow Recital Hall
- Academic and Professional Performances in Wilkins Theatre
- Global Business Advisory Board
- Arts and Theatre Advisory Board
- New Jersey Greenfest
- Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony
- Annual Scholarship Reception

4. Strategic Planning

Further demonstration of steps the Board has taken to "...regularly review and balance the roles and relationships among multiple constituencies as well as the structures and processes through which they participate in governance" can be found in the proactive role the Board played in the development and adoption of the 2013-2020 Strategic Plan for Kean University. Board members embraced their active participation with faculty, administration and professional staff in reviewing and providing feedback on the work of the University Planning Council in this area. (The University Planning Council is the most inclusive campus organization; it includes leaders of all collective bargaining agents, chair of the faculty Senate and several other faculty, student leaders and many senior administrators; see Standard 7 report for more detail). The collaborative effort has provided the Trustees with another opportunity to ensure that all campus constituencies participate in the governance processes and that the final strategic plan is a reflection of our shared vision for the future of the University.

From 2012 through December 2013, Board members received regular briefings from the Chair of the University Planning Council on the status of the University Strategic Plan at public sessions and in committee meetings. Board members received draft copies of the report as it was developed, and were provided significant opportunities for input and feedback. The Board Chair tasked the Academic Policy and Programs Committee specifically with receiving regular updates on the development of the plan. All Board members were encouraged to provide feedback, editing and strategic direction for the initiative.

Additionally, to further support the Board's participation in planning efforts, the Board Chair reached out to the Association of Governing Boards to request materials and services that would better inform Board members about strategic planning for universities prior to the adoption of the strategic plan. All Board members received a copy of the AGB report, *"Top 10 Strategic Issues for Board 2013-2014,"* and were provided with access to AGB expertise on this topic.

The final draft of the 2013-2020 Strategic Plan for Kean University was presented to the full Board in September 2013. Board members were asked to provide feedback prior to the December Board 2013 Board meeting; the Board provided feedback through the APP committee and the final plan was adopted publicly by Board Resolution on December 7, 2013 (See Appendix 6.4).

5. MSCHE Information

As noted in the University's September 1, 2012 monitoring report, all letters and actions received by the University from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education are promptly shared with and reviewed by members of the Kean University Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, through its committee structure and at public sessions, also requests and receives regular updates on campus efforts related to assessment and compliance with MSCHE Standards of Excellence.

6. Creation of Board Governance Committee

Following the 2013 National Association of Governing Boards (AGB) Conference on Trusteeship, Board Chair Morell directed the Executive Director to the Board to research the possibility of creating a Governance Committee of the Board that would assist trustees in mentorship, responsibilities and best practices. The Chair reported that the Board's ability to build stronger, more productive relationships with various campus constituencies, and to strike the right balance of roles with such constituencies starts with building a better-educated and better-informed Board.

Research from AGB and other entities found that most private and independent colleges have a Governance Committee or a Committee on Trusteeship, whose primary responsibility is to identify and cultivate new trustees for service. As the appointment of trustees in public institutions is generally dictated by a legal/governmental process, not as many public institutions have established these types of committees. However, AGB research also found that those public institutions that *have* established Governance Committees feel they play a productive and informative role in Board discussions. The recommendation from Chair Morell to the full Board was to create a Governance Committee whose primary responsibilities would include:

- New trustee mentorship
- Annual trustee assessment
- Board retreats
- Best Practices in Governance (committee charters, etc.)
- Annual review of Board Bylaws
- Board Education/Issues Briefings

The creation of the committee required a minor amendment to the bylaws of the Board noting its creation as a standing committee. The resolution was adopted unanimously at the December 2013 Board of Trustees public meeting, and a copy of the resolution is attached (see Appendix 6.5: Board Creation of the Governance Committee). The Chair appointed four members to serve on the committee; its first meeting is planned for March 2014, at which time the committee members will develop a charter and future meeting schedule.

7. Creation of an Ombudsman

In response to faculty suggestions made during a meeting of the Faculty Senate Assessment Committee with members of the Board of Trustees and senior administrators, the University last year established the position of Ombudsman to serve as a neutral, campus-wide resource for assisting in problem solving. President Farahi appointed former Interim University President Dr. Frank Esposito, now a distinguished professor with the History Department and an elected member of the Faculty Senate, to serve in this capacity. His appointment was approved by the Board of Trustees at its December 2013 meeting. Since that time, Dr. Esposito has met with the leadership of various campus constituencies, including the Board Chair, to develop a shared vision of the role the ombudsman will play helping to resolve individual, organizational and campus issues when they arise.

RELATIVE TO STANDARD 6, MSCHE HAS REQUESTED DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF:

- Steps taken by the leadership of the various constituencies to regularly articulate a shared vision about the mission of the institution

SUMMARY

The entire community -- Kean's Board, administration, faculty and students -- has been actively engaged in articulating the shared vision about the mission of the University in many ways. President Farahi regularly shares the challenges the University faces and a vision for the future both in official forums and less formal work sessions with groups throughout campus and externally as well. These discussions and input have greatly contributed to refining academic and institutional objectives, the creation of new programs and opportunities for engagement, and participation in realizing the objectives of our strategic plan 2013-2020. These discussions take many forms, including Presidential luncheon discussions with units throughout the campus, regular meetings of a scheduling and advisement Task Force; University-wide Biannual Assessment Institutes; public Board meetings; the highlighting of faculty and student achievements and awards in internal and external communications, and videos, blogs and articles produced by campus leaders publishing their ideas and opinions about Kean's mission and the future of higher education in scholarly journals, as well as national and international news media.

Perhaps the best summary response to this recommendation is found in the President's annual Opening Day Address, to which the entire campus community is invited. In his most-recent

speech, Dr. Farahi not only provided a report on the state of the University to those in attendance, he also presented more than 40 examples of Kean faculty, staff and students communicating and carrying out Kean's shared vision of access and excellence.

This response is organized into 11 sections:

1. University Planning Council (UPC)
2. Biannual Assessment Institute
3. Public Board Meetings
4. Task Force on Course Scheduling and Student Advisement
5. Presidential Luncheons
6. University Relations
7. External Publications, Projects and Presentations
8. Assessment
9. Vice Presidents
10. Student Leadership and Governance
11. Kean in Wenzhou

STEPS TAKEN SEPTEMBER 2012 - FEBRUARY 2014

1. University Planning Council (UPC)

Among the significant accomplishments noted in the September 2012 Visiting Team Report was that, "The administration and faculty, through collaboration on the UPC and through other processes, have demonstrated the ability to collaborate effectively on planning and assessment" (Visiting Team Report, September 2012, p. 6).

The strategic planning process at Kean University continues to engage widespread involvement. The University Planning Council, which is described in detail in (Standard 7-Appendix 7.1: Kean University Institutional Assessment System), is charged with developing the Strategic Plan (see full plan at Appendix 6.6: 2013-2020 Kean University Strategic Plan). This year, the UPC evaluated and reorganized its committee structure to include three standing committees: (1) Strategic Plan Committee; (2) Committee to Coordinate the Annual Review of Assessment Results in Planning, Resource Allocation and Institutional Renewal; and (3) Annual Scorecard Committee. Through the Strategic Plan development phase, the UPC members served on ten Strategic Goal subcommittees. These subcommittees and their membership are detailed in the UPC's Chair Report in (Standard 7 - Appendix 7.11), and demonstrate the diverse range of participation on every important University matter.

2. Biannual Assessment Institute and Professional Development Days

The Offices of Academic Affairs, Accreditation and Assessment, and Professional Development, in consultation with the Office of the President and the Executive Director to

the Board of Trustees, implemented a Biannual Assessment Institute and a series of Professional Development Days (five contiguous days in total) for staff and faculty to further Kean's mission and to implement several goals of the Strategic Plan. The biannual Assessment Institute, Professional Development Days and accompanying employee training sessions enhanced faculty development, elicited a sharing of internal best practices and ensured continuous improvement through a sustainable cycle of quality assessment practices. Over the course of the five days, 71 sessions were offered by Kean faculty and staff, with 421 overall Kean participants, and 126 Kean presenters. Topics ranged from assessment and strategic planning to technology and quality customer service training (see Appendix 6.7 for the full Assessment Institute Schedule).

All sessions supported one or more goals of Kean's Strategic Plan. For example, UPC Strategic Plan goal number 3.2 seeks to "support faculty recruitment and retention through professional development opportunities necessary to build an ever-evolving career at Kean." Goal 9 strives "to ensure that all students, faculty, and administrators at all Kean sites are provided with the technological resources and innovative technological solutions required to meet Kean's fast changing and increasingly complex instructional, research and administrative needs." Goal number 2 is "to attract and retain more full-time, first-time undergraduate students, transfer and graduate students."

Examples of these sessions include:

- Library staff presentation on use of eBooks and electronic resources
- A training on emergency preparedness and campus security by Adam Shubsda, Director Campus Police
- Student advisement training by Dr. Barry Mascari, Counselor Education

3. Community Sharing Vision at Public Board Meetings

As described in Section I of this document, the Kean Board of Trustees convenes, on average, five public meetings each year during which any member of the public is afforded the opportunity to address the Board. In addition to the general public comment session, the Board, the University President or a member of the Administration may invite a presentation on a special project, program or accomplishment. The Board and all in attendance hear from Kean community members immersed in the University's shared mission at every Board of Trustees meeting. (See Appendix 6.8 for a sample of such presentations offered during the public board meetings since October 2012).

4. Task Force on Course Scheduling and Student Advisement

In January 2013, President Farahi created a University-wide Task Force on course scheduling and student advisement. The Task Force is comprised of faculty, students, administrators, including a KFT representative and the Chair of the Faculty Senate. The task force has met 13 times since. (See meeting dates in Appendix 6.9: President's Task Force: Meeting

Dates). Through this process, the Task Force has developed University Scheduling Guidelines and an Academic Planning Calendar that all members agreed to—not an easy task. (See attached Appendices 6.10: University Scheduling Guidelines and 6.11: Academic Planning Calendar).

On April 23, 2013, Professor Patrick Ippolito, chair of the Faculty Senate, led a town hall meeting to garner input about new scheduling guidelines. Professor Ippolito worked with the Vice President for Student Affairs, Janice Murray Laury, to develop a PowerPoint presentation for this meeting (see attached PowerPoint, Appendix 6.12). Chairman Ippolito and Vice President Murray Laury followed up at the appropriate places on issues presented by the public. The new Scheduling Guidelines were also shared at the Leadership Forum, Council of Deans meeting, the Executive Directors and Chairs meeting, via the Kean Website and via email. The Office of Academic Affairs also advised all Executive Directors, Chairs and Coordinators to share these guidelines with their units.

5. President's Luncheons

For more than a decade, President Farahi has engaged the campus community personally through individual and group interactions. The President routinely walks the campus environment, greeting students, faculty, and visitors alike. He regularly dines in the University Center cafeteria, holds one-on-one or small group meetings in the Library Starbucks and he encourages ongoing dialogue with all campus constituencies.

Furthering that effort, the President holds meetings with various leaders in the academic and administrative departments in order to inform the community of the challenges and opportunities we face as a public university, seek out creative ideas on new programs, student recruitment and retention, issues of concerns to particular groups and things we can do together. Since the last MSCHE team visit in 2012, several meetings were held with participants from the academic and administrative units listed below. For example, when the University prepared applications for New Jersey's Building Our Future Bond Act funds, Assistant Vice President of Facilities, Phyllis Duke joined President Farahi at a series of lunch meetings, including one with the Faculty Senate, to give a presentation on the proposals (see Appendix 6.13).

Faculty and staff from the following units were invited to meetings with the President and senior staff, since September, 2012:

- Marketing and International Business
- School of Accounting & Finance
- School of Nursing
- School of Elementary and Bilingual Education
- The Center for Academic Success

- Members of the Kean Community who expressed interest in the Vision 2020 project as well as new hires to the University. This lunch included Professional Staff, Managers and Professors.
- Human Resources
- Office of Computer and Information Services
- Facilities Department
- University Planning Committee
- Faculty Senate
- Directors and Managers: Alumni Relations, Center for Professional Development, College of Education, Communications & Disorders, Conference and Event Services, Center for Innovative Education, Dean of Graduate Studies, Graduate Student Services, Foundation, Institutional Research, Internal Audit, Library, Occupational Therapy, Payroll, Professional Impact NJ 2013, Progressive SCI unit, Psychology, Robert Busch School of Design, Research & Sponsored Programs, School of Performing Arts, School of General Studies, Special Ed/Lit/Counsel, T3 Kean/Newark, Teacher Certification, Teaching Performance Center, VP of Institutional Advancement.
- Directors and Managers: Affirmative Action, Africana Studies, Campus Police, Career Services Center, Counseling, Diversity, EEO Program, Health Services, Hispanic Foster Care, Office Student Conduct, One stop Service Center, and Premier Administration.
- School of Global Education and Innovation
- The Child Advocacy and Resource Association
- Academic Affairs Office
- Office of the Registrar
- Community Standards and Student Conduct
- Upward Bound
- School of Psychology
- Scholarship Services
- School of Environmental and Sustainability Sciences
- Student Leadership Council
- Biological Sciences
- Physical Education/Recreation/Health
- Criminal Justice

These meetings have led to many ideas on closing the loop activities, improvements in learning support programs, data sharing systems, student retention and internship programs, outreach activities and student recruitment, training programs, new academic programming and much more. Several ideas have been implemented, some have become part of our strategic plan and some are being formulated. They have ranged from simple issues such as the lunch options available on East Campus and mail delivery to Kean Ocean to the creation of a $2 million Occupational Therapy Clinic (now complete) and offering a Ph.D. Program in Speech Pathology (in progress) and a degree program in International Business (at the last stage of approval). In academia, it is not always possible to reach total

consensus on all issues and secure the full support of every member of every constituency. Yet, ideas and concerns about the University's Vision 2020 plan have been freely discussed and most participants expressed their support and interest in a shared vision for the future. As a result many of these ideas and suggestions became part of the University's strategic plan, later adopted by the Board of Trustees.

6. University Relations

There are many mediums of communication, both electronic and print, to inform the community about issues and the accomplishment of our students and faculty. They also serve as forums for discussion and putting forward innovative ideas.

Different University constituencies also utilize University Relations to communicate their part in the shared vision with the campus community. Since October of 2012, University Relations has sent out more than 400 email blasts to the Kean Community. University Relations uses a dynamic new website, KeanXchange, to inform the community about academic achievements, student activities, and social events. Since October, 2012, Kean's media and publications office produced more than 450 highly professional videos featuring students, faculty, and friends of the University who had a Kean story to tell. A selection of quotes from a few of these videos and hyperlinks to the full videos can be found in Appendix 6.14: Select Quotes and Videos.

7. Communicating With the External Community

Students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni and members of the Board of Trustees communicate with external constituencies through various publications, projects and presentations. A few examples are:

Kean Current:

Kean's work to enhance and expand communication both within the Kean community and beyond campus borders came to life with the introduction of a new publication *Kean Current*. This publication is produced by a committee of representatives from the President's Office, the Office of Student Leadership, University Relations, and Academic Affairs. This committee reaches out to departments throughout the University for content, and student work is a major source of contribution. The managers of the final product are: Michael Aneson, Administrative Assistant (and a Kean alumnus and Kean graduate student); Scott Snowden, Director of the Center for Leadership and Service (and Kean alumnus); Joey Moran, Creative Director in University Relations (and Kean alumnus); and Benito Nieves, who was a Kean Student at the start of publication and is now a Kean alumnus working in Student Affairs. Student contributors include: Jacqueline Giase, Strawberry Gallagher, Garieka Godfrey, Megan Lovelace, Stephanie Martinez, Steven Okine, Rachel Syko, Rachel Nierres, Vincent Plenzo, Shaida Sadi, John Camacho, and Hermanshu Agnihorti. In addition to the semester calendars of campus events and advertisements for

the University's museum, galleries and theaters, see Appendix 6.15 for a list of titles covered in this communication to date.

Each issue produced can be found at http://www.kean.edu/KU/Publications**.**

Sample examples of other external Publications, projects and presentations communicating Kean's shared vision:

- Polirstok, Susan., *The Star Ledger*, "*Kean Ahead of the Game*," September 20, 2013.
- Polirstok, S; Ortiz, V; Del Risco, G; Verdi, G; The Latino Institute, Inc.; Latinos and the Future of Higher Education Conference; "Creating Communities that Support College and Career Readiness in Higher Education for Latino Students: Implications for Teacher Education" April 9-10, 2013
- Dr. Jeffrey Toney serves on the Steering Committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Human Rights Coalition, launched in January 2009, and as co-Chair of the Outreach and Communications Committee.
- Toney, J.H., *The Star Ledger*, "*Kean Vision Working*," April 16, 2013
- Toney, J.H., *the New York Times,* "*New Campuses in China*," January 25, 2013, A18.
- Susan Gannon, Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, invited a nationally-acclaimed expert on science communication, Cara Santa Maria, to speak at Research Days 2013: Video highlights at: http://media.kean.edu/vid/media/kean-research-days-cara-santa-maria
- President Dawood Farahi was the Keynote speaker at the New Jersey Latinos in Higher Education conference on April 10, 2013, delivering a speech entitled, "*Students soar when educators help them find the gifts they each have inside."*
- President Dawood Farahi has twice served, in 2010 and 2012, as the international keynote speaker at the China Annual Conference for International Education sponsored by the China Education Association for International Education (CEAIE).
- The Office of Accreditation and Assessment led by Ian Klein presented "Kean University – It Takes a Village" at the IUPUI National Assessment Institute (10/29/13) and at the NEEAN (New England Educational Assessment Network) Conference at Holy Cross University (11/1/2013).

KeanLift:

"KeanLift" is perhaps one of the University's simplest but most tangible examples of how the leadership of various campus constituencies communicates a shared vision about the University. Launched in 2013, KeanLift is the University's pilot crowd-funding initiative—a program designed to build financial support for programs and initiatives that are of value to the Kean community and the communities we serve. The effort was truly a collaborative

undertaking. The Office of Sponsored Research and Programs worked closely with University Relations to develop a look and a technical platform for the fundraising tool. Both departments worked closely with the Kean Foundation to identify areas of need and opportunities for assistance. Together, the project identified a faculty-based initiative aimed at reducing violence and gang-related issues in urban areas as the first project for a KeanLift. The University surpassed its goal of raising $5,000 for the initiative - funds came from students, faculty, administrators, board members and alumni alike. Since that time two more initiatives have been spotlighted on KeanLift, with similar successful results. The common theme through each project funded to date is providing opportunities for students who might not otherwise be able to access or afford them—projects that live and breathe the very mission of Kean University. A look at the donor list for one such project can be found at: http://keanlift.kean.edu/campaign/detail/1874.

8. Assessment

The Kean community's active commitment to an ongoing cycle of improvement through sustainable assessment is another shared vision that is being communicated campus-wide. The following link leads to academic assessment reports AY11-12 and AY 12-13: http://www.kean.edu/KU/Academic-Assessment.

These reports are the culmination of assessment analysis carried out in the May (spring term data) and the January (fall term data) Assessment Institutes. The University's ongoing steps taken include: University-wide syllabus template with embedded SLO's, department or School faculty meetings throughout the academic year (usually during College hour when courses are not scheduled) to discuss adjustments to the process, including reassessing SLO's, academic program learning outcomes, and possible curriculum revision based upon the assessment data. In addition, the University has ongoing academic program review on a three-year cycle as a separate, complementary process.

9. Vice Presidents

While the President meets with various constituencies throughout the year, ongoing communication between the Administration, faculty, staff and students also takes place via regular participation in standing campus committees. All Vice Presidents, the Executive Director to the Board of Trustees and the President's Special Counsel participate on the University Planning Council and the Leadership Forum.

- **The Executive Vice President for Operations**

  The Executive Vice President for Operations, Philip Connelly, chairs the President's Task Force on Course Scheduling and Student Advisement and the Leadership Forum. He also represents the University in meetings with the Collective Bargaining Units.

All members of the Leadership Forum are invited to submit their own agenda items for each meeting. Everything submitted is put on the agenda (see Appendix 6.16 for Leadership Forum Meeting Dates, Membership List, Attendance Lists and Agendas).

The President's Task Force on Course Scheduling and Advisement has representatives from Administration, faculty, staff and students. Every college and Kean Ocean are represented. The Faculty Senate Chair, a representative appointed by the Kean Federation of Teachers, undergraduate and graduate students are members as well. (The full President's Task Force: Membership List is attached in Appendix 6.17).

The Executive Vice President for Operations, Mr. Connelly, also represents the University administration in monthly (or more) negotiation meetings with Collective Bargaining Units. (Negotiation Meeting Dates with the Collective Bargaining Units are attached in Appendix 6.18).

- **The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost**

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Dr. Jeffrey Toney, chairs weekly meetings with the Council of Deans, including discussions of shared mission and vision. He presided over a Council of Deans retreat on October 16, 2013, at which each Dean presented their vision for their College aligned with the University mission, as well as a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).

Dr. Toney holds regular meetings with academic program Executive Directors and Chairs, and schedules periodic unit meetings at which faculty and administrators present their vision and mission for their academic program aligned with the University mission. Dr. Toney also joins the Executive Vice President of Operations in negotiation meetings with the Kean Federation of Teachers, and a representative from the Provost's Office regularly attends Faculty Senate meetings.

- **The Vice President for Institutional Advancement**

The Vice President for Institutional Advancement, Diane Schwartz, meets monthly with staff to discuss the University's broad vision and various details of special initiatives and plans designed to improve outreach to potential and current donors She and developed a divisional strategic plan in alignment with the University's Strategic Plan. She meets with the other Vice Presidents and individual staff members to share information regarding donor solicitation and cultivation meetings, and she reviews University Relations materials regarding the work and achievements of faculty and students in order to inform donors, alumni and prospective donors about their work.

- **The Vice President of Student Affairs**

The Vice President of Student Affairs, Janice Murray Laury, chairs monthly Student Leadership Council meetings. The Student Leadership Council serves as a major communication network between student leaders and the University administration. The President regularly consults with this group regarding new initiatives related to development projects, major academic initiatives, annual budget plans, strategic planning proposals, and other issues. The other Vice Presidents may attend at least once per semester. (A Description of the Student Leadership Council and its Membership is attached at Appendix 6.19).

10. Student Leadership and Governance

In addition to the Student Leadership Council, Kean University has two student governing bodies: The Student Organization, which is the undergraduate student government, and The Graduate and Part-time Student Government Association. These two bodies have monthly public meetings at which they conduct business, share information, and invite input from the community. They have offices in the University Center and East Campus, respectively, where board members and staff meet with students seeking assistance, representation on an issue or to learn how they can get involved. Vice President Murray Laury regular attends the student governing body meetings.

Students are also afforded wide representation on University Committees. Students have a seat on standing University committees such as the UPC, the Leadership Forum and the President's Scheduling and Advisement Task Force. Students also hold an elected seat on the Board of Trustees, as well as an alternate seat on the Board of Trustees, and serve as members of the Board's Student and University Affairs Committee.

Students also participate in many *ad hoc* committees. For example, student representatives serve on a variety of committees formed for decision-making related to the development of new facilities, from review of developer proposals and selection of the same, to design charrettes and end use discussions. (A list of Standing Committees on which Student Leaders Participate is attached at Appendix 6.20).

11. Kean at Wenzhou, China

Kean's shared vision spans the globe, literally, through the University's additional location in China, Wenzhou-Kean University. The Chancellor of Wenzhou-Kean University, Dr. Robert Cirasa, is a longtime Kean faculty member and administrator, and two key campus leaders -- Dr. Suzanne Bousquet, chair of the University Planning Council and Acting Dean of the College of the Humanities and Social Sciences, and Professor Patrick Ippolito, chair of the Faculty Senate, traveled to Wenzhou in April, 2013, to lead a seminar in shared governance with faculty and staff there. A number of Kean-USA faculty have gone to Wenzhou to conduct peer observations and evaluations. The University Planning Council recently added Professor Charles Anderson as a designated representative of Wenzhou-Kean University.

In October 2013, President Farahi, Executive Vice President for Operations Philip Connelly, Student Organization President Chaz Fellenz and the MSCHE's site visit representative Dr. Michael Middaugh visited Kean's Wenzhou campus. During this site visit, President Farahi, Vice President Connelly, Student Organization President Fellenz and many members of the Wenzhou campus community spent time communicating Kean's shared vision to Dr. Middaugh. At the conclusion of this visit, Dr. Middaugh forwarded his report to the Commission, which resulted in the Commission's decision to affirm the formerly provisional approval and include the Wenzhou campus in Kean's accreditation.

Student leaders in Wenzhou quickly emerged as vocal members of the Kean community as well, forming student groups and leading the development of student activities in coordination with Wenzhou-Kean University and Kean USA Student Affairs Administration and staff. The first student group formed by the students in Wenzhou was Kiwi News, a fully student run news organization that is actively engaged with the University community.

NEXT STEPS

The University will continue on the path of shared governance and open communication.

1. The Board of Trustees will continue to designate a representative to attend meetings of the Leadership Council, the Student Government Organization and the Faculty Senate and seek feedback, when appropriate, from all constituents on policy matters.
2. The Board will continue to develop the workings of the Governance Committee, to engage in an ongoing process of assessment and improvement in all its functions.
3. At the appropriate times, as identified in consultation with the President and the UPC Chair, the Board will invite the UPC Chair to report at Board Committee and/or public Board meetings.
4. At least one public Board of Trustees meeting each year will be held at Kean Ocean, and the Board will send a representative to an annual meeting of the Wenzhou-Kean University Advisory Board in Wenzhou, who will report back to the Kean Board of Trustees.
5. The President will continue to meet with the University Planning Council, the Faculty Senate and the Student Government organization at least twice a year. Meetings with faculty and other groups will continue as it has been the practice for many years.
6. The Task Force on Course Scheduling and Advisement will continue to monitor, consult and recommend means for improved efficiency in course scheduling, meeting the challenges of balancing students' needs for course availability with students' needs for a fiscal efficiency that gives them more for less. The Task Force will also produce academic advisement guidelines that create a fair, effective and accountable system of ensuring that students plan a four-year curriculum, stay on track and get the resources they need to graduate on time and are prepared to seek meaningful employment.

7. The executive team will continue to participate as members of UPC and the Leadership Forum.
8. The Vice President for Operations will continue monthly meetings with collective bargaining agents to resolve outstanding local matters and reach local agreements on issues specific to Kean University, whenever authorized by the OER.
9. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will continue to meet with the Council of Deans and other academic leadership such as Executive Directors, Chairs and coordinators while maintaining close communication with the Faculty Senate. The Deans' retreat will continue each semester, focused on SWOT analysis, innovation and intercollegiate collaboration to ensure coordinated implementation of strategic plans and shared vision to best meet the needs of students of today and tomorrow. The Council of Deans will obtain regular updates from the President's Task Force committees, UPC (including UPC committee chairs) as well as the Student Leadership Council to strengthen shared governance.

STANDARD 6 CONCLUSIONS

This report clearly documents the robust participatory system at Kean University and describes the established bodies that play significant roles in developing and helping to implement the shared vision of the University and our strategic goals for the future. There has been considerable progress and meeting of the minds in many areas and the momentum will be maintained. Most stakeholders recognize the immensity of financial challenges facing public institutions, the tremendous pressure from on-line providers of higher education and the external pressures on the academe to become more cost-efficient, student-centered, and more accountable. Kean must also focus on developing and implementing high quality programs and significantly improve graduation rates, now a major issue with the State Legislature. Working together, Kean University's diverse communities have a much better chance to face these challenges and turn most of them into opportunities. State aid to institutions proportionate to operating expenses decreases year after year, currently 84% of our operating budget comes from tuition and fees.

Meanwhile, student indebtedness increasingly is a national concern. In times of greater resource availability, and these are not those times, the challenge to please more constituents was not as great. Current conditions demand that Kean be more strategic, more innovative, and more efficient. The University simply must continue to do more for students and to do better by students with the resources available. We must keep our tuition and fees stable and yet improve learning outcomes. To do otherwise is to price ourselves out and nail the window of opportunity for higher education shut for many of our students. Access without opportunity, after all, is contrary to Kean University's mission. The University's commitment to its mission of access and excellence is our shared vision. This report demonstrates that many members of the Kean community are committed to this mission. Most understand and are embracing the challenges before us, and taking many opportunities to communicate the same through their words and deeds.

The Board of Trustees as the legally empowered governing body of the institution takes its responsibility in hearing all feedback and concerns seriously. Yet it is cognizant of balancing its role in the context of leaving the management and implementation of policy in the hands of the executives it hires to operate the University and its educational delivery systems. By all accounts the Board has done so and will continue to do so. We are sure the readers are aware that Kean University is part of the State of New Jersey Public Higher Education system and subject to its laws, regulations and rules, including civil service and collective bargaining contracts, for both full-time and adjunct faculty. These contracts are negotiated by the Office of Employee Relations (OER) in the Office of the Governor in one master contract that affects all nine colleges and universities. The Board does not participate in the negotiation or enforcement of labor contracts. These issues are relegated to OER and the Public Employees Relations Commission.

This report documents that Kean University has a committed, engaged and well informed Board of Trustees diligently performing its duties while properly balancing its role among the many University constituencies, with priority one always being our students. It also shows that there are established organizations within the University that are part of our shared governance structures as well as many avenues through which input is provided and ideas are incorporated in our shared vision for the future.

STANDARD 6: INTEGRITY APPENDICES

6.1	Board of Trustees Record of Attendance
6.2	Board of Trustees Public Sessions: List of Registered Speakers
6.3	Board of Trustees Public Sessions: Feature Presentations
6.4	Board of Trustees Resolution Adopting the Strategic Plan
6.5	Board of Trustees Resolution Creating the Governance Committee
6.6	2013-2020 Kean University Strategic Plan
6.7	Assessment Institute Schedule
6.8	Board of Trustees: Examples of Presentations
6.9	President's Task Force: Meeting Dates
6.10	University Scheduling Guidelines
6.11	Academic Planning Calendar
6.12	Town Hall Meeting PowerPoint Presentation, April 23, 2013
6.13	Faculty Senate Meeting PowerPoint Presentation, March 19, 2013
6.14	Select Quotes and Videos
6.15	Kean Current: List of Titles
6.16	Leadership Forum Meeting Dates, Membership List, Attendance Lists and Agendas
6.17	President's Task Force: Membership List
6.18	Negotiation Meeting Dates with the Collective Bargaining Units
6.19	Description of the Student Leadership Council and its Membership
6.20	Standing Committees on which Student Leaders Participate

Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness

Kean University is in compliance with Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness, as affirmed by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) (Letter from MSCHE to President Farahi, November 15, 2012). This action followed a monitoring report and a visiting team's report, both in September, 2012. The Commission issued two recommendations to improve institutional effectiveness. The following report documents Kean University's incorporation of those recommendations. Supporting documents are attached as appendices.

RELATIVE TO STANDARD 7, MSCHE HAS REQUESTED DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF:

- The development and implementation by all non-academic units of assessment processes that use substantive and direct measures to evaluate and improve outcomes related to unit as well as institutional mission and goals.

BACKGROUND

The Visiting Team of September 2012 noted a number of significant accomplishments by Kean University since the March 1, 2012 Monitoring Report and the follow-up April 12-13, 2012 small team visit. In particular, it commended Kean "for the incorporation of its University Planning Council into the institutional assessment system and for the charge to the Council to review and utilize assessment data for program improvement, decision making and resource allocation." The Visiting Team noted that "The Council serves as an excellent two way conduit between the divisions and the university leadership" (Visiting Team Report, September 2012, p.8). They also noted the Office of Accreditation and Assessment's "herculean efforts to jump start the institutional assessment process across campus."

Having built "a systematic and potentially sustainable process for institutional assessment" (Visiting Team Report, September 2012), the institution's overall aim over the past year and a half has been to ensure sustainability through monitoring, through skills-building across campus, through repetition of the cycle, and through review/correction where necessary. The result is a sustainable cycle of consistent improvement through assessment.

The University Planning Council (UPC), with the support of the Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA), has monitored the cycle and ensured moving forward. Since September 2012, all Kean non-academic units have continued to produce annual assessment plans and reports, and the institution is now in the third year of performing an annual assessment cycle for both academic programs and non-academic units. (Appendix 7.1: Kean University Institutional Assessment System).

As a "two way conduit," the UPC also took on the leadership of the institutional Strategic Planning process. The new Institutional Strategic Plan 2013-2020 was adopted in December 2013 by the Board of Trustees and has become the reference point for the assessment cycle 2013-2014.

Upon careful review of assessment processes, an adjustment was made to the timing of our institutional assessment cycle. These adjustments have aligned assessment cycles with the institution's calendar, linking assessment as closely as possible to budgeting and planning for the coming year.

The MSCHE recommendation was an endorsement of the institution's overall approach. It suggests that Kean continue its approach of repeating and deepening the assessment process, and sharpening the assessment-related skills of non-academic units.

THE KEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Kean University Institutional Assessment Process (see Appendix 7.1) was strengthened and revised in 2011 in response to the April 2011 Self-Study Visiting Team's recommendation to "design and implement a University-wide assessment process to generate tangible evidence indicating the extent to which the institution is meeting the aspirations of its mission statement." The annual assessment cycle begins with the formation of an assessment plan for each non-academic unit. The first rotation of the cycle was Academic Year 2011-12, for which more than 50 non-academic units prepared their plans. The second stage of the cycle (at the end of the assessment cycle, which is tied to the academic year) is the review, analysis, and completion of each non-academic unit's assessment plan into an assessment report (see http://www.kean.edu/KU/Administrative-Unit-Assessment for 2011-12 and 2012-13 assessment reports). In the third stage, each division leader reviews unit reports, analyzes the data, creates an overall division report identifying financial and resource needs, and describes challenges still to be overcome (see http://www.kean.edu/KU/Administrative-Unit-Assessment for summary reports from divisions).

The UPC then reviews division reports, constituting Stage Four of the process. UPC members evaluate the priorities of each division leader and then create a priority list for the institution (see Appendix 7.2 Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2012-2013 AY). This priority list is submitted to the President, who utilizes the UPC's recommendations to inform his own funding priorities. He then forwards his recommendations to the Board of Trustees for their consideration in the next fiscal year's budget (see Appendix 7.2).

This process has now gone through two cycles, with the third cycle, tied to the 2013-14 academic year, already underway.

ACTIONS: SEPTEMBER 2012-FEBRUARY 2013

In setting up the first cycle in the Academic Year 2011-2012, the Office of Accreditation and Assessment asked non-academic units to:

1. Develop assessment plans that were aligned to their mission statement
2. Create mission statements where they were absent

3. Ensure that each mission statement is aligned to the University's mission statement
4. Align the goals of their plan with the 2007-2012 Kean University Strategic plan goals

The process ensured that assessment plans were infused with these four principles. Over the past 1.5 cycles, the OAA, division leaders and each non-academic unit's director and/or assessment coordinator have continued to work on these four principles. These principles for assessment plans link each non academic unit's annual outcomes to unit and institutional goals.

In addition, non-academic units were asked to develop annual assessment plans that utilize "substantive and direct measures to evaluate and improve outcomes."

More specifically, Kean has achieved the following:

1. All non-academic units have substantive and increasingly direct measures to evaluate and improve non-academic outcomes.

During the period September 2012 through February 2014, the institution has:

1.1. Introduced and formalized the use of SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable/Achievable, **R**elevant, **T**imely) objectives for administrative assessment plans. The Office of Accreditation and Assessment met with each non-academic unit leader and/or assessment coordinator from the conclusion of Academic Year 2012-2013 and throughout Academic Year 2013-2014 to promote and explain SMART objective development. For the 2013-2014 Assessment Planning process, the OAA prepared a new planning form based on SMART objectives and the new Institutional Strategic Plan. This Form was used for 2013-2014 Assessment Plans. The OAA is also drafting a set of more extensive guidelines for the future (see Appendix 7.3: Non-Academic Unit Planning Form; and Appendix 7.4: SMART Objectives Information Sheet).

1.2. Provided skills-building/training for non-academic staff to help them to write effective plans, and to understand and enact direct assessment measures for SMART objectives. The University continued a biannual Assessment Institute (January and May) to support both academic and administrative staff to develop their plans and instruments for evaluation. In January 2014, the Assessment Institute provided training in topics such as "Building Your Strategic Plan," "Implementing Your Strategic Plan" and "Project Management and Cost Benefits Analysis" (all training was provided by faculty from the Business School). These training sessions had been requested by various units to support assessment planning, in particular the movement towards three-year unit strategic plans. In addition, the January Assessment Institute 2014 became one component of a more extensive program of weeklong training days. During these training days, staff was trained in areas useful for direct measurement of outcomes, such as training in Google Apps, training in SPSS, training in Ellucian Recruiter, Qualtrics usage, Introduction to Excel, Introduction to EMS (our new Event

Management System which can also be used as an activity tracking device), and a session entitled "What's Exciting in Campus Lab and How You can Use It" (see Appendix 7.5: Assessment Institute Schedule January 2013; Appendix 7.6: Assessment Institute May 2013; see Appendix 7.7: Training Days Schedule January 2014; Appendix 7.8: Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience] Assessment Institutes January and May 2013).

1.3. Provided facilitated time during the academic year for staff to reflect and plan, issued formal guidelines for the creation of assessment plans and tools, and provided ongoing support from the Office of Accreditation and Assessment at the individual unit or division level. Each Assessment Institute has provided an opportunity for non-academic unit directors and assessment coordinators to discuss together their plans and progress. Institutes in May have focused on preparing reports, while January Institutes emphasize Closing the Loop activities and current milestones. Facilitators from the OAA have been made available to support unit group assessment meetings during the year, as well as divisional meetings (the OAA has provided consulting services with divisions, units and individual assessment coordinators). (See Appendix 7.7: Training Days Schedule January 2014, Appendix 7.6: May 2013 Assessment Institute Schedule and Appendix 7.5: January 2013 Assessment Institute).

2. All non-academic units are assessing their own goals in conjunction with those of their division, and the institution, as outlined in Kean's mission statement, its Strategic Plan 2013-2020 and the University's Vision 2020 initiative (see also Appendix 7.9: Vision to Strategic Goals for the explicit connections between Vision 2020 and the Strategic Plan 2013-2020).

During the period September 2012 until February 2014, the institution has:

2.1. Adopted the Kean University 2013-2020 Strategic Plan through a university-wide process. Since the last MSCHE team's visit, the entire community of Kean (including alumni) engaged in a year-long strategic planning process. By the end of academic year 2012-2013, the Strategic Plan was ready for consideration as part of the unit assessment planning process. Each unit and division has re-aligned their assessment plans to the new institutional Strategic Plan (see Appendix 7.10: Strategic Plan 2013-2020 and Appendix 7.11: Report on the Development of the Kean University 2013-2020 Strategic Plan).

2.2. All non-academic unit assessment plans for 2013-14 used a new formal set of instructions for preparing their assessment plans. These instructions ask units to begin their planning process with the institutional Strategic Plan, and then to align unit and divisional goals with that plan. The non-academic 2013-2014 assessment process was driven by each division leader, who selected institutional-level goals to focus on for the year. Some units, such as Computer Services, also had institutional goals which relate directly to their unit's responsibilities, so their plans were crafted to address

those requirements as well. Each unit then reviewed its goals for the year and connected them to the larger divisional and institutional goals (Appendix 7.3: Non-Academic Unit Planning Form; see also 2013/14 Non-Academic Units Assessment Plans at http://www.kean.edu/KU/Administrative-Unit-Assessment).[1]

2.3. The OAA has instituted a Three-Year Strategic Planning Process (2013-2016) for all non-academic units, ensuring that units have a longer-term view alongside their one year assessment plans. The new institutional Strategic Plan provides a clearer framework for each unit to pursue. This approach will also allow the OAA to support further strategic thinking and appropriate assessment by staff. All units and divisions will have their Three-Year Strategic Plans ready by the summer of 2014, using their assessment plans for 2013-2014 as a starting point and the 2012-13 results for closing the loop. Some divisions have started the process with a Divisional Strategic Plan; others have worked from the unit level upwards. Non-academic unit assessment coordinators have been working on the project. Many units and some divisions already have a draft for the coming three years.

3. The institution has continued to review and now is assessing the impact of the annual assessment cycle as part of the sustainable culture of assessment in place at Kean.

During the period September 2012 until February 2014, the institution has:

3.1. Held regular Assessment Institutes for both staff and faculty, most recently in January, 2014. The January Institute was divided into two days. Day One focused on "Closing the Loop" activities while Day Two ("Moving Forward") was devoted to skill-building, discussions of Assessment Plans for 2013-14, and further discussion of Three-Year Strategic Plans (see Appendix 7.7: Training Days Schedule January 2014; Appendix 7.12: Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience] Training Days January 2014; Appendix 7.6: Assessment Institute Schedule May 2013; and Appendix 7.5: Assessment Institute January 2013).

3.2. Revised the timing for the Closing of the Loop processes to link better with the UPC's recommendations to the annual budget planning process (see Appendix 7.13: Written Procedures for the Kean University Assessment Cycle and on page 32; see also Appendix 7.14: 2011-2012 UPC Closing the Loop Timelines; and Appendix 7.15: 2012- UPC Closing the Loop Timelines).

[1] The final plan was not adopted by the Board of Trustees until December 2013, but the main structure and much of the detail could be surmised beforehand. In 2012/13, we had assessed all our proposed goals and then worked on objectives and actions. During that period we had only made one major change in our goals – moving Goal 10 to become Goal 6. We were therefore satisfied as an institution that we had agreement on our 10 goals and further changes would be rather concerned with specific actions etc. We were therefore confident that all non-academic units could utilize these overall goals starting from Fall 2013.

3.3. Put into operation a Strategic Plan Committee as a sub-committee of the University Planning Council (the sub-committee was created in 2012, but was not required to operate until January 2014, when the new Strategic Plan had been adopted by the Board of Trustees). This Committee already has reviewed the Strategic Plan and considered the timetable for actions.[2]

3.4. Ensured that the Assessment Sub-Committee of the Faculty Senate (made up of faculty and staff) is engaged in planning at every level. This maintains the University's culture of inclusion in the assessment process. The Sub-Committee recently created a survey to assess the effectiveness of the January training programs (see http://ku.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_3ReGnPjZJF4Xuvz for the post-training and professional development days survey; Appendix 7.12: Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience] Training Days January 2014).

3.5. Requested examples of closing the loop actions to share among non-academic assessment coordinators at the Assessment Institutes. This strengthened the University's collective understanding of Closing the Loop activities. (see Appendix 7.16: Closing the Loop list for Training Days January 2014 examples; and see training resources and presentations at: https://google.com/a/kean.edu/training-days/home/2014-january-training-days-resources)

NEXT STEPS

Kean University is in the third year of its institutional assessment cycle. All non-academic units have an annual assessment plan. Since the 2011-12 Assessment Cycle, all have a mission statement and a vision aligned to Kean University's mission. The use of SMART objectives has been institutionalized through the OAA Planning Form and Guidelines. All now utilize SMART objectives and use direct measures to assess their outcomes. In addition, the University has written, and the Board of Trustees has adopted, a new 2013-2020 Strategic Plan. All annual assessment plans are connected to both the new institutional goals and to specific unit goals.

Meanwhile, the University has made a substantial and sustained commitment to forming a *sustainable assessment culture* from the Board of Trustees through division leaders, unit heads, Faculty Senate, to faculty and individual staff members. Indeed, the Board of Trustees has mandated training days twice a year for ongoing professional development of all University personnel which will continue to include the biannual Assessment Institute.

Below are the opportunities to be pursued over the coming year:

[2] We will necessarily go through an adjustment period over the next semester as the Action Plan and Assessment of the Strategic Plan is further connected with the non-academic units' Three Year Strategies.

1. The University will focus even more on skills-building for better assessment. The OAA has received requests for future assessment-related skills-building events, which will be scheduled for our Spring Training Days in May 2014. The OAA also has identified places in individual non-academic units' plans where the Spring Training Days could be utilized to support unit annual goals (eg the Human Resources training suggestions – see 2013/14 Non-Academic Units Assessment Plans at http://www.kean.edu/KU/Administrative-Unit-Assessment).

   The OAA has also provided written and oral comment at various stages of individual unit assessment planning and implementation, guiding the use of direct assessment measures and supporting the formation of SMART objectives. The language and tools of assessment are ever evolving, highlighting the importance of professional development opportunities.

2. The Quality First Initiative (QFI) provides special grants to support new initiatives that would not normally be funded as part of the institutional budget. Essentially, these are "start-up" grants designed to encourage innovation in furthering specific objectives of the strategic plan. QFI grants will be funded based on the recommendations of the University Planning Council. The UPC will examine grant proposals for their alignment with the Strategic Plan and Student Learning Outcomes.

   The UPC is well-placed to determine which QFI funding proposals best fit the University's overall strategic goals. Since the 2011-2012 Academic Year, the UPC has served as a critical bridge between annual assessment reporting processes and the overall assessment-based budgeting process. The Quality First Initiative will be an *additional contribution* of the UPC, fulfilling further the UPC's function as the institutional monitor of strategic goals and assessment-driven results.

   The UPC will ensure that successful QFI funding proposals are part of the institution's ongoing effectiveness. The OAA facilitates utilization of assessment reports to both inform resource decision making and for funding QFI proposals (the QFI Sub-committee of the UPC is going to be developed in the near future to organize the process).

3. The University is assessing the impact of the changes made to the institution as a result of the first Assessment Cycle 2011-12. An impact report due by Summer, 2014, will aid and improve the ongoing decision-making process of the institution (see Appendix 7.17: Closing the Loop Academic Year 2011-2012 Follow-Up Impact Reports).

4. With the adoption of the Kean University 2013-2020 Strategic Plan by the Board of Trustees in December 2013, the Strategic Plan Committee already has begun to examine the plan's timelines. The Committee will consider whether some actions planned for the current academic year should be moved to next year, and it will establish a firm time line for projects to be carried out during the plan's later years. The OAA is required to inform the President of any changes required in the Strategic Plan. The OAA will deliver a report to the President by the end of July, 2014, after the Three-Year Strategic Report process for

individual units is complete and all 2013-2014 Academic Year non-academic assessment reports are complete.

5. The University will review an Institutional Score Card, which will briefly highlight key goals and indicators of success (expected by Summer 2014) and then pilot for its validity and utility.

RELATIVE TO STANDARD 7, MSCHE HAS REQUESTED DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF:

- The development and implementation by the University Planning Council of written procedures for the regular and systematic use of assessment results in planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal.

SUMMARY

The University Planning Council has a crucial role as partner with the Office of Accreditation and Assessment to coordinate the University's Assessment Cycle (for a full description of its function, see Appendix 7.1: Kean University Institutional Assessment System). In this regard, the UPC:

1. Brings together all assessment reporting on an annual basis.

2. Synthesizes the University's needs – financial and resource based.

3. Reflects on and recommends priorities based on an overall strategic perspective focused on institutional renewal. This is a key role, because the UPC also is the primary coordinator of the Strategic Plan. This ensures that strategy and annual assessment are linked.

4. Forwards recommendations to the President and Board of Trustees (see Appendix 7.2 Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2012-2013 AY).

5. Reviews, with the support of the OAA, the key institutional-level assessment processes:

   5.1 The review of the assessment cycle

   5.2 The assessment of the implementation of the strategic plan

   5.3 The University's Score Card (an institutional quick annual 'health check' to ensure we are thinking about institutional renewal in terms of our generic needs as a university as well as in terms of our ongoing strategic plan – the Score Card is currently under development).

6. Kean's University Planning Council has written procedures for the conduct of its annual Assessment Cycle. It has used the processes described within the procedures through two

Assessment Cycles. One modification resulting from reviewing our assessment processes has been revision of the timeline after the first iteration of the cycle. Twice the UPC has collected, reviewed, synthesized, prioritized and then sent forward its recommendations for financial or resource allocation to the President (see Appendix 7.18: UPC Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2011-2012; Appendix 7.2 Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2012-2013 AY).

The timeline was changed to better link the assessment cycle to the University's fiscal calendar. The original timeline for decision-making allowed a brief review period prior to the new fiscal year beginning July 1. The fiscal planning process occurs in January and February of every year. The UPC also decided to provide each unit, program, college and division assessment representative more time for thoughtful assessment review and analysis.

The UPC successfully tested a new timing process in 2013, and as a consequence revised the written procedures to reflect this new timetable in Fall 2013 (see Appendix 7.15: 2012- UPC Closing the Loop Timelines).

The UPC has reviewed and streamlined its sub-committees to ensure effective review of assessment procedures. In particular, the "Committee to Coordinate the Annual Review of Assessment Results in Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal" has the important function of working with the Office of Accreditation and Assessment to oversee the annual review of assessment reports, program review reports, and resource allocation recommendations.

ACTIONS: SEPTEMBER 2012-FEBRUARY 2014

The Question of Timing

The timeline for the assessment processes Academic Year 2011-2012 allowed little time for reflection, and, therefore, created a gap between the UPC's decisions on priorities for the coming year and the timing of the financial planning process.

In 2013, the University piloted a new Closing the Loop timeline, which the UPC formally accepted in October 2013 (see original timeline in Appendix 7.15: 2012- UPC Closing the Loop Timelines; see new timeline in chart formats in Appendix 7.19 Updated Yearly Assessment Reporting Timeline (Cycle Form). The main changes are as follows:

1. As a first step, both Academic Program and Non-Academic Unit assessment coordinators were provided with more time to utilize their assessment processes, norm, complete their reports, and then report to their Division Heads/College Deans. The new deadline for receiving program and unit reports is June 30 (this provided assessment coordinators with approximately one additional month of review time when compared with the deadline from the previous cycle).

2. College Deans are now provided with one month to gather, review, reflect, go back to their programs for any further conversations needed, and then complete their College level report which is then submitted to the VPAA. The new deadline is July 31 (in the previous assessment cycle, the Deans and VPAA had two to three weeks to conduct this process).

3. The VPAA now has one month (deadline of September 1) to review, discuss with Deans, and then synthesize and create the division-level Academic Affairs report on the overall priorities for the upcoming assessment cycle.

4. For non-academic units, Division Heads have two months over the summer to review, discuss, synthesize and report. Non-academic units are to submit their completed annual assessment reports to their Division Heads by June 1. The new deadline for Divisional Assessment Reports is September 1.

5. The UPC holds its annual Closing the Loop meeting in mid-November, one and a half months after completion of all of the divisional summary reports for that assessment cycle. This provides time for the UPC to review all assessment materials and to request further documentation, if needed, as well as time to put forward recommendations to the President for the annual December Board of Trustees meeting. Decisions made at the December Board of Trustees meeting may then impact immediately on the next year's institutional planning process, which takes place in January and February (see Appendix 7.2 Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2012-2013 AY).

Re-Synchronizing the Assessment Cycle Timeline

Having successfully re-aligned the timetable for academic program and non-academic unit assessment reporting, the University needed to *re-synchronize* the timeline for Program Review with the general assessment reporting for academic and non-academic units.

UPC Sub-Committees

The UPC has also made changes in its sub-committees during 2013 to focus further its role in reviewing the institution's assessment practices. More specifically, while drafting the University's Strategic Plan, the University Planning Council reassessed its subcommittees, and reorganized into the following three standing committees:

- **Strategic Plan Committee:** This committee will identify strategic directions receiving priority for each upcoming academic year (based upon results of annual review of assessment data and final resource allocation decisions and President's charge). To document strategic accomplishments during previous academic year, this committee will identify strategic goals which were met and strategic directions requiring future attention.

- **Annual Score Card Committee:** This committee is charged with determining the University's performance indicators and incorporating them in an annual score card of institutional effectiveness.

- **Committee to Coordinate the Annual Review of Assessment Results in Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal:** This committee is charged with working with the Office of Accreditation and Assessment to oversee the annual review of assessment reports, program review reports, and resource allocation requests.

These Standing committees were established in the fall of 2013.

Due to the changes in the University's assessment processes timetable, the Committee to Coordinate the Annual Review of Assessment Results in Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal was able to guide the UPC review of the annual assessment reports and recommendations reports during the 2012-2013 assessment cycle. It is also currently overseeing the follow-up reports to assess the impact of requests funded from the Academic Year 2011-2012 Closing the Loop.

The Strategic Plan Committee held its first meeting to begin review of implementation in February 2014 following the adoption of the Strategic Plan in December 2013. At that meeting, it adapted the implementation plans and timelines of the goals/objectives/actions of the 2013-2020 Strategic Plan based on a proposal from the OAA into a system of monitoring progress on the strategic plan. It also started review of the actions required in the Academic Year 2013-2014.

In the upcoming Academic Year 2013-2014, the modification to the timeline within the written procedures for the assessment cycle and the Closing the Loop processes that occurred Fall 2013 needs to be assessed to determine if further refinements are necessary. This will be completed at the end of the fiscal year in consultation with the Vice Presidents.

STANDARD 7 CONCLUSIONS

The processes explained above document Kean University's continued compliance with Standard 7 (Institutional Effectiveness). The University's assessment processes will continue to be inculcated in our culture and produce even better outcomes for our students in the years to come. The processes that have been established confirm that Kean follows a systematic and sustainable assessment process: Kean utilizes data in decision making; those data results are tied to budgetary and/or resource allocation processes;[3] there is institutional buy-in for the

[3] See also additional data sources used in annual decision making to inform resource allocation and assessment in Appendix 7.20: Annual Environmental Scan for the Board of Trustees (ppt); Annual Performance Indicators prepared by the University at http://ir.kean.edu/irhome/Menu/AssessmentPI.asp; Annual Institutional Profile at http://ir.kean.edu/irhome/Menu/Excacc.asp; Appendix 7.21: Annual Departmental Profile; and Appendix 7.22: IPEDS Data.

assessment processes; and Kean continues to improve its assessment system to meet the ever changing needs of the campus community to enhance our students' learning outcomes.

STANDARD 7: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS APPENDICES

7.1	Kean University Institutional Assessment System
7.2	Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2012-2013 AY
7.3	2013-2014 Non-Academic Unit Assessment Planning Form
7.4	SMART Objective Form for Administrative Unit Assessment
7.5	Assessment Institute Schedule January 2013
7.6	Assessment Institute Schedule May 2013
7.7	Training Days Schedule January 2014
7.8	Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience] Assessment Institutes January and May 2013
7.9	Vision to Strategic Goals
7.10	Strategic Plan 2013-2020
7.11	UPC Chair's Report on the Development of the Kean University 2013-2020 Strategic Plan
7.12	Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience] Training Days January 2014
7.13	Written Procedures for the Kean University Assessment Cycle
7.14	2011-2012 UPC Closing the Loop Timelines
7.15	2012-onwards UPC Closing the Loop Timelines
7.16	Closing the Loop list for Training Days January 2014
7.17	Closing the Loop Academic Year 2011-2012 Follow-Up Impact Reports
7.18	UPC Closing the Loop Actions Grid 2011-2012
7.19	Updated Yearly Assessment Reporting Timeline (Cycle Form)
7.20	Annual Environmental Scan for the Board of Trustees (ppt)
7.21	Annual Departmental Profile
7.22	IPEDS Data

Standard 12: General Education

Kean University is in compliance with **Standard 12: General Education** as affirmed by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) (Letter from MSCHE to President Farahi, November 15, 2012). MSCHE made one recommendation for this Standard. In addition the Visiting Team made one suggestion that Kean "publicize examples of good General Education assessment practice and encourage other areas to adopt those strategies and approaches." Kean has accepted and implemented both the recommendation and the Visiting Team's suggestion, as evidenced within this chapter and the attached appendices.

RELATIVE TO STANDARD 12, MSCHE HAS REQUESTED DOCUMENTED EVIDENCE OF:

- Clearly articulated general education outcomes that are assessed in an organized, systematic, and sustainable manner, consistent with the institution's overall plan for assessing student learning, with assessment results that are utilized for curricular improvement.

BACKGROUND

In February 2011 (Revised June, 2012), the School of General Studies and Office of Assessment and Accreditation created an action and assessment plan that included 14 SLOs for the GE program. The plan is consistent with the University's mission and is aligned with its SLOs (See Appendix 12.1: School of General Studies Action and Assessment Plan, June 2012, pp. 1-15, for specific courses in which the GE SLOs are assessed also see Courses and Results in sequential order: Knowledge, Skills, Values, in Appendix 12.2: GE SLOs Assessment Report 2012-2013 and Fall 2013).

In the Monitoring Report of September 2012, Kean again made clear its strong commitment to General Education. The Visiting Team of September 2012 noted the "positive actions taken by the institution toward strengthening its General Education curriculum (GE)." The team favorably noted that the institution had hired an Executive Director, placed GE in the School of General Studies, hired eight GE lecturers, and created a more-active leadership role for the General Education Sub-Committee of the Faculty Senate in overseeing the GE curriculum.

The MSCHE recommendation was an endorsement of the institution's approach to General Education and its plan for General Education assessment. The Visiting Team added the additional excellent suggestion that Kean "publicize examples of good General Education assessment practice and encourage other areas to adopt those strategies and approaches."

The focus of the School of General Studies since September 2012 has been to ensure the following:

1. The ongoing clarity of GE SLOs to the whole community

2. Assessment of all GE SLOs - following the GE Assessment Plan 2011-2014, amending where necessary or suggested by prior assessment results
3. Ensuring that direct measures of assessment are used and where instruments are not in place to do so, adopting such instruments
4. Implementing proposed changes to curricula and classroom activity based on assessment of SLOs
5. Publicizing to the Kean community the GE approach to SLO assessment, and even more important, the results of that approach

Kean University is now approaching the end of its present General Education Assessment Cycle. As we announced in our last Monitoring Report (September 2012), we are planning a comprehensive evaluation of GE assessment to "determine the extent to which the GE curriculum and its assessment practices are effective" (Standard 12 Conclusion, Monitoring Report, September 2012). The GE Sub-Committee already is working on new Curricula Guidelines for GE Courses as part of the University Curriculum Committee's comprehensive review of its overall Curricula Guidelines. Now that we have evaluated all of the SLOs, we are able to turn to this comprehensive evaluation of the GE assessment system.

THE GE ASSESSMENT APPROACH

The School of General Studies utilizes 14 General Education Student Learning Outcomes (GE SLOs) to assess the General Education component of the University (see Appendix 12.3: General Education Student Learning Outcomes). These Student Learning Outcomes are clearly articulated and shared with the campus community on the Kean University website (http://kean.edu/admin/uploads/KeanUniversityStudentLearningOutcomes.pdf). The SLOs are disseminated through broad-based faculty engagement in the GE committee, through discussions with faculty teaching GE distributed courses or capstones, and most recently through dissemination events at the January 2014 Assessment Institute.

The 14 GE SLOs are aligned with the Kean University Student Learning Outcomes (see Appendix 12.4: GE Contribution to Institutional Student Learning Outcomes). They cover three areas of cognitive and affective ability -- Knowledge, Skills, and Values. GE Assessment is a part of academic program assessment and follows the same timelines and procedures. It is therefore fully aligned with Kean University's Student Learning Outcomes and mission.

The School of General Studies is supported in its assessment work by the General Education Sub-Committee of the Faculty Senate, the Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA), and all of the academic programs and faculty who offer approved GE courses. There is also strong ownership of GE SLOs among the School of General Studies faculty and staff. They have worked on compiling the data and analyzing the results for specific SLOs. They and their colleagues in other academic programs have provided Closing the Loop actions, including changes to curricula, class assignments, and teaching that could improve GE SLOs. They have also provided

suggestions for deepening our assessment activities (see Appendix 12.2: GE SLO Assessment Reports 2012-2013 and Fall 2013).

We have assessed all 14 GE SLOs. Assessment has been focused on GE courses that all or most Kean students need to take during their progress through the University. Direct Assessment Measures were used to assess the 14 GE SLOs (see Appendix 12.5: Direct Measures of GE SLOs). Some SLOs, such as GE S1 Composition and GE S2 Speech, have now been assessed using direct measures through 2.5 cycles, allowing us to analyze comparatively over multiple semesters.

The GE SLO Fall 2013 assessment reports from the School of General Studies and GE-related academic courses clearly document our GE SLOs, our direct assessment measures, and the action that will be taken to make changes in our curricula, teaching and learning activities (see Appendix 12.2: GE SLO Assessment Reports 2012-2013 and Fall 2013). Closing the Loop recommendations can also be found in the Academic Year 2012-2013 reports. Evidence of the implementation of prior Closing the Loop actions and recommendations can be found in Appendix 12.6: Closing the Loop Actions recommended by faculty as a result of Fall/Spring 2012-2013 (for Composition) and Fall 2013 Assessment Results - Curricula and Classroom Experience Changes and are also referred to throughout the relevant GE SLO reports (eg GE S1 Composition).

The School and OAA already have divided GE assessment into a three tiered approach (introductory, intermediate and advanced) (see Appendix 12.7: Course Selection Process by Proficiency Level and GE course requirements), and they are considering assessment reporting for a potential longitudinal approach to assessing student progress (following students either by cohort or individually through their university career).

Kean University has accomplished the following since the Middle States' recommendation was made:

- Utilized direct measures where data is collected from a significant number of student performance indicators to yield greater confidence in data analysis
- Reviewed, built or found new assessment tools that are then used to sustain and/or improve the GE curriculum and student learning
- Used the assessment results to make meaningful curricular improvements
- Sustained an on-going adjunct and full-time faculty training program in assessment
- Shared information regarding GE and GE assessment with the campus community

GE assessment is sustainable in a number of ways:

1. The School of General Studies now has a large full-time faculty group: 14 full-time lecturers as of Spring 2014 with two additional full-time faculty lines for GE Math

currently advertised for Academic Year 2014-2015 [this group of 14 faculty are assigned to the School of General Studies faculty and teach General Education courses full-time or half-time]. The University has made a considerable financial and resource investment in its General Education program to ensure that this foundation bloc of learning achieves the outcomes desired.[4]

2. Due to increased number of full-time faculty who have their home at the School of General Studies, the School has been able to create an SLO team approach to assessment and assessment reporting, led by the GE staff and the GE Assessment Coordinator. The Fall 2013 assessment reports are a reflection of this team approach: each SLO was assigned a leader or group to work on data analysis and Closing the Loop activities.

3. As a consequence of their commitment, the GE faculty group has become a coherent body of *engaged* assessors with articulated ideas, based on assessment, for our future. The School of General Studies is now reaching the end of its present Assessment Cycle and it is ready to perform a major evaluation of GE SLOs, with the support of the OAA and the GE Sub-Committee. The GE faculty group's ideas are now focused on this new Assessment Cycle. Their reports reflect ideas for a variety of new initiatives to support GE SLOs and outcomes assessment in the future. We will consider these further in the "Next Steps" section below.

4. The GE faculty and staff have taken their engagement with assessment one step further and presented their results, hosted discussions on assessment tools, and discussed prospective new GE syllabi to the whole Kean community at the January 2014 Assessment Institute.

ACTIONS: SEPTEMBER 2012-FEBRUARY 2014

Kean University is committed to providing a strong liberal education for all of its students. Over the past 18 months, more faculty, staff and students than ever before have engaged in thinking about what should be taught in GE, how, why and in what way.

Kean has been working throughout this period with a set of clearly articulated GE Outcomes and a GE plan for assessment managed by a School of General Studies. The principal actor behind the new School of General Studies was the Executive Director of General Education, the late Dr. John Dobosiewicz, who was hired in 2011 to establish and maintain GE curriculum and assessment. He created the University's Action and Assessment Plan, finalized the 14 SLOs and

[4] In Spring 2010, 6% of GE 202x sections (Research and Technology) was taught by full-time faculty, as compared to 94% of sections being taught by adjuncts. Now, in Spring 2014, 97% of GE 202x sections are taught by full-time faculty. In Spring 2010, 15% of GE Math 0901 (pre-college Math) sections were taught by full-time faculty; whereas in Spring 2014, 67% of sections are taught by full-timers. In Spring 2010, GE Math 1016 had no sections taught by full-time faculty; 43% of sections are now taught by full-timers. Kean aims to improve this situation even further with the appointment of the two additional Math faculty members.

started to implement the Assessment Plan. He worked very closely in all these activities with the General Education Sub-Committee of the Faculty Senate. At the beginning of Fall 2013 the School reassessed its activities as the GE staff and faculty worked under new leadership with the Associate Vice President for Learning Support to chart progress to date, and then compile a list of priorities for the coming semester. This review was also important because of the large number of new faculty hired for the School. These new faculty were appointed as part of Kean's ongoing effort to ensure that full-time faculty teach most GE courses. These new faculty were provided with an orientation of the School and institution's assessment approaches as well as GE SLOs and assessment instruments.

A large-scale effort was made to assess meaningfully all 14 General Education Student Learning Outcomes during Fall 2013, whether through ongoing use of national instruments, the ongoing application of established rubrics, or the adoption of new assessment tools. The aim was to ensure that the School fulfilled its Assessment Plan in time for a proper evaluation of the GE SLOs and overall GE Assessment approach in 2014, and wherever possible that there might be comparative data (between semesters and/or years) available. Weekly meetings were held to implement GE assessment through a purposeful selection of courses and direct measures to yield convincing evidence of student learning.

By assessing each of the 14 GE SLOs simultaneously, the GE faculty group learned a great deal about assessment and their particular SLOs (as evidenced in their reports). They are also ready to work with the GE Sub-Committee and OAA to perform the 2014 evaluation. Further, the School and OAA have now mapped a large part of the GE landscape. Finally, due mainly to the Closing the Loop process, both the School and OAA have started to debate distinctions between each SLO (particularly in the Values section) and asked themselves whether 14 GE SLOs is an appropriate number for Kean. Diversity as a student learning outcome, for instance, is vital to Kean's distinct mission and student population. A specific emphasis must be placed on this SLO to ensure the distinctive role it plays in our mission. Could we distill our priorities into a smaller number of SLOs and at the same time assess smarter, or do we need to add to the Values SLOs? These important questions have prompted a vigorous and useful discussion on campus.

Consequently, the School and OAA would like to evaluate not just our assessment process in 2014 but also the 14 GE SLOs using assessment reports and faculty feedback on the assessment process. Assessing smarter might include, for instance, fewer SLOs but more longitudinal assessment: measuring students' progress during their studies at Kean, and randomly select course sections and students to ensure significant assessment. Indeed, the evidence suggests that we might need to look more closely at the junior level. Kean has a substantial group of transfer students and this may impact the development of Knowledge, Skills and Values in the student body at the more advanced level. Kean already gives specific attention to transfer students and will intensify that commitment with a new Transfer Transition to Kean course that would be mandatory for all transfer students. The spring semester is an ideal time to review the GE data and consider which GE SLO we should place in the new course.

PURPOSEFUL SELECTION OF COURSES FOR ASSESSING GE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

To assess GE Student Learning Outcomes, courses were carefully selected based on a variety of factors:

1. By proficiency level
2. By relevance to the Knowledge, Skill, Value to be assessed
3. By importance to the GE curricula

Whenever and wherever possible, outcomes were assessed at three distinct proficiency levels: introductory, intermediate, and advanced (Appendix 12.7: Course Selection Process by Proficiency Level and GE course requirements). Courses at the introductory and intermediate level were primarily selected from highly enrolled courses required of all or most students (eg ENG 1030-1032: College Composition; MATH 1000; GE 202x: Research and Technology). More information on general education course requirements can be found at: http://kean.edu/KU/General-Education-Program.

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING IN GENERAL EDUCATION

The assessments for GE SLOs in 2012-2013 were conducted primarily by faculty in the disciplines offering GE foundation and distribution courses. In fall 2013 many of the faculty came from the School of General Studies, except for Knowledge SLO assessment, where the relevant academic programs took the lead. Additionally, faculty teaching capstone courses also participated in GE assessment to provide information on Student Learning Outcomes at the advanced level. Capstone faculty come from their relevant disciplines.

The number of student performance indicators (student work) that General Studies and the OAA used to produce our data was large (ranging from 53 to 577 students per assessment) and represent a significant portion of the overall GE student population. In total, 9,231 student works were collectively assessed in 2012-2013. In all assessments conducted, multiple sections of course offerings delivered by two or more faculty (minimum) were used to collect data independent of any one specific variable (eg faculty, course day/time, etc.). For an inventory of the direct measures used to assess these outcomes see Appendix 12.5: Direct Measures of GE SLOs.

LEARNING FROM THE CHOICE AND USE OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

The University continues to retain membership with the AAC&U and is a founding and active member of the New Jersey Association of New Student Advocates (NJANSA). These organizations provide us with an ongoing community of ideas for assessment. GE staff has been involved in NJANSA activities throughout the state.

The AAC&U provides a useful set of rubrics to assess potential GE SLOs. Kean views the AAC&U rubrics as an excellent starting point for GE assessment. They inspire the institution to think about how Kean wishes to assess its SLOs.

In the Knowledge SLOs, three programs have taken the lead to date: Biology, History, and History of Art. Each program has produced its own disciplinary-based rubric in consultation with the OAA, the GE Assessment Coordinator and the GE Sub-Committee (see Appendix 12.8: GE Rubrics, note K1, K2, K3 and K4). The History Program has provided two rubrics. Each program has tested each rubric at least once. Each program has findings and actions, that is, changes in the classroom as a result of assessment. Looking to the future, the OAA has been in discussion with the leader of World Literature (a required GE distribution course) to assess the K3 SLO instead of assessing K3 within History. This would require a new, more literary focused, rubric. No final decision will be made until the 14 SLOs have been reviewed during the spring/summer GE evaluation. K4 presented the OAA with different difficulties. The rubric data is being considered as a sum total, rather than separated out into its components. Moving forward, if K4 remains as an SLO, then the OAA will support Art History to articulate results and draw conclusions from each category of the rubric.

For S1 (Composition) and S2 (Speech), Kean University wrote its own rubrics and there is now 2.5 years of assessment data and Closing the Loop activities (both in terms of change in the curricula/classroom activities and refinements to the rubric to ensure clarity and utility) (see Appendix 12.8: GE Rubrics, note S1 and S2). Dr. Mark Sutton of the English Department wrote the S1 Composition rubric for his Composition Courses. We now utilize his rubric at the Introductory level (through Composition), at the Intermediate level (in Research & Technology courses) and at the Advanced Level specifically through Capstones that have self-designated as "Writing Emphasis Capstones." Dr. Sutton has worked with his own program's faculty, with his adjunct group, and with GE lecturers in Composition to ensure that everybody understands the rubric, its use in assessing students' skills, and the application of the rubric. He leads a Composition Team in "norming" Composition SLO results on an annual basis (see Appendix 12.2: GE SLO Assessment Reports 2012-2013 and Fall 2013, see S1 Composition Report 2012-2013). Dr. Sutton has presented his process and the results to Kean's Biannual Assessment Institute (see Appendix 7.7: Training Days Schedule January 2014). This session allowed the Kean community as a whole to learn about the Composition's team's work and their development and use of a rubric.

The S2 Speech rubric was created by Dr. Fred Fitch of the Department of Communication. He has followed the same process as Dr. Sutton (see Appendix 12.2: GE SLO Assessment Reports 2012-2013 and Fall 2013, see S2 Speech Report, Fall 2013). The Speech rubric is utilized at the Introductory level through Dr. Fitch's Speech courses; at the Intermediate level through Research and Tech; and finally through Capstone courses where students not only write a research paper but also make an oral presentation of that paper as part of their assessment. The Communications Program as a whole has been very involved in the use and promotion of the S2 Speech rubric. The rubric and the results to date were presented at Kean's Biannual Assessment Institute (see Appendix 7.7: Training Days Schedule January 2014). Faculty saw

first-hand how the rubric is used when a student made a presentation to the group and was then assessed by Dr. Chris Lynch of the Department of Communication.

S3 (Quantitative Reasoning) has presented us with some interesting challenges. GE Guidelines require Math at the introductory level, and use of Math (especially statistics) at the intermediate level (through Research and Technology). But Quantitative Reasoning consists of more than the ability to perform Algebra or Statistics to a specific level. General Studies knew that it needed to expand its thinking. To that end, General Studies adopted the AAC&U Quantitative Reasoning rubric to facilitate the debate. The instrument challenged all of those involved to consider what is meant by Quantitative Reasoning. Much of the Fall 2013 semester was then spent working out how to apply this rubric to each of the introductory Math courses offered within the GE option. The Math course facilitator from the Math program and the GE Math lecturers group worked with the OAA to connect Math testing in each of the relevant areas with the rubric. As we considered the match between rubric and conventional Math testing (in various Math areas), we reflected on what more we could do beyond teaching Quantitative Reasoning through Math.

As can be seen in the Quantitative Reasoning reports (see Appendix 12.2 GE SLO Assessment Reports 2012-2013 and Fall 2013, see S3 Quantitative Reasoning Reports Fall 2013), we will reflect further on how to teach and assess Quantitative Reasoning beyond Math (for instance, by using more diverse approaches to Quantitative Reasoning at the intermediate level in Research and Technology, or by building Quantitative Reasoning Emphasis Capstones, just as we already have for Writing and Speech). Moving forward, the AAC&U rubric is still our tool for the Spring semester 2014. The debate on Quantitative Reasoning (what it is and how we should teach it) still is in process and until we have arrived at a consensus on our definitions at every level, we will not be ready to review the rubric and make it “our own.” It is important to note, however, that the conversation already has yielded concrete results in the curricula. To date, GE has distinguished between Math courses for those entering programs with particular Quantitative Reasoning needs (for example Math, Science, Business, Economics) and Math for those entering other programs. The conversation between the Math program and GE Math, and our review of the assessment results longitudinally made it clear that we needed to extend *backwards* our distinction between these two strands. Developmental Math currently is the one course offered to all who need additional support before entering college-level Math. But assessment showed that incoming students to Math program-led GE courses who had taken Developmental Math (0901) were not necessarily well prepared for work in Algebra, for instance (see Appendix 12.2: GE SLO Assessment Reports 2012-2013 and Fall 2013, see S3 Assessment Report for MATH 1000). This was not the case for those students entering GE-led GE courses from Developmental Math. In consultation with the relevant Deans and the Associate Vice President for Learning Support, the School and the Math Program agreed to set up a distinct Developmental Math (potentially 0902) that will specialize in preparing students for the Math/Science/Business strand.

For S4 (Critical Thinking), we adopted the AAC&U rubric on Critical Thinking as a starting point. The rubric has been used at the introductory level and the intermediate level for Fall 2013

Assessment. There were no specific difficulties arising from its use in the assessment reports. We can now begin to establish threshold points at the introductory and intermediate levels. "Norming" conversations occurred at both levels in the Winter Semester GE Assessment week. and adjuncts were trained in the use of the new rubric. GE lecturers teaching sections of Research and Technology that used the rubric were involved in the adoption of the instrument during the Fall semester.

S5 (Information Literacy) has been assessed using Project SAILS for 2.5 assessment cycles.

Within the Values section of the GE SLOs, we continue to develop internal assessment instruments, and so have mainly relied to date on external instruments, including the CSFI for V1 (Personal Responsibility); the DIT2 and NIH certification for V2 (Ethical and Social Responsibility).

V4 Diversity currently is assessed at the introductory level using ID 1225: Critical Issues and Values of Contemporary Health, which is a GE Foundation level course. The School is using the AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Rubric. However, this limits our definition of Diversity to intercultural understanding, rather than thinking about sexuality or disability, for example. Given the ongoing strategic importance of Diversity to Kean as an institution (see Appendix 7.9: Strategic Plan 2013-2020 for Kean University's present Strategic Plan), the School and OAA have been discussing how we can improve our assessment instrument. Using the AAC&U rubrics as a starting point, we are considering how we might bring together elements of three different rubrics (Global Learning Rubric, Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Rubric and Ethical Reasoning Rubric) to create a new rubric specific to our understanding of Diversity. The OAA asked the Guest Speaker for the January 2014 Assessment Institute to provide a workshop on assessing Diversity. We are convinced that once we have completed a new instrument, we should utilize the E-Portfolio format of the work to be assessed. The E-Portfolio is a part of the assessment of the new GE 1000 T2K, and we are aiming to link a number of GE assessments at every level to the E-Portfolio. In that way, it will become an assessable "living document" through which a student and teacher can explore the student's development of values, goals and skills.

Finally, V5 Lifelong Learning again presented us with special challenges. According to the original assessment plan, Lifelong Learning was expected to be an outcome of World Literature. However, World Literature had never assessed for V5 and could not see the relevance of this SLO to the course. The School of General Studies and OAA agreed that this was an inappropriate SLO for World Literature, and instead World Literature should perhaps consider SLOs such as S1 Composition and K3 (relating literature to historical context). We were assessing V5 indirectly through the NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) survey. We are also assessing V5 directly at the Advanced Level through Education Capstone courses. But we wanted to do more and given the potential paucity of evidence we wanted to make changes prior to the end of the Cycle and the proposed evaluation.

At the same time, during Fall 2013 we re-wrote GE 1000: Transition to Kean (T2K) to focus more on student personal development. The School quickly realized that this was an excellent opportunity to re-think where Lifelong Learning should be assessed. V5 is now the most important SLO in our new GE 1000 and the new course is being piloted for all incoming First Year students in Spring 2014 (see Appendix 12.9: GE 1000 T2K curriculum). We will use the AAC&U rubric for Lifelong Learning as a starting point for Kean's direct assessment of Lifelong Learning at the Introductory Level (see Appendix 12.8: GE Rubrics).

PROGRAM INTEGRITY–CLOSING THE LOOP

The GE Sub-Committee collaborates with the School of General Studies monthly to make sure that the GE SLOs are systematically assessed with the Kean University System for Institutional Assessment, and both formative and summative data are reviewed. Faculty teaching GE courses (whether foundational, distributed or capstone) draw on a summary of findings from assessment data to guide actions to inform and improve teaching and learning and guide curricular revisions when necessary. Assessment data and Closing the Loop actions are available to the community online in the GE SLOs Assessment Reports (see http://www.kean.edu/KU/General-Education-Assessment).

Closing the Loop activities have been taking place and continue to move forward through collaboration among the GE Sub-Committee, the School of General Studies, and individual faculty members, under the guidance of the OAA. Appendix 12.6 provides an inventory of "Closing the Loop" actions used to improve program curriculum. Although additional recommendations appear in individual assessment reports (collaboration with the Writing Center, improved assessment methods, etc.) only those actions which result in programmatic/curricular improvements are listed in this appendix. For Fall 2013 results, the School piloted a Report Form to facilitate the process of Closing the Loop (see Appendix 12.10: GE SLO Assessment Report Form). The School and OAA are presently reviewing the form to create a new version for Fall 2014. The new version would request a list of the previous semester's suggested evidence-based changes to the classroom experience or curricula, followed by a review of what was ultimately changed and why. Further, in the Closing the Loop section at the end of the report, faculty will be asked to reflect back on these previous changes as part of their decision making.

SUSTAINING GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT: TRAINING, SUPPORTING AND ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Reflection, debate and training around GE SLOs, rubrics, assessment results, and Closing the Loop actions have been taking place at each of the Biannual Assessment Institutes (January and May 2013, and now January 2014, see Appendix 7.5: January 2013 Assessment Institute; and Appendix 7.6: May 2013 Assessment Institute Schedule). A majority of Kean faculty and many adjuncts have attended these sessions, and faculty provided feedback for all sessions (see Appendix 7.8: Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience] Assessment Institutes January and May).

Following up on the suggestion of the Visiting Team (September, 2012), the School of General Studies and the OAA decided to showcase their work and ideas in GE Assessment at the January 2014 Assessment Institute. The two day GE Track allowed General Studies to share GE Assessment results and Closing the Loop ideas with the wider Kean community (see Appendix 7.7: Training Days Schedule January 2014; all presentations are available online at https://google.com/a/kean.edu/training-days/home/2014-january-training-days-resources; community attendance and feedback are in Appendix 7.21: Data Review [Attendance and Assessment of Experience]: Assessment Institute January 2014). The GE Track comprised 13 sessions, with one additional session connected to GE on the use of the co-curricular transcript (an area that General Studies wishes to explore further in the coming year, see "Next Steps" below). GE Track sessions were divided into a variety of different types:

1. General sessions, such as "Working with GE Rubrics" or "Designating and aligning your course with GE SLOs." These were organized to inform and engage the community into general debates around GE.

2. In cases where General Studies had considerable experience to share, we held sessions focused on training, such as "Teaching with the University Writing Rubric." (We also have provided training support for the utilization of new rubrics outside of our Assessment Institutes. The University financed the training of adjuncts in the use of the Critical Thinking rubric in Fall 2013. The faculty of the School of General Studies also has met on a regular basis to discuss the issue of GE assessment and specific SLOs, as well as assessment innovations).

3. Where we had only recently worked with a new rubric or directly assessed an SLO, we held exploratory sessions to discuss what General Studies did, what the results were, and engage the community in debate to improve assessment next time around.

4. Working group sessions were held for areas where General Studies already had decided to explore making substantial change and wanted interested members of the community to engage in providing new solutions. Such working groups included "Transfer Transition to Kean" to help write a new Transition to Kean course for our transfer students, and "Values - How do we measure them?" (The latter group reflected on recent assessment experiments by General Studies and opened up new questions, for example, what assessment we should ask students to perform to assess the broader definition of Diversity).

We will use the results of these activities alongside our assessment results as a part of our evaluation. We also intend to maintain the GE Track in future Assessment Institutes.

In addition, the School of General Studies held a GE Assessment week, January 6-10, 2014, prior to the Assessment Institute. Faculty spent the week in SLO teams working through the Fall 2013 data; comparing the results with prior assessment of their SLO (where relevant); analyzing the

results and suggesting areas where we could improve; and finally preparing a list for each SLO of Teaching, Learning and Closing the Loop actions. The OAA facilitated the week with three plenary meetings of faculty (at the beginning, midway and at the end), and support for each SLO team and the GE Assessment Coordinator throughout.

NEXT STEPS

The School of General Studies, the GE Sub-Committee and the OAA will plan the evaluation of the current General Education Assessment Plan/Model this semester. Planning begins in February 2014. We will be considering the following issues raised by the past years of GE assessment:

1. **The ongoing relevance of the GE SLO group:** having completed this cycle of assessment, we are reviewing the data as a whole and using that review to reflect on Kean's GE SLOs as a group, as well as triangulating with GE outcomes in other institutions.

2. **Longitudinal assessment:** the evidence suggests that we should continue to look closely at the longitudinal assessment results, and work to trace progress from introductory to intermediate to advanced (where pertinent) achievement of GE SLOs. Should longitudinal assessment be best performed by cohort or by individual student? How can we further utilize assessment results from pre-college development courses to support our teaching of introductory level courses (and vice versa)? Do the School, GE sub-committee and OAA need to consider a fourth point in the assessment process for (at least) the skills-oriented SLOs? Assessment results suggest that the junior year, in particular, requires closer examination.[5]

3. **Do all of Kean's GE SLOs need to be achieved at the Advanced Level?** The Knowledge SLOs raise particular issues: if one considers GE K1 -- Applying the scientific method to understand natural concepts and processes -- for example, then should every student, no matter what his or her major, achieve an advanced level of knowledge? But if Kean aims to provide Liberal Arts based education, what level of knowledge should we expect our students to achieve outside of their major? There are other SLOs that raise similar issues: as can be seen in the Quantitative Reasoning reports, the School is considering how to define precisely Quantitative Reasoning, and discussing how and when it is best taught.

4. **Assessing Kean's Values:** GE assessment of Value SLOs presently focuses at the introductory level: ensuring that incoming students are provided with Kean's value set. Kean presently introduces its values within GE 1000 (Transition to Kean). A mandatory Transition to Kean

[5] Kean brings in a large group of transfer students in the junior year. Intermediate SLOs are today primarily assessed through the compulsory GE Research & Tech course, which students usually take during their sophomore year. Transfer students enter after this point. The School and OAA need to look more closely, but the analysis of data for S1, for instance, suggests that the Junior year could be a particularly sensitive 'moment' for Kean students: the progress that should be seen from sophomore to capstone does not always seem to be occurring. This may be true in other SLOs.

course is already being considered for entering transfer students to ensure that they have also received Kean's specific value set. The planned GE evaluation should consider assessing values in the junior year to examine transfer students' level of achievement and to review progress within the whole student body. As a longitudinal assessment tool, the School, OAA and Office of Student Affairs are interested in linking the established co-curricular transcript to the GE assessment of values.[6] Finally, the School has been re-considering how to assess the Diversity SLO. Diversity is a key element of Kean's identity. It is imperative that students understand and value diversity in all its forms. We may have to put together our own rubric, utilizing ideas from three existing AAC&U rubrics.

5. **Assessment Tools:** the School and OAA have been utilizing national testing for many GE SLOs over the past two years. However, some SLOs have only been assessed in-house; while others have been assessed only through national testing. Just as we wish to move towards a full group of internal assessment tools, so we wish to use national testing more specifically in the future. National testing will provide an extra dimension to internal assessment through triangulation. To build a full group of internal tools, the School has been using several new AAC&U rubrics since Fall 2013. From Spring 2014 onwards, General Studies and the OAA will gather feedback from faculty members who used the rubrics, look at the results and evaluate ongoing use. Does the School need to build its own and base it on its own experience? Or does the School need to modify (based on faculty feedback) AAC&U rubrics for Kean use?

6. **Ongoing faculty support:** the School and the OAA will continue to provide training in GE assessment for faculty (especially after any changes resulting from the evaluation) through the Assessment Institute and during the semester. The evaluation should consider what professional development opportunities would be most appropriate to support GE assessment moving forward. Secondly, The School and OAA now wish to institutionalize norming conversations for faculty during the academic year.[7] GE faculty can facilitate norming conversations for distributed and capstone courses. The evaluation could also be used to encourage capstone faculty that share GE SLOs to talk across courses about their teaching and approach to assessment. Finally, the OAA, in cooperation with the GE Sub-Committee and the Assessment Sub-Committee of the Faculty Senate, will prepare a document that clearly articulates the differing roles and responsibilities in the assessment process of GE course (core, distributed or capstone) for the individual academic program assessment coordinators and the GE program assessment coordinator in the GE assessment

[6] Currently, the Center for Leadership and Service within Student Affairs is logging 18,900 hours of community service annually. Community service is introduced (and a co-curricular transcript begun) and is part of the assessment in GE 1000 (a transfer version of GE 1000 in the junior year could do the same). How can the transcript be used to assess value acquisition as students progress through their college career?

[7] Faculty experienced in GE SLO assessment, such as the leaders of S1 Composition and S2 Speech, are familiar with and utilize norming sessions. The School's faculty has begun to use norming groups *de facto* through the formation of SLO assessment teams during GE Assessment Week January 2014. Norming groups could be used for latitudinal and longitudinal analysis, and also to clarify expectations: for instance, the thresholds for each level.

process. The complexity of the GE assessment reporting has shown us some potential areas for innovation.

STANDARD 12 APPENDICES:

12.1	School of General Studies Action and Assessment Plan, June 2012, pp. 1-15
12.2	GE SLOs Assessment Report 2012-2013 and Fall 2013 (the individual reports for each SLO at each level assessed, together with summaries and comparative analysis)
12.3	General Education Student Learning Outcomes
12.4	GE Contribution to Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (table showing the relationship between GE SLOs and Institutional SLOs)
12.5	Direct Measures of GE SLOs (table showing how each GE SLO was directly assessed and at which level)
12.6	Closing the Loop Actions recommended by faculty as a result of Fall/Spring 2012-2013 (for Composition) and Fall 2013 Assessment Results - Curricula and Classroom Experience Changes
12.7	Course Selection Process by Proficiency Level and GE course requirements (which courses were assessed and why, with their connection to the GE curriculum)
12.8	GE Rubrics (the full set of rubrics used for GE assessment during the years 2012-2013)
12.9	GE 1000 T2K curriculum (the new T2K curriculum for Spring 2014 with an emphasis on Lifelong Learning – already operational)
12.10	GE SLO Assessment Report Form (the form created by the School of General Studies and the Office of Accreditation and Assessment for individual faculty members to report on their GE assessment)

Conclusion

The Kean Culture of Assessment: moving into the future with confidence

In 2012 Kean focused on a more 'robust' and 'systematic' culture of assessment (Monitoring Report, September 2012). This culture has three characteristics. It is comprehensive: it encompasses the whole Kean community from the Board of Trustees to the individual classroom. It is based on the achievement of excellence: providing a World Class Education at home and across the world as Kean extends into China. It is student-centered: Kean leadership, faculty and staff focus on assessment that will improve student learning and the student experience of university life. In this regard, the Board of Trustees has continued to provide strong leadership to ensure the ongoing integrity of the institution. It has shown engagement at every level of the community's life and, together with the leadership of the university and its various constituencies, has worked to engage all stakeholders (both internal and external) in understanding Kean's mission and vision for its future.

In its Monitoring Report of September 2012, Kean University asserted that "The tools and processes now in place to assess institutional effectiveness, general education, and student learning generally were designed to stand the test of time and they have proven their utility in the writing of this Monitoring Report. But more importantly, they have proven their utility to the people who designed them to assess and improve the effectiveness of what they do in the service of the University's students" (p. 93). Now in the third cycle of the institutional assessment system the University can reaffirm with documented evidence the sustainability and utility of its system. Kean University can look forward with confidence.

Thinking about the future can be a daunting task. But at Kean University, the future is already structured and the processes in place that will allow us to fulfill much of Vision 2020. The Strategic Plan 2013-2020 provides a comprehensive roadmap for the next seven years. The institutional assessment system is a proven tool for university planning. Non-academic units have already aligned this Academic Year's assessment plans to the new Strategic Plan. Kean can focus on fulfilling its promise of World Class Education with an ever-growing understanding of student learning and needs.

In the next year, Kean will focus on four assessment tasks. The first is the evaluation of General Education that has already started. Thanks to the strength of the overall system, the gathered evidence from General Education assessment, and the role of the different constituencies in General Education (from the GE sub-committee of the Faculty Senate, to the extensive GE full-time faculty group), Kean can look forward to evaluating General Education with confidence using evidence from the classroom, longitudinal and latitudinal, to guide the formation of a new General Education assessment cycle. Secondly, the production of three year Strategic Plans for every non-academic unit has already started. From next Academic Year onwards, every annual assessment plan will be connected to their unit's overall strategy. Meanwhile, the creation of Three Year Strategies is another opportunity to continue strengthening staff experience and skills in assessment. Thirdly, the University looks forward to the building of the next cycle of

Program Reviews. The experience of three years of Program Review will be examined, assessment data re-evaluated and faculty and staff will share discussion on lessons learned and the shape of Program Review for the future. Finally, the new Strategic Plan requires careful monitoring and the support of an institutional Score Card to ensure progress and general institutional health. Kean University looks forward to all these tasks. It does so with pride in its successful formulation of a culture of assessment; and with confidence in a shared vision of the future.