

The Plan for the 2012 Self-Study: Transitions

Juniata College

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**Commission action which preceded this report:
Periodic Review Report of 2008**

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Chapter 1: Introduction: Who We Are and the Changes that Confront Us

This chapter contains general information about Juniata College, reviews our mission, contextualizes our situation compared to past Middle States' reviews, and describes our current and future challenges.

A. Description of Juniata College

Juniata College is an independent, coeducational liberal arts college. The college was founded in 1876 by members of the Church of the Brethren to prepare individuals "for the useful occupations of life." The first classes were held on April 17, 1876 in a second story room over a local printing shop. Three students attended, two of them women. In 1879, classes were moved to Founders Hall on the present campus, located in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. Huntingdon, the county seat, has a current population of approximately 8,000. Huntingdon is located in the mountains of scenic central Pennsylvania, midway between Interstate 80 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

In 1896, Juniata was accredited as a four year liberal arts institution. From its inception, Juniata devoted itself to liberal education within the context of ethical values and useful citizenship. Our recently revised mission statement reflects our commitment to these goals.

The campus contains 43 buildings, a 315-acre nature preserve, and a 365-acre environmental field station. The von Liebig Center for Science, with state of the art classrooms and laboratories, was opened in 2002. Recent additions include the Juniata Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership (JCEL), an entrepreneurial center and business incubator which serves students and the community. JCEL was opened in fall 2003. The field station on nearby Raystown Lake is leased from the Army Corps of Engineers and provides one of the most distinctive opportunities for environmental study in the nation. The field station includes residences for students in two lodges and a 6000-square-foot all-purpose building with a dining hall and classrooms.

Currently we have about 1600 students seeking degrees at Juniata.

B. Mission of the College

Here is the mission statement.

Juniata's mission is to provide an engaging personalized educational experience empowering our students to develop the skills, knowledge and values that lead to a fulfilling life of service and ethical leadership in the global community.

The mission statement shown above can be found on our website. The strategic plan which includes specific goals derived from the broad vision of the mission statement serves as our true planning document. You can find a summary of the strategic plan in Appendix 1: Summary of the Strategic Plan for Juniata, on page 12.

C. Connections to Past Middle States Reviews

In 2003, the college chose the 'selected topics' format for its self-study and emphasized three areas. These were

- a. *The first year.* We studied the academic needs of incoming students and the success of the freshman year program in meeting those needs.
- b. *The international program.* We examined the commitment of the college to raise the awareness of students to their role in the global community.
- c. *Student engagement.* We studied the extent to which our students engage in active learning in the curriculum, in co-curricular activities, and in extra-curricular experiences.

Our self-study report was accepted by the Middle States commission and was deemed satisfactory. There were no recommendations from the committee. However, as a result of our study, faculty and staff members generated a list of high-priority recommendations and ranked them according to degrees of urgency.

The periodic review report of 2008 (PRR) reported on the results of our grappling with those high priority items. The reviewers of the PRR submitted several suggestions. They focused on

- reviewing class size across the curriculum,
- developing distinctive experiential learning opportunities,
- regulating student internships across departments,
- continuing to search for African American faculty members, and
- reviewing practices to support writing across the curriculum as well as assessing student writing.

In our 2012 self-study, we intend to revisit the items that generated suggestions from the PRR reviewers. In fact, these issues have helped the steering committee shape our focus for the upcoming self-study.

D. Recent Developments and Expectations for the Future

This section points to an overwhelming sense that Juniata is in transition. Our state and neighboring states are declining in their college-aged population. Our traditional recruiting market is also declining while others are opening. Soon top administrators and faculty members will leave. Tensions surrounding the curriculum have surfaced. Juniata will have to confront these and other changes that are more marked than in recent assessment periods.

1. Transition and Challenges to our Culture

As noted above, Juniata undertakes this self-study at a time of transition. Those transitions suggest, to some in our community, a tension over whether the change reflects a more fundamental change—in mission, philosophy, or ethos. For better or worse, Juniata is known as a college with exceptionally strong science programs, with a distinctive community focus, with high academic standards, and with a commitment to peace studies and international experience. We wonder to what extent our reputation shapes our identity and will impact the transitions we face.

2. Key Changes among Administrators and Faculty Members

In the coming two to three years, several departments on campus are facing a significant number of faculty retirements. In 2013, our current president, provost, and executive vice president of enrollment and retention will retire. These changes have energized significant portions of campus and have influenced the focus of this self-study process.

3. Demographic Changes and Increased Competition for Students

The *Princeton Review* noted in 2010 that “Juniata College has catapulted from regional to national status in the last decade.” In the last few years, Juniata has cracked *U.S. News and World Report’s* list of top 100 colleges, as well as the top 100 in the *Forbes.com* list and the *Kiplinger’s* Best Buys list. Whether a particular ranking methodology is flawed or not, the resulting exposure has resulted in Juniata vying for students against new and stiffer competition.

Peer institutions with whom we competed for students at the time of our last accreditation have fallen on the list of overlapping applications. More aspirant and out-of-region colleges have moved higher on the list. For the first time in 2010, students from Pennsylvania accounted for less than 60 percent of the student body.

The increased competition noted above, as well as a marked emphasis on enrollment activities, has resulted in a number of pressures on faculty members. As Juniata competes with aspirants more regularly than peers, we question whether we are comparing ourselves to the right institutions. Comparisons to peer institutions occur at a time when administrators are increasingly interested in attracting grants to fund needs. Faculty members have consequently questioned how their success in securing grants affects their evaluation. Other issues of debate include

- issues of workload and salary, particularly as they compare to our shifting peer and aspirant groups,
- research expectations and how they are considered with regard to different disciplines, and
- the efficacy of Juniata’s self-designed major (the Program of Emphasis) and our tradition of supplying two-advisors for each student.

Both faculty members and administrators are aware of demographic shifts occurring within our traditional markets. In Pennsylvania, the population of college-bound students is on the decline, with no expectation of a climb in population until 2018. The demographics in which growth is expected are urban African American and Latino populations, groups that historically have proven challenging for Juniata to enroll. Many of the contiguous states from which we recruit students (Ohio, western New York, and Maryland) face similar shifts in demographics.

4. Enrollment Pressure

Financially, Juniata has long existed as college dependent on tuition. In recent years we have seen growth in the discount rate that, while not yet alarming, is certainly a concern. Issues with the discount have come at the same time we have achieved record classes in recent years. Juniata is in the midst of an aggressive improvement to our search process, expected to deepen our applicant pool and result in our ability to drive down the discount. The challenges before us produce tensions between growth and its impact on educational programs and student support resources, between growth and discounting trends, and between sustaining growth and shifting market realities.

5. Financial Challenges

Juniata has ended a prolonged period of investing in its physical plant. We are now focused on growing our endowment to more than \$100 million. Recent debt restructuring has stabilized our rates and debt service costs.

Within the last ten to fifteen years, our endowment has twice experienced dramatic declines as a result of sudden market adjustments. In recent years we have diversified our assets more thoroughly in order to avoid dramatic market downturns. But because our endowment is significantly smaller than those of most of our competitors, we worry that competitors have more flexibility to manage scholarships, the discount rate, and program enhancements. Thus, managing and growing the endowment are our current concern.

Chapter 2: The Goals and Process of the Self-Study

This section looks at the goals we have for our self-study, the way we have organized ourselves to accomplish the self-study, and how we expect to keep the community aware of what we are finding as we study ourselves.

A. The Goals and Objectives for the Self-Study

We expect that the comprehensive self-study of Juniata College will

- Help us formulate an extensive understanding of how the college achieves its educational mission
- Function as a planning tool for the future, particularly in the upcoming transition to a new administration for the college.
- Assist us in identifying areas in need of improvement
- Promote the development of effective and sustainable assessment practices.
- Demonstrate our compliance with Middle States' 14 accreditation standards

B. The Organizational Structure

This section on organizational structure first explains how we assembled the self-study team and then explains how we organized the working groups.

1. Composition of the Self-Study Team

The members of the steering committee were appointed during the Fall semester of 2010. Members of this committee will oversee the self-study process. They will propose the structure of the self-study design, and work with the campus community to identify the key issues and questions for the self-study. The steering committee will form, oversee, and coordinate the working groups established to study the key issues and questions identified for the self-study. They will establish and maintain an adequate timetable for the completion of the self-study. They will provide opportunities for the campus community to participate in the self-study process by providing information and feedback on the self-study process and documents and oversee the completion of the final self-study report.

You can find a list of the committee members in Appendix 3: Members of the Steering Committee on page 25.

2. Composition of the Working Groups

The steering committee appointed members to serve as convening chairs for the working groups. Due to expected overlap of the inquiries of the working groups, the steering committee charged its convening chairs with serving as liaisons between the working groups and the steering committee. When seeking members, chairs of working groups considered expertise as well as broad representation by faculty members, students and administrators. We were particularly interested that faculty

members active with Juniata's Center for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning were spread among working groups, due to their assessment focus. Finally, working groups were urged to connect with existing campus committees whose work resonated with particular standards.

You can find a list of resources available to the working groups in Appendix 4: Sources of Information for the Working Groups on page 26.

C. Communication Plan for the Juniata Community

To ensure active engagement of the Juniata community in the self-study process, the steering committee will provide opportunities for members of the Juniata community to provide information, to raise questions, to review and give feedback on the self-study process and on its documents. These opportunities will include the following activities for specified groups.

- For faculty members: open forums, faculty meetings, individual department meetings, the solicitation of feedback and views from the Grants Group (a faculty grant activity workshop), from meetings of department chairs, and by solicitations from the steering committee and from work groups to individual professors and discreet groups.
- For staff members: open forums, articles in *The Lantern* (the in-house employee publication), solicitations by the steering committee and work groups to staff members and to discreet groups.
- For administrators: open forums, leadership team meetings, individual department meetings, cabinet discussions, solicitations by steering committee and work groups to professors and discreet groups.
- For students: open forums, *Juniatian* articles (the college newspaper), outreach efforts to student government, student group meetings.
- For alumni and trustees: At Alumni Council meetings and workgroups, at trustee meetings, and through participation by trustees as determined by the steering committee.

D. Timeline

To ensure that the self-study process is completed in an effective manner, the steering committee proposes the following timeline:

Spring 2011: Designing the Self-Study and Developing the Work Groups

- Select the self-study model
- Begin communicating the Middle States Self-Study process with members of the Juniata Community
- Develop the structure of the self-study
 - determine coverage of the 14 standards,
 - work with the Juniata community to identify the key issues of focus for the self-study,

- identify the working groups and
- draft the initial research questions to be analyzed.
- Finalize the self-study design and conduct the self-study preparation visit with the Middle States' liaison person.

Fall 2011 through Winter 2012: Conducting the Self-Study

- Working groups begin to analyze their assigned research questions.
- Steering committee members relay information from the working groups to the steering committee and to the broader Juniata community.
- The steering committee sends a copy of the self-study planning document to the chair of the evaluation team.
- Working groups submit reports

Spring 2012 through Summer 2012: Finalizing the Self-Study Report

- Review working group reports. Areas needing clarification or more information are identified and requested from the working groups
- Prepare the draft of the self-study report.

Fall 2012 through Winter 2013: Review and Submit the Self-Study Report

- Distribute the draft of the self-study report to the campus community for discussion and feedback
- Review of the self-study draft report by the evaluation team chair and plans made for the preliminary visit.
- Submit the final version of the report.

Spring 2013 through Summer 2013: Visit by the Middle States' Evaluation Team

- The Middle States' team visits and submits its report
- Receive the action of the Middle States' Commission.

Chapter 3: The Structure and Scope of the Self-Study

This chapter contains three sections: our rationale for using the comprehensive bundle model for our self-study, the structure we have developed for the self-study report, and the charge we have given to the work groups.

A. A Rationale for the Comprehensive Bundle Model

After reviewing our previous self-studies and looking ahead to a change in leadership at the institution, the steering committee decided that a comprehensive review would be best. A comprehensive review would, first, allow for the most extensive examination of the current functioning of the college and, second, serve as a planning tool for the future.

The option of the bundled comprehensive model allowed us the flexibility of interconnecting the standards in ways that reflect the mission, goals, and actions of the college. Thus, the steering committee agreed that the bundled comprehensive model would best help us tell the story of who we are and what challenges we face now. As you saw in Chapter 1 of this document, “transition” is our dominant theme.

The theme of transition reflects not only the expected change in leadership at the institution, but also several other changes affecting the college. As the opening of this document explains, in addition to leadership changes, Juniata faces many changes. As a result, we find that we need to know ourselves in order to meet our changing future. We believe that we can meet the objectives of accreditation while also helping ourselves.

B. The Tentative Structure of the Self-Study Report

We have bundled the standards as shown below. As you will see, we use four major categories that we believe define us and what we espouse. The categories are

- Think
- Evolve
- Act, and
- Think again.

We ask our students to think, evolve, and act. Our first bundle, around “Think,” is structured around how we operate. We tie Standards 4 and 5 together because our search for our next president and provost will have a clear bearing on issues related to governance.

“Evolve” is the essence of what we exist to do: teach in order to help others to grow. The work group examining Standards 11 and 12 will study the current

makeup of our educational product. Because of the comparatively high degree of experiential learning in which our students participate, we dedicated a group to examine Standard 13. Finally, Standard 10 will also be undertaken by its own group, at the conclusion of this bundle. We believe the issues studied in the other groups in the bundle have current and ongoing ramifications for faculty members.

“Act” reflects our mission to find, recruit, and support those students who can benefit from Juniata’s approach to education. For that reason, we bundle Standards 8 and 9, with particular emphasis on the work we do to attract students and to provide the services to ensure that they stay and prosper. Given our dependence on enrollment and the work we will undertake in the “evolve” bundle, our study of Standards 8 and 9 is shaped by our operations and our educational offerings. The bundle will study the degree to which such shaping occurs.

The final category, “Think Again,” is our effort to emphasize assessment and planning. The category’s name also implies that we will re-invest, in terms of planning and resources, to ensure that what we do is appropriately focused.

The un-spaced standards that you see below represent working groups. Thus, one working group will tackle standards 1 and 3, while another will take on standards 5 and 4. In Appendix 2: Working Groups and the Bundled Standards on page Appendix 2: Working Groups and the Bundled Standards13, we provide context and rationale for the bundling.

I. Think: What Systems Enable Our Work

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

Standard 5: Administration

II. Evolve: The Juniata Method, or What We Talk About When We Talk About Education

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

Standard 12: General Education

Standard 13: Related Education Activities

Standard 10: Faculty

III. Act: Match Students to Method, or Finding and Building Our Base

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

Standard 9: Student Support Services

IV. Think Again

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

C. Charge to the Working Groups

The steering committee has asked each working group to develop its individual charges, including

- the context for the formation of the working group
- a statement on the standards the group will address
- three to five overarching questions
- the members of the group and the plan to recruit others, and
- a review of sources to address the fundamental elements of each standard.

The working groups are charged to continue developing their overarching questions based on feedback from the Middle States Visiting Team. Each group is expected to solicit questions and feedback from members and others on campus as they develop the research questions before Fall 2011.

Working groups have also been charged to conduct their studies in accordance with the recommendations stated in the Middle States' publication, *Self-Study: Creating a Useful Process & Report* (2nd Edition, 2007). The steering committee has charged the working groups with considering the theme of "transitions" as they work.

The steering committee has emphasized to the working groups that the transition theme engenders a degree of uncertainty in the process. As a result, working groups will need to be vigilant about assessing the current condition and state of the college. In addition, the steering committee acknowledges that, since we are conducting a comprehensive assessment, working groups will necessarily communicate with one another through the self-study process. Communication will be necessary not only to share information but also to avoid duplication of effort.

Chapter 4: Profile of the Visiting Evaluation Team

If possible, we would like all members of the visiting evaluation team to have connections to liberal arts institutions comparable to Juniata. Specifically, we request an evaluation team whose members have had recent experience with significant changes in administrators at their institution. Continuing on our theme of transitions, the steering committee also requests that one or more members of the evaluation team be from institutions that have recently moved up in the national college rankings. Last, our rural setting raises unique and interesting challenges. The steering committee agrees that having evaluation team members who are aware of these challenges would be beneficial.

Institutions within the Middle States region with similar experiences may be Washington College, Hartwick College, and Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Additionally, we would welcome representatives from institutions outside the Middle States region. We have identified Centre College in Danville, KY and Austin College in Sherman, TX as institutions which may be helpful with our review process.

Appendix 1: Summary of the Strategic Plan for Juniata, 2008

The strategic plan begins with an explanation of the constituencies involved in creating it. The plan recognizes the challenges and opportunities our graduates face:

1. Significant advances in biotechnology and medicine, and tension regarding the ethics of the implementation of these advances;
2. Ubiquitous information technology with a transformational effect on communication;
3. Unprecedented entrepreneurial opportunity;
4. Growing environmental limitations;
5. Conflicts of increasing complexity and danger;
6. Changes in content and delivery of education with demand for greater accountability and affordability;
7. Frequent interactions with people of diverse cultural perspectives and practices;
8. Finally, a significantly greater career opportunity for our students as the “baby boomer” generation retires.

The plan then groups goals into three broad initiatives:

- The Teaching and Learning Environment
- The 21st Century Campus
- The Economic Advancement

The teaching and learning initiative includes such goals as creating a center for teaching excellence, increasing support for faculty development, expanding our international programs, expanding experiential opportunities for students, and exploring the possibility of masters programs.

Goals in the 21st century initiative include environmental sustainability, renovations and refurbishments across campus, and the development of a campus mater plan.

The economic advancement initiative calls for increasing the number of students not from Pennsylvania, working to retain 80% of our students until graduation, graduate 95% within four years, and reduce the debt level below \$33 million.

Appendix 2: Working Groups and the Bundled Standards

I. Think: What Systems Enable Our Work

Working Group 1

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

Standard 3: Institutional Resources

Convening Chair: Rob Yelnosky. Team members: Dom Peruso, Mark McKellop, members of Budget Team, others TBA.

Rationale for Working Group 1

At Juniata we tend to tie goals to resources in the way we plan. We are entering a period of significant transition. Now more than ever, clearly articulating our mission and goals and consciously linking our resources to them will be crucial to maintain our momentum and focus.

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 1

1) *This self-study will include an assessment of our mission and our strategic plan and the process for developing and communicating both.*

In 2008 Juniata concluded the process of developing a new mission and strategic plan. It had been seven years since the last strategic plan. The timing for the completion of the goals of the plan was intended to coincide with the retirements of the President in 2011 and the Provost and Vice President of Advancement and Development. Less than a year later, the United States experienced the most challenging economic period since the Great Depression. While things have improved, there is still significant economic uncertainty.

Using the 2008 mission and strategic plan, we will answer the following questions:

- How well are the mission statement and strategic plan communicated to college constituencies?
- Do college stakeholders regularly review and affirm the college's mission, goals, and strategic plan? Do stakeholders have opportunities to provide appropriate input into planning?
- Are the mission and goals of departments, divisions, offices, and programs congruent with the college mission statement? How do we assess this congruence?
- To what extent do institutional strengths and changing market conditions influence changes in the mission statement? Can the mission statement be improved?

2) *This self-study will include an assessment of our institutional resources and the process for strategically allocating and managing those resources.*

Over the last 10 years, we've have improved enrollment, facilities, rankings, and student outcomes. However, we have not improved our financial flexibility and resiliency. Our ability to do great things with fewer resources has been a source of pride and part of our culture. Is that still true? Is this reality now a source of insecurity or does it remain a source of pride. Is this feeling pervasive or do different constituencies have different perspectives?

With this reality as background, we will address the following:

- What is the financial condition of the college? What is the trend? How do we compare to peers and aspirants?
- What is the process for allocating our limited resources?
- How well do we evaluate the financial viability and sustainability of college departments, programs, and offices? How do we perform this evaluation? What criteria drive decisions to add or close programs? Who participates in these decisions?

3) *This self-study will include an assessment of our business model and address the question of sustainability. Do we have the resources required to deliver on our mission now and in the future?*

As our rankings have increased, we find ourselves competing with a more prestigious cohort of colleges. The gap between our resources and facilities and those of our competitors is wide and, at times, puts us at a competitive disadvantage. How do we respond to the amenity war? Is participating in that war consistent with our mission? Over the next 10 years, how must the college evolve for us to be successful on this new playing field?

More importantly, can we continue to expect to attract and maintain all of our resources given our financial resources? If not, how does our business model need to change?

Working Group 2

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

Standard 5: Administration

Convening Chair: Dave Hsiung Team members: Kati Csoman, Athena Frederick, and Bob Miller, with others still to join.

Rationale for Working Group 2

Juniata's system of governance has come under scrutiny recently, especially regarding the role played by the faculty. The self-study provides the opportunity to extend that scrutiny to all forms of governance and to the roles all constituents play. Soon, changes within the administration will have great effect on leadership as it pertains to governance.

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 2

- 1) *This self-study will include a thorough assessment of how people understand, and function within, the college's governance structure and governing bodies.*

Governance at Juniata runs from the board of trustees through a maze of committees, departments, and offices. This working group will assess the degree to which members of the Juniata community understand where they have primary, shared, or no responsibilities. The group will determine if the governing structure has the proper policies to carry out the mission. The group will also examine the actions people have taken within the governance structure: Were the right people placed in the proper positions? Did they have the requisite authority and ability to carry out their responsibilities? Have they been able to participate fully?

- 2) *The self-study will assess how well administrative decisions have aligned with the mission and resources of the institution.*

Over the past ten years, the administration has made many decisions that have affected every facet of Juniata College. The list includes enrollment growth; the development of master degree programs; the allocation of faculty, staff, equipment, space, and money to academic programs and departments; study abroad programs; campus security; the acquisition of local real estate; and responses to national political and economic developments. This working group will examine such decisions: Who made them? How were they made? To what degree did they adhere to Juniata's mission? Were they appropriate, given the college's resources? How have the decision processes and decision makers been assessed over this time period?

- 3) *The self-study will include an assessment of leadership positions within the governance structure.*

The current governance structure vests those in leadership positions (e.g., cabinet-level officers and chairs of academic departments) with considerable power and latitude. To what degree have the actions of leaders accorded with the governance structure and with the mission? How well have they recruited, developed, evaluated, promoted, and retained employees? How well has the college prepared for transitions in these positions, both anticipated (such as retirements) and unexpected (such as resignations)?

II. Evolve: The Juniata Method or What We Talk About When We Talk About Education

Working Group 3

Standard 11, Educational Offerings

Standard 12 General Education

Convening Chair: Dr. James Lakso, Provost. Team members: Dr. Dennis Johnson, Assistant Provost and Professor of Earth and Environmental Science; David Fusco,

Associate Vice President & Chief Information Officer; Dr. Sarah DeHaas, Professor of Education; Dr. Susan Prill, Assistant Professor of Religion.

The group intends to recruit other individuals who contribute to the management of general education, specifically the POE.

Rationale for Working Group 3

In setting the context for Standard 11, Educational Offerings, The Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education states that “Teaching and learning are the primary purposes of any institution of higher education, whether at the undergraduate or graduate level.”

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 3

1) *This self-study will include a thorough assessment of the Program of Emphasis.*

The traditional role of the major at Juniata is fulfilled by the Program of Emphasis (POE). This feature of our curriculum has endured for forty years. In theory, several features set the POE apart. The first is that we place the responsibility for creating the area of concentration in the hands of individual students. While students may choose to adopt a more or less standard program, the “designated POE”, more than half go through the process of creating something more individualized. Second, the POE makes interdisciplinary programs more likely. Students are encouraged to combine courses from different disciplines and programs in constructing the POE. Finally, the POE offers the advantage of flexibility. Many students change their intended fields of concentration during their four year program. In the traditional major, often courses taken in one field may not satisfy the major requirements of another. With the POE, students often find that course work completed in the first POE can also be used in a second, more interdisciplinary POE. Finally, we have not kept the POE separate from all of the general education requirements. Courses can simultaneously satisfy both the POE and distribution requirements.

Recently, faculty members chose to impose limits on the number of credits in the POE. Although the POE continues to be popular, it isn’t clear that it has led to a greater interdisciplinary experience for students. One focus of the fundamental elements of our educational offerings will be the Program of Emphasis.

2) *The self-study will include an assessment of our program of general education*

Juniata’s program of general education emphasizes:

- a) Acquiring intellectual skills and capacities. The Juniata curriculum identifies three specific skill requirements: communication, quantitative literacy, and information access.
- b) Developing breadth. Juniata students are required to take two courses in each of five different areas; (F) Fine Arts, (I) International, (S) Social Science, (H) Humanities and (N) Natural Science. This construct sets the Juniata program apart from typical liberal arts curricula. First, we go beyond the standard three distribution areas (humanities, social science and natural science) to include fine

arts and international courses. Second, students must designate in which of three areas they will pursue higher level coursework. Recently, the faculty revisited the distribution categories and redefined each category.

- c) Developing societal, civic, and global knowledge. In the Juniata curriculum, this objective is addressed in four ways. First, each student is required to take two courses that have a significant international component. Second, two required courses, Cultural Analysis and Interdisciplinary Colloquium, address the issues of societal and global knowledge. Third, approximately 40% of our students study abroad. Finally, a growing number of students are involved in service learning.

The general education program has evolved over time, often as the result of staffing issues and compromises. As we sought questions for the self-study, many recommended that we address our general education program.

In examining the POE and the general education curriculum, we focus on what we offer. The second major focus in Standards 11 and 12 will be on the way we teach.

3) *This self-study will include a thorough assessment of the effectiveness of the way we teach.*

- a) A high level of student-faculty interaction is a defining characteristic of a Juniata education. For years students and faculty members have collaborated on academic activities and projects. This collaboration is reflected in alumni comments and also in various assessments, including The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
- b) Juniata is both challenging and supportive. Students who come to Juniata expect to work hard. A key component of the Juniata experience is that the academic challenge occurs in a supportive environment. When students experience difficulty, they can expect to find faculty and administrative support. When a student decides to change the POE, he or she will find faculty members to assist them in that transition. The supportive campus environment also comes from other students, many of whom serve as tutors and mentors.
- c) Faculty members use teaching methods that engage students as active participants in the learning process. Experiential learning via internship, faculty-student research, service learning, and study abroad are important parts of the Juniata experience. Capstone experiences allow students to create an individualized and often intensive learning opportunity in order to apply their knowledge and skills.

The use of technology in teaching and learning has increased significantly in the past 10 years at Juniata. Students born after 1982 have been called the "net generation" or "millennials". Net gen students have a unique set of characteristics that are changing the way we teach, as their method of learning is different than generations past. Technology has changed curricula in a number of ways. Most changes, though, are the replication or automation of old procedures done more

efficiently. The most exciting uses of technology have involved projects that have created new environments altogether and engage students like they've never done before. Juniata faculty members recognize the need to integrate technology into courses to maximize teaching and student performance.

Campus Technology Services (CTS) provides the leadership, infrastructure, and support to facilitate the use of technology in and out of the classroom and to enhance business processes and operations. CTS is comprised of four integrated organizations that work together. The four divisions of CTS are the Technology Solutions Center, Campus Network and Security, Administrative Information Services, and Training Services.

Working Group 4

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

Convening Chair: Jen Cushman, Dean of International Education and Associate Professor of German. Team members: Dennis Plane, Associate Professor of Politics; Chuck Yohn, Director of the Raystown Field Station and others to be announced.

Rationale for Working Group 4

Because of Juniata's emphasis on distinctive experiential education, Standard 13 was assigned its own working group. Central to Juniata's philosophy, work, and ethos, Standard 13 is closely aligned with Standards 11: Educational Offerings; 12 General Education; and 10 Faculty, under the second, or "Evolve" section of the report. Encompassing many of what George Kuh identifies as "High Impact Practices" (AAC&U 2008) the areas under Standard 13 are in no way ancillary to Juniata's educational mission. Indeed, the 2008 strategic plan places special emphasis on related educational activities. The plan sets the goal that

every Juniata graduate will have at least one distinctive experiential learning opportunity related to that student's educational objectives.

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 4

- 1) *This self study will include an assessment of Juniata's efforts to provide educational access and support to a diverse community.*

Juniata's geographic location presents certain challenges in providing educational access to a diverse population of undergraduates. The working group will assess our strategies in recruiting and supporting a diverse community. In particular, the group will examine how effectively Juniata identifies and supports diverse, nontraditional, and underprepared students through student advising, diversity and inclusion, campus ministry, international student services, academic support services, the college writing center, and the intensive English program.

- 2) *This self-study will include an assessment of our experiential learning offerings.*

In addition to examining co-curricular services that support academic success, the working group will consider experiential learning. Juniata's mission statement places special emphasis on "engaging," "service," and "global." The 2008 strategic plan establishes the goal to ensure that "every Juniata graduate will have at least one distinctive experiential learning opportunity related to that student's educational objectives [including] internships, service projects, extended off-campus class experiences, research, student teaching, or international study."

Among other programs, the working group will examine distance education (with international partners, for example), certificate programs, study abroad, internships, service learning, living and learning communities like the Global Village and the Raystown Field Station, the Juniata Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, and long- and short-term off-campus study, including domestic or international trips embedded in academic courses. Because Juniata values such activities the working group will evaluate related educational activities strategically, collaboratively, and intentionally, so that they may be 1) integrated more effectively into the academic program, 2) sustainable in the context of faculty and staff workload, and 3) assessed in terms of their contribution to student learning.

Working Group 5

Standard 10: Faculty

Convening Chair: Kathy Westcott. Team members: Jack Barlow, Sarah May Clarkson, Alison Fletcher. Ryan Mathur, Deb Roney and Kim Roth have agreed to participate in the fall.

Rationale for Working Group 5

Faculty's central role is "... promoting, facilitating, assuring, and evaluating student learning (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, p. 37)". In addition to continued development in teaching and learning, the faculty also support Juniata's mission through scholarship, student advising, and service. Upcoming transitions in administration, enrollment, and faculty composition are linked to potential shifting demands for faculty in a variety of key areas (i.e., educational offerings, class size, scholarship activities, etc). This working group is set to identify and examine the core issues that influence the overall functioning of our faculty.

Charge and Fundamental Questions

1) How have faculty workloads been altered by broader changes at the institution?

Central to college mission is the long-standing emphasis on teaching excellence. Given our fundamental objective to provide "the highest quality, liberal education" (Juniata College Mission Statement, 2006), how have changes at the institution impacted the day to day activities of faculty members? How might these changes impact our level of teaching effectiveness? Do we effectively adjust faculty workloads to match changing demands (i.e., service, scholarship, teaching, advising, changes in the general education program, demands on POES, enrollment activities, and Master degree programs)?

In thinking about the students we serve, we also must consider how institutional changes impact their experience. Specifically, how well do we address the needs of the enrolled student body? How do we adapt in areas such as class size, course offerings, etc? Last, what is the role of the department chair in departmental assessment, the development of departmental colleagues, evaluation of their departmental colleagues, and recruitment of departmental members. Is this workload sustainable? How are chairs evaluated?

2) How are professional development opportunities for faculty members supported?

This question will examine issues related to opportunities for faculty members to engage in professional development (i.e., remaining current in academic discipline, scholarship activities, and professional engagement opportunities). This working group will explore if our current system of funding for faculty development properly supports continued professional growth in areas of teaching, scholarship, and creative work.

Additional questions about professional development were about the link between faculty development activities and faculty evaluation. In particular, how effective is the link between faculty development and faculty evaluation? Specifically, does the current process of formative evaluation match the summative evaluation process that occurs through the formal evaluation process? Finally, how do we foster continuous improvement of faculty members, including post-tenure review?

3) How do we plan for and recruit new faculty?

The expected changes in administrators and faculty members raise questions about our practices for planning, recruiting, and hiring. This working group will examine how faculty replacements (i.e., retirements, sabbaticals) will be planned for? Also, how effective are our processes for recruiting tenure-track, non-tenure track, and adjunct faculty?

III. Act: Match Students to Method, or Finding and Building Our Base

Working Group 6

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention

Standard 9: Student Support Services

Convening chair: John Hille. Team members: Michelle Bartol, Kris Clarkson, Cy Devries, Grace Fala, Jim Latten, Cathy Stenson. (Future inclusion by members from Enrollment, the Student Success Team, and the First Year Committee.)

Rationale for Working Group 6

During the last ten years, Juniata has grown its total enrollment by an average of twenty-five students per year. The college has continued to attract a base of first generation students, matriculates from the twelve counties closest to Juniata, and a significant cohort of students with very high need. Most of the growth, however, has

come from increases in non-Pennsylvania matriculates, domestic African American, Latina and Asian minorities, international students and students from families with more assets. The college anticipates growth in the next decade at about the same pace, despite declines in college age populations. The college also expects that the additional matriculates will be from recent growth areas.

As the transition in enrolled students continues, we want to investigate whether we can maintain our strong sense of community and support the needs and aspirations of the growing constituencies. We have added pressures related to the increasing numbers of students who need medication and other special needs. The college seeks to increase first to second year retention and four and six year graduation rates. Working group 6 will examine college performance and capabilities to support enrollment goals. It will consider the interaction of advising; service learning; athletic, health, and wellness programming; and residential life activities in supporting student success.

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 6

- 1) How do academic advising processes and academic support services impact on-time graduation rates for students? How do they help students to graduate, or pursue professional programs, and to secure educationally related employment?
- 2) Has the college developed sufficiently robust programs for its diverse student population to offset limits in offerings and to meet shifts in student interests?
- 3) How does the college support students who have special needs, marginal academic backgrounds, or poor study skills?
- 4) Are student recruitment and marketing strategies related to the resources and strengths of the college? Are they aligned with trends in the market place likely to reward the college?
- 5) Does the college assess whether a positive campus environment exists for all students, especially for those from traditionally underrepresented populations?

IV. Think Again

Working Group 7

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment

Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

Convening Chair: Carlee Ranalli. Team members: Phil Dunwoody, Jim Borgardt, Dave Widman, Jason Mickel, Candice Hersh, Carol Peters, Cindy Clarke, Lyndsey Gianella, Sarah Trescher

Rationale for Working Group 7

Standards 7 and 14 were bundled together based on an interest in a holistic assessment. Arguably, one standard is primarily an administrative assessment and

the other fundamentally an educational assessment. Questions in other standards suggest that understanding and relations between administrators and faculty members, while currently generally good, could erode. A working group tackling both standards has the potential of having each side learn more and gain greater understanding of the other. Finally, our appreciation of community and our frequent collaborations between faculty and administration suggest that, for Juniata, a comprehensive look at assessment fits who we are.

Juniata has been praised in the past for the value placed on data at our institution. This data is collected at various levels through an assortment of processes. For example, the Academic Planning and Assessment Committee (APAC) guides academic departments through program reviews. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning group (SoTL) assists faculty with course assessment projects. Administrators complete annual reviews. The Institutional Research Office and other units on campus collect institutional level data.

While we have a culture that values data and assessment, we still do not always make the best use of the data. Sometimes, it appears as though we lack clear goals to guide us in using the data we have collected. As one faculty member put it, “the tail seems to sometimes wag the dog.” By examining our assessment processes, we can determine what steps in the assessment cycle are missing and work through our established assessment channels to close the loop.

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 7

1) *Are we achieving our mission? How do we know?- Does Juniata have a clear process for assessing itself and its students?*

The working group will focus on institutional assessment and assessment of student learning. Do we have established goals or standards to measure against? Do we have mechanisms in place to assess our performance as well as the performance of our students?

How well are we collectively doing what we say we are doing? The working group will summarize our current assessments by the criteria set for each accreditation standard and draw conclusions about our achievement of our key goals.

2) *Do the results of the assessments get shared and used in administrative decision making and in the allocation of resources?*

We spend a great deal of time and resources collecting and compiling data. We need to know if it is being used. Using data to make sound decisions and to allocate resources will make us a stronger institution.

The working group will analyze how information is shared across the institution and determine if data is used to make decisions.

3) How does assessment help us plan for the future?

The working group will look for evidence that the institution reflects on assessment results and uses it to guide us.

Working Group 8

Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

Standard 6: Integrity

Convening Chair: Gabe Welsch. Team members: Linda Carpenter, Will Dickey, Jay Hosler, Matthew Powell, Daniel Welliver, others to be announced.

Rationale for Working Group 8

Standard 2 concerns the need for ongoing planning, for allocating resources according to the mission and objectives of the college, and for using assessments to renew the institution. Standard 6 concerns our adherence to ethical standards and to our own policies as we serve our several constituencies. Integrity also involves safeguards for academic and intellectual freedom. We bundled these standards together because they challenge us to consider our actions and accomplishments. They ask us to make clear the truth about our operations, messaging, planning, and delivery on the promises we make.

The questions generated around Standards 2 and 6 are forward looking and focused on accountability. Their answers have ramifications on every area of the self-study. For that reason, we bundle these two standards into a section, with assessment standards, that challenge us to “think again.” The rationale implies that it is not enough to look forward, but to do so with the confidence of our convictions, and to plan accordingly.

Charge and Fundamental Questions for Working Group 8

1) What significant or specialized planning processes has the college recently undertaken? To what extent have those processes reflected the elements of effective planning as outlined by the Middle States Commission?

The working group will examine ongoing planning and allocation of resources such as the strategic plan, the master plan, the functioning of standing committees, and specialized planning functions that occur irregularly. The working group, using the detailed characterization of Standard 2 by Middle States, will assess the quality of processes by asking questions such as: Did planning and allocating resources relate to the mission and to the prioritized goals of the institution? Did processes make full use of available data? Did planning include the involvement of relevant constituencies? Were the results of these processes fully assessed, reported and used for future iterations of planning?

2) What distinctive promises does Juniata College make? What are the expectations these promises create for its constituencies and for the public? How do we know the extent to which those promises and expectations are fulfilled?

These over-arching questions relate to the outcomes from planning and allocating resources. They also relate to the integrity of the institution in delivering the services and experiences it says it will deliver. Since other working groups will assess the fulfillment of goals in various areas, this working group need not replicate their work. This working group can answer this question by *referring to other working groups* focused on institutional and student learning assessment; educational offerings; related educational activities; faculty; student admission and retention; and student support.

3) *What are the core ethical values of the institution; the policies and procedural structures for supporting those values? What are the avenues for people to pursue grievances relating to these values, policies, and structures? How well are policies, procedures, and avenues for grievance functioning? Do practices align with values? Are people afforded due process and fair and equitable treatment?*

The working group will assemble and review existing documentation to answer this query. The working group will examine the frequency and care with which the college reviews these policies and procedures; the process for developing new policy; and its responsiveness to challenges that emerge. The working group will also, in all likelihood, reveal any gaps in policy or procedures.

Appendix 3: Members of the Steering Committee

The self-study committee (the steering committee) includes

- Jim Lakso, (Co-Chair), Provost and Vice President for Student Development
- Gabe Welsch, (Co-Chair), Vice President for Advancement and Marketing
- Kathryn Westcott, (Co-Chair), Associate Professor of Psychology
- Kris Clarkson, Dean of Students
- Jenifer Cushman, Dean of International Education and Associate Professor of German
- Alison Fletcher, Assistant Professor of History
- Dave Fusco, Vice President, Chief Information Officer Computer and Network Services
- John Hille, Executive Vice President for Enrollment and Retention
- Dave Hsiung, Professor of History
- Dennis Johnson, Professor of Environmental Sciences
- Dom Peruso, Professor of Accounting, Business, and Economics
- Susan Prill, Assistant Professor of Religion
- Carlee Ranalli, Director of Institutional Research
- Pat Weaver, Professor of Business, Accounting, and Economics
- Daniel Welliver, Assistant Professor of Sociology
- Rob Yelnosky, Vice President for Finance and Operations

Note: We will add students to the committee once the Fall semester of 2011 begins.

Appendix 4: Sources of Information for the Working Groups

Working groups will use the following resources, among others.

- The strategic plan
- Program self-studies, reviews, and policies from the Academic Planning and Assessment Committee
- project results from the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Group
- NSSE, CLA, the Senior Survey, the Freshman Survey, Alumni Surveys, Faculty Surveys, SSI, PSI, CORE data from Health & Wellness, library assessments, focus group results
- Narrative of uses of the APAC self studies, CLA and NSSE in informing curricular change
- Administrative Reviews
- Collaborative discussions with APAC and the IE Council
- IR Office Factbook
- AICUP & HEDS surveys
- Enrollment Progress Reports
- Supported Admission outcomes
- Retention Reports
- Annual Enrollment Plan
- Plan for 1600 Enrollment
- Student Success Objectives
- Minutes of SAD Committee on Advising
- First Year Committee reports
- Freshman Profile Reports
- Results from the Admitted Student Questionnaire
- Noel-Levitz parent and student satisfaction surveys
- Attrition DataBase Reports
- Historic Retention Rates Reports
- Minutes of Enrollment and Student Success Team
- Enrollment Over Time report
- College Writing Seminar curricula
- Inbound reports
- List of full- and part-time faculty, with credentials
- Faculty handbook
- Faculty senate and/or council structure, constitution, and bylaws
- Faculty manual and comparable documents describing procedures, policies, and criteria hiring and reviewing full and part-time faculty, and for promotion, tenure, grievance, discipline, and dismissal
- Policy on academic freedom
- Materials from new faculty orientation
- Reports on and plans for faculty development
- Policies for orientation, integration, and professional development of part-time faculty

- Summary of results of student course and teaching evaluations
- Relevant results of internal surveys of faculty
- Ratios of students to full-time and to part-time faculty
- Description of shared governance
- College Catalog
- POE listings
- Departmental assessment plans
- Descriptions of library resources and learning technology
- Transfer policies from registrar
- Course syllabi
- Overview of General Education curriculum
- List of Board members, with job titles
- Orientation materials and/or handbook for governing board members
- Conflict of interest policies for the governing board and employees
- Governing board minutes
- Job description and qualifications of the president
- Written policies outlining governance responsibilities of administration and faculty
- Student government constitution and bylaws
- Organization chart of senior administration
- Handbooks/manuals for faculty, staff, and institutional committees
- Job descriptions and qualifications for administrators
- Orientation materials and handbooks for employees
- The president's annual report
- Reports to state and other governmental educational agencies
- Reports to specialized accrediting organizations
- Reports on and supporting materials from relevant workshops, conferences, orientation/training sessions
- Previous institutional reports to Middle States
- Collective bargaining agreements, as background information
- Audited financial statements and associated Management Letters
- Budget projections and related documents
- Special Funding Documents
- Facilities master plan
- Board Committee on Investments, Business Affairs Committee and Audit Committee Resolutions
- Development and fundraising campaign documents