



# KEAN



## SELF-STUDY REPORT

Prepared for the  
**MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION  
ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

2021 - 2022



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**AA** – Office of Affirmative Action

**AACU** – Association of American Colleges and Universities

**AIC** – Academic Issues Committee

**AGB** – Association of Governing Boards

**APP** – Academic Policy and Programs Committee

**ARTP** – Appointment, Retention, Tenure and Promotion

**AToD** – Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Task Force

**AY** – Academic Year

**AOD** – Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Services

**BHE** – Board of Higher Education

**BOT** – Board of Trustees

**BoT** – Back on Track Program

**CACREP** – Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

**CAPS** – Center for Advising, Persistence and Success

**CARES** – Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act

**CASHI** – Computing Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Institutions

**CBPM** – College of Business and Public Management

**CCCSW** – Cougar Connections Center of Social Work

**CIS** – Center for International Studies

**CLA** – College of Liberal Arts

**CLS** – Center for Leadership and Service

**COE** – College of Education

**COI** – Conflict of Interest

**CSI** – College Student Inventory

**CSMT** – The Dorothy and George Hennings College of Science, Mathematics and Technology

**CRT** – College Retention and Tenure

**CURF** – Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships

**CVSS** – Center for Veterans Student Success

**CWA** – Communications Workers of America

**DC** – Diversity Council

**DEI** – Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

**DHE** – Department of Higher Education

**DSSR** – Division of Student Success and Retention

**EEO** – Equal Employment Opportunity

**EHS** – Office of Environmental Health & Safety

**ELC** – English Language Center (WKU)

**ELL** – English Language Learners

**ELO** – Ethics Liaison Officer

**ENR** – Enrolled Not Registered

**EOF** – Educational Opportunity Fund

**EPIC** – Entry Program Into College

**FAFSA** – Free Application for Federal Student Aid

**FCP** – Facilities and Campus Planning

**FRI** – Freshman Research Initiative

**FSCL** – Food Scrap Composting Laboratory

**FY** – Fiscal Year

**GE** – General Education

**GE SLOs** – General Education Student Learning Outcomes

**GPSC** – Graduate and Part-time Student Council

**HR** – Human Resources

**HRC** – Holocaust Resource Center

**HRI** – Human Rights Institute

**IE** – Office of Institutional Effectiveness

**IFPTE** – International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers

**IT** – Library and Information Services Center (WKU)

**INCLUDES** – Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science

**KCC** – Kean Counseling Center

**KeanWISE** – Kean Web Information System Express

**KFT** – Kean Federation of Teachers

**KUAFF** – Kean University Adjunct Faculty Federation

**KUBIT** – Kean University Behavioral Intervention Team

**KU SLO** – Kean University Student Learning Outcome

**LEAP** – Learn, Earn and Persist Program

**LIEP** – Learning and Immersion Enrichment Program (WKU)

**LMS** – Learning Management System

**LSAMP** – Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation

**NACAC** – National Association for College Admission Counseling

**NASPA** – National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

**NCAA** – National Collegiate Athletic Association

**NIH** – National Institutes of Health

**NJAC** – New Jersey Athletic Conference

**NJCSTM** – New Jersey Center for Science, Technology and Mathematics

**NJLESA** – New Jersey Law Enforcement Supervisors Association

**NJPC** – New Jersey Presidents Council

**NJSOLEA** – New Jersey Superior Officers Law Enforcement Association

**NJSPBA** – New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association

**NTLC** – Nancy Thompson Learning Commons

**NWGC** – Nathan Weiss Graduate College

**OAA** – Office of Accreditation and Assessment

**OAS** – Office of Accessibility Services

**OCIS** – Office of Computer and Information Services

**OER** – Open Educational Resources

**ORSP** – Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

**OSSR** – Office of Student Success and Retention

**PASSPORT** – Program for Academic Support Services Providing Opportunities to Remarkable and Talented Students

**PIEP** – Pre-University Intensive English Program (WKU)

**PoE** – Power over Ethernet

**PSC** – Presidential Search Committee

**RRC** – Research Recruits Program

**RSS** – Residential Student Services

**S&P** – Standard & Poors

**SAP** – Satisfactory Academic Progress

**SASSC** – Student Academic Services Support Center (WKU)

**SCDC** – Student Career Development Center

**SGS** – School of General Studies

**SHS** – Student Health Services

**SI** – Supplemental Instruction

**SIU** – Step-it-Up Program

**SLO** – Student Learning Outcome

**SPA** – Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates

**SpF** – Students Partnering with Faculty

**SPLOs** – Program Student Learning Outcomes

**SUPERA** – Spanish Speaking Program

**SVPAA** – Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

**UPC** – University Planning Council

**UR** – University Relations

**VAWA** – Violence Against Women Act

**WKU** – Wenzhou-Kean University

**ZEV** – Zero Emission Vehicles

Since it was founded as the Newark Normal School in 1855, Kean University has changed in many ways. It has enlarged its scope of endeavor from teacher training programs (which remain strong) to embrace first undergraduate, then graduate instruction, in a wide variety of areas. The Normal School became a College, which became a University. It moved from Newark to Union, and then expanded beyond Union to develop two additional locations in New Jersey and another in Wenzhou, China. Along the way, the local school became a regional hub that developed a statewide vision that grew into a truly global institution.

While the entire history took fully 166 years to unfold, Kean's development accelerated dramatically over the last 50 years. It became Kean College of New Jersey in 1973, then Kean University in 1997. Kean Ocean, a partnership with Ocean County College in Toms River, welcomed its first students in Spring 2006. Wenzhou-Kean University in China enrolled its first students in 2012. The newest site, Kean Skylands, has been in operation for less than three years.

These changes have been consequential and their planning visionary, but the fundamental pillars of Kean were laid at its founding in 1855. The University has always embraced the mission of providing opportunity for those who have had too little of it. It has always recognized the imperatives of public purpose for universities funded by taxpayers and remains to this day attentive to constituencies beyond the campus. It has embraced rigor while eschewing the kind of elitism that would make it less accessible to the constituencies it was founded to serve. It has always placed the fortunes of its students first, while recognizing that their interests are often as well served by indirect as well as direct investments, such as the quality of faculty and the institution's ability to advance research excellence alongside direct curricular and career support.

Today, Kean University is at yet another inflection point. President Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., took the reins on July 1, 2020, in the teeth of COVID-19. The pandemic demanded the lion's share of his attention, as it did for every university leader in the country. Safety and maintenance of students' academic momentum in the face of unprecedented challenges simply had to take center stage. Those urgencies did not, however, dampen his insistence on upholding the University's long-standing commitments and building on them to meet the challenges of the day. Under Dr. Repollet, Kean has reaffirmed its commitment to equity and inclusion, building new platforms to recruit and retain a diverse faculty; admit and support students who are best positioned to benefit from the education it provides; and strengthen institutional supports for achieving its inclusion goals.

Kean has also set its sights on achieving the designation of R2 – Doctoral University – High Research Activity – in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education within the next five years, recognizing that research excellence would be, increasingly, one of the most ringing value propositions it could provide for students and the off-campus communities it serves. Dr. Repollet has championed Kean's recent designation as the first urban research institution in the State of New Jersey, bringing aboard into Cabinet roles executives with deep experience developing university-community partnerships. These efforts build on those begun during the prior administration to grow capacity to support student research, particularly for undergraduates, cognizant of the outstanding success that many institutions have had in advancing students' success by involving them in research projects.

None of these would be hot-button priorities for an institution with Kean's student-focused mission if they did not provide immediate value for our enrollees. To ensure that they do, Kean has launched a number of new initiatives – a Center for Advising, Persistence and Success (CAPS); a Cougar Connections Center of Social Work (CCCSW); a new Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); redoubled effort on the part of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) to support student engagement in research; and a joint center for student co-curricular experiences in the form of internships and short-term study abroad opportunities, among others – to put students in the forefront of the University's strategic objectives. Kean takes square aim at persistence and graduation rates that must improve if it is to be true to its mission and provide optimal service to all of the constituencies whose good fortunes it promotes.

None of this would be possible without two key procedural commitments that President Repollet has made and on which there has been demonstrable progress in the 16 months since his arrival. First, Kean is to be an inclusive and collegial institution with respect to decision making. Executive leadership is now fully engaged with the University Senate, with the union (the Kean Federation of Teachers), and college-based decision-making bodies ensuring the integrity of the institution. This shift reflects both an attitudinal and ethical commitment of the President as well as a frank recognition that in a research-led enterprise, researchers, together with Trustees, students, and senior leadership, must have a strong voice in determining the institution's direction.

Second, Kean is committed to open, transparent and data-driven decision making. The University is committed to the constant investigation of both its successes and failures. It needs to foster a culture of innovation, not complacency, and provide all units, academic and administrative, with the information they need to improve their practices, as well as to celebrate achievements. To that end, Kean is co-locating all of the University's measurement and assessment functions and providing to the individual units of the University the information they need to succeed. This approach allows Kean to underscore for all constituencies the key themes by which it measures success, learn from failures, and build best practices anew while reducing data collection burdens on downstream units and harmonizing the ability to focus on shared goals.

### *With regard to the individual standards:*

#### **Standard I: Mission and Goals**

Kean's Mission has been consistent throughout its history while also expanding to embrace emerging imperatives, such as globalization, re-specified understandings of inclusion and equity, and the strategic commitments of successive administrations. Its R2 and urban research goals are bold but demonstrably evolutionary developments that are the logical next steps in the experiment that began in Newark in 1855.

#### **Standard II: Ethics and Integrity**

Kean is a public institution in the State of New Jersey. Its Trustees, President and all employees are bound by State ethics laws and receive annual training on those requirements. Academically, Kean is committed to helping students, faculty, and staff understand all of the rules about authorship and patent-level innovation so that they become effective moral agents able to steward both their own and others' interest in scholarly and creative content. The University also sees its commitment to transparency as an ethical imperative, providing every constituency at Kean with the data needed to become fully empowered analysts, partners, and critics of the University's goals, strategies, and accomplishments.

#### **Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

This chapter is devoted to academic instruction rather than co-curricular activity and curricular support. The narrative in this section shows an evolving and increasingly rigorous attention to what and how students learn. As it has for many universities, the pandemic accelerated Kean's attention to delivery modalities and heightened awareness of the range of supports provided for learners face-to-face, online, and increasingly, in hybrid formats.

**Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience**

This chapter is devoted to co-curricular support rather than the in-class experience, though the advisement sections overlap. Kean has been expanding its capacity to offer students internships and short-term programs, some of them study abroad, that amplify the value of their curricular-only experiences. Kean seeks to build uptake in internships and all experiential programs. It is committed to providing students with as many opportunities as possible to move what they learn in the classroom into real-world practice in institutional and more public settings. The University intends thereby not only to improve retention and graduation, but to build better citizens.

**Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

Kean has long been devoted to establishing measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs). Its work with SLOs began well before the last accreditation cycle and has seen many refinements and reconfigurations since. The University is now engaged in a system-wide project of trying to understand how all of the direct (e.g., class size, delivery modality, use of OER, advisement uptake, etc.) and indirect (e.g., quality of technology support, student utilization of non-academic campus services, condition of physical plant, etc.) efforts toward educational success make persistence, graduation, and thriving post-graduation more likely.

**Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

This chapter brings together the data collection and analysis efforts described under narrower purposes in the preceding chapters. It details the many levels of planning underway at Kean and how those are harmonized and integrated to chart a clear path forward. Like any public institution, Kean must plan with an eye to decisions made in the State's capital, which may or may not align with the University's short-term goals. To that end, the chapter details ways that the University is diversifying its revenue streams, largely predicated on the geopolitical community-engaged value propositions and the strong outcomes for under served populations that drive earned revenue beyond tuition as well as private philanthropy.

**Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

Kean is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of the State. Those Trustees are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the University ensuring that Kean operates within the boundaries of sound financial practice and uses all of its resources to pursue its mission. Under Dr. Repollet, Kean is engaged in a sustained and thoroughgoing effort to reinvigorate the University's internal governance, inviting broad participation in decision making, insisting on transparency about standards and processes, and fostering inclusive practices at every level of operation. Kean has always conformed to its overall and unit-level governance charters, but it is manifestly true that in the past some constituencies, very much including the Senate and the faculty union, felt less involved with key decisions than they wanted to be. That has changed. Cabinet officers now routinely attend Senate meetings; the administration partners with both the faculty and staff unions in pursuing the University's mission; faculty self-organize into various interest groups – full professors interested in the future of the University, data scientists who want to harness the power of analytics across the campus's Colleges, faculty dedicated to research and teaching about sustainability, etc. – and those voices are heard and welcomed by the administration. This is more than a matter of atmospherics; evidence of the pivot can be found in changes to the labor contract, the empanelment of task forces considering a wide range of issues, prompt action responding to the work of those task forces, and steady, insistent public messaging that underscores the value that Kean places on inclusion and participation. The very process of this Self Study is an example of the way that Kean includes the entire campus community in coming to better understand its strengths, its weaknesses, and how to craft a better path forward working together.

Kean could not be undergoing accreditation review at a better time. At one level, the University is changing rapidly with regard to personnel, policy, funding formulas, and a host of other things, making a snapshot assessment very complicated. At another, Kean is right now reorganizing its institutional data regime to improve every aspect of its work. The University welcomes the insight and guidance of peers who have been down these pathways themselves and can help Kean reflect on how best to achieve its goals.

Kean University's informal motto is "Cougars Climb Higher!" The University believes that, in the chapters that follow, the reader will encounter a university that has steadily pursued a vital mission for more than a century and a half, that currently meets all MSCHE standards and requirements but is newly invigorated by a visionary leader, and that fully embraces the importance of involving every member of this community in the bold course it has charted. Cougars indeed climb higher, and they climb together.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT**

In addition to key findings, the self-study process identified opportunities for improvement that can guide the University in preserving a strong commitment to provide all students with an outstanding educational experience. These new and continuing recommendations, aligned with Kean's institutional priorities and presidential initiatives, are presented below.

**In Progress**

Implement evaluation and improvement initiatives that foster a more timely, measurable, and systematic university assessment process that contributes to a strengthened culture of assessment at Kean.

- **Conduct a formal workforce analysis to revise the current academic and administrative structure of the University, including academic leadership roles to empower and strengthen shared governance, student services, and academic program delivery in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves.**
- **Educate and integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion practices throughout academic units and all student support programs and experiences in partnership with Kean's newly established DEI Office.**
- **Streamline the current evidence-based budget development process to align with institutional priorities, mission, and goals, while intentionally reducing redundancy and unwieldy procedures.**
- **Support mission-appropriate research in alignment with Kean's new designation as New Jersey's first Public Urban Research University, as well as its continued evolution as it seeks Carnegie R2 classification.**

**Future Initiatives**

- **Implement a comprehensive and transparent communication plan that provides equitable constituent access (faculty, staff, and students) across all instructional sites and locations to ensure timely and consistent information sharing.**
- **Create a financial literacy program to guide Kean students and their families throughout their educational experience, fostering retention, persistence, completion, and long-term social mobility.**
- **Develop a long-term "Technology Strategic Plan" to provide direction and a technological vision for the University across all instructional sites and locations that will continuously improve its programs and services and respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.**

**Institutional Overview**

Kean University has a long history of providing affordable and accessible education to a culturally rich and diverse student population. As the institution continued to evolve – from New Jersey State Teachers College (1937) with an exclusive focus on teacher training; to Newark State College (1958) with expanded academic programs and majors; to Kean College of New Jersey (1973), a fully comprehensive institution; and ultimately, to Kean University (1997), the world-class institution of higher education it is today – its core identity remained unchanged. Teaching a diverse population of students has been part of Kean’s Mission since the beginning.

Kean University offers more than 50 bachelor’s degree programs and more than 70 options for graduate study leading to master’s and doctoral degrees, professional diplomas or certifications across a full range of academic subjects. Degree programs include various subject areas within the liberal arts, natural sciences, social sciences, health professions, applied sciences, visual and performing arts, as well as in business, architecture, design, and teacher education across five undergraduate Colleges as well as the New Jersey Center for Science, Technology and Mathematics, and Nathan Weiss Graduate College. Kean has locations in New Jersey, a virtual campus through Kean Online, and is the only public American university to offer academic programs in China at Wenzhou-Kean University. Kean University believes in delivering an educational experience that prepares students to succeed in a competitive global economy through hands-on innovative curricula, a full and vibrant campus life, state-of-the art learning environments, and academic support services and campus resources that continuously evolve to align with their needs.

As of Academic Year 2020-21, Kean University is home to more than 14,000 undergraduate students and 2,000 graduate students, the majority of whom (72.3%) are of traditional college age and female (62.1%). Approximately 82% of Kean students are from New Jersey, with others hailing from New York, Pennsylvania, and other states, as well as more than 100 international students who are studying at Kean’s New Jersey campuses. In addition, Wenzhou-Kean University in China has more than 2,000 enrolled students. The race/ethnicity breakdown for the current student enrollment at Kean University is as follows: 27.6% White; 26.5% Hispanic; 17.5% Black; 20.1% Asian; 1.8% Multi-Race; and 6.4% Not Reported.

More than one-third (34.3%) of Kean’s currently enrolled students have transferred from another institution; nearly half (47.4%) are admitted as traditional freshmen; and 18% are admitted into special programs. Kean has served Education Opportunity Fund (EOF) students since 1968, one of the first institutions in the state of New Jersey to offer the program. In operation since 1992, the Program for Academic Support Services Providing Opportunities to Remarkable and Talented Students (PASSPORT) offers similar support to students who do not qualify for EOF funding but who, in all other ways, share similar needs. The University is recognized as a Hispanic-Serving Institution with a long history of offering non-native speakers introductory-level courses in Spanish while they simultaneously master English in ESL courses in its Spanish Speaking Program, SUPERA (established in 1972).

Kean University has a long tradition of access, opportunity, and affordability for students seeking a college degree. Each year, Kean proudly builds on this distinguished history as it stays focused on guiding students to academic and professional success, thereby fostering social mobility. For the third year, U.S. News & World Report has ranked Kean University as a top-performing school for helping economically disadvantaged students succeed and graduate, and was also named among the most ethnically diverse universities in the northern United States.

Source:	Recognition:
<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report 2022</i>	Number 23 among regional universities in the northern U.S. for social mobility
<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report 2022</i>	Number 20 on the 2022 Best Colleges list of “most innovative” universities in the northern region
<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report 2022</i>	Seventh in the northern U.S. on Campus Ethnic Diversity Index
<i>U.S. Economic Development Administration 2021</i>	Named one of 25 colleges nationwide to lead economic development programs
<i>Military Friendly Schools 2021</i>	First in the nation among large public schools
<i>SR Education Group 2020</i>	Ranked one of the best online colleges in the nation
<i>Money 2020</i>	Among the nation’s colleges that add the most value

*Table 1: Recent Recognitions of Kean University*

As articulated in its most recent Strategic Plan, Beyond 2020, the University continues to align its activities toward six goals:

1. To position Kean University as an academic focal point of ongoing and transformational post-secondary educational opportunities that prepare students to meet the current and future challenges of our world;
2. To prepare students for an adaptable 21st-century workforce in which the jobs of the future do not exist today;
3. To create a transformative student-centered university culture focused on student success from first encounter through graduation and beyond;
4. To position Kean University as a cultural, economic, and educational epicenter and resource for the entire community;
5. To establish Kean University as a national center of excellence in human rights and civic engagement that builds upon its institutional commitment to equity, inclusivity, and social justice and models for its students their role as contributing citizens of the world;
6. To secure a financially sustainable university that can successfully face the challenges of the future.

These Strategic Plan goals are an extension of the University’s Mission. Kean dedicates itself to the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of all its members – students, faculty and professional staff. In particular, the University prepares students to think critically, creatively, and globally; to adapt to changing social, economic, and technological environments; and to serve as active and contributing members of their communities. Kean is steadfast in its dedica-

tion to maintaining a student-centered educational environment in which diversity can flourish and an atmosphere in which mutual respect characterizes relations among the members of a pluralistic community. The University seeks to combine excellence with equity in providing opportunities for all students. Further, Kean University is an interactive university, and the University serves as a major resource for regional advancement. Kean collaborates with business, labor, government, and the arts as well as educational and community organizations.

**Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study**

The intended outcomes of Kean’s current Self-Study are to:

1. Demonstrate compliance with all MSCHE Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation;
2. Foster an inclusive environment through which all campus stakeholders can engage in a transparent and comprehensive self-assessment;
3. Assess the University’s progress in implementing the institutional Strategic Plan by identifying strengths, aspirations, and forward-thinking recommendations for continuous improvement with an enhanced focus on excellence and equity as they relate to retention, persistence, and graduation; an ethos of service; and continued evolution of the institution.

**Self-Study Approach**

Kean University used the Standards-Based approach for the Self-Study. Guided by the 2013-2020 Strategic Plan, the University had undergone considerable transformation since its previous Self-Study, which was conducted under the previous expanded set of MSCHE Standards. Furthermore, with the adoption of a new five-year Strategic Plan and the appointment of a new president in July 2020, the Standards-Based approach was selected to provide the comprehensive foundation upon which Kean could chart continued advancement.

**Institutional Priorities**

The institutional priorities to be addressed in the Self-Study emerged organically from the Kean University Mission Statement and the goals of the current Strategic Plan, crafted during 2019-2020 by the representative membership of the University Planning Council (UPC) in collaboration with the entire University community. Proposed by the Executive Committee, shared with the Steering Committee and endorsed by both the former and current Presidents, the priorities capture both the historic ideologies and pragmatic aspirations of the University. The institutional priorities are as follows and the tables below identify the alignment of the institutional priorities with Strategic Plan goals and MSCHE Standards.

- **Excellence and Equity:** Ensure the University’s commitment to excellence and equity is embodied in its educational practices and services.
- **Upstanders:** Incorporate the importance of community responsibility and integrity in all campus life experiences for its students.
- **Evolution:** Assess existing programs and resources to identify growth opportunities that build on existing capabilities and strengths, including new and/or re-imagined programs, facilities, and instructional sites to prepare the University for continued evolution.

<b>Alignment of Institutional Priorities with Strategic Plan Goals</b>	<b>Institutional Priority 1: Excellence and Equity</b>	<b>Institutional Priority 2: Upstanders</b>	<b>Institutional Priority 3: Evolution</b>
<i>Strategic Plan Goal 1 - serve as focal point of transformational post-secondary opportunities</i>	X	X	X
<i>Strategic Plan Goal 2 - prepare students for an adaptable 21st-century workforce</i>	X	X	X
<i>Strategic Plan Goal 3 - create a transformative student-centered university culture</i>	X	X	
<i>Strategic Plan Goal 4 - position Kean as a cultural, economic, and educational epicenter</i>	X	X	X
<i>Strategic Plan Goal 5 - establish Kean as a national center of excellence in human rights and civic engagement</i>	X	X	X
<i>Strategic Plan Goal 6 - secure a financially sustainable university</i>	X		X

*Table 2: Alignment of Institutional Priorities with Strategic Plan Goals*

Alignment of Institutional Priorities with MSCHE Standards	Institutional Priority 1: Excellence and Equity	Institutional Priority 2: Upstanders	Institutional Priority 3: Evolution
Standard I	X	X	X
Standard II	X	X	
Standard III	X	X	X
Standard IV	X	X	
Standard V	X		X
Standard VI	X		X
Standard VII	X	X	X

Table 3: Alignment of Institutional Priorities with MSCHE Standards

**Organization and Participants**

Kean University’s Self-Study Steering Committee consists of the Executive Committee, Working Group Co-Chairs, the Logistics Team, the Editing Team, the Design Team, and the Senior Leadership Advisory Team. The Steering Committee maintained standing meetings throughout the self-study process and encouraged the Working Groups to interact with one another. In these meetings, members updated one another on the work, direction, progress, and pitfalls of their individual Working Groups to promote intergroup support for common areas of inquiry and enhance efficiency. After significant data was collected and discussed by the Working Groups, an Editing Liaison was assigned to write the initial chapter for each standard, prior to the first draft going to the Editing Team. In addition, Kean created a Requirements of Affiliation and an Evidence Inventory Working Group. These two groups reviewed all chapters of the Self-Study and periodically engaged with each of the Working Groups. They thus gained awareness of the bigger picture to support and advise the Working Groups and Steering Committee. Along with the Steering Committee, these groups ensured that other Working Groups received appropriate oversight and support for evaluation and assessment of MSCHE Standards and the priorities selected for analysis in the Self-Study. Finally, the members of the Executive Committee and Senior Leadership Advisory Teams each served as a designated liaison to two or three Working Groups and regularly met to support a holistic and coordinated effort.

Role	Members
<b>Executive Committee</b>	David Birdsell, <i>Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs</i> Suzanne Bousquet, <i>Former Vice President, Academic Affairs and Professor Emerita</i> Frances Stavola Daly, <i>Professor and Assistant Chair, School of Health and Human Performance</i> Felice Vazquez, <i>Senior Vice President &amp; Special Counsel</i> Donald Marks, <i>Associate Professor and Director of Clinical Training, Psy.D. Program, Department of Advanced Studies in Psychology, Nathan Weiss Graduate College</i>
<b>Working Group Co-Chairs</b>	Pat Ippolito, <i>Associate Professor, College of Education</i> Maryam Raja, <i>Director, High School Partnership Office</i> Claire Mulry, <i>Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Entry Level Doctorate Programs</i> Christine Thorpe, <i>Dean, Nathan Weiss Graduate College</i> Richard Conti, <i>Coordinator, Forensic Psychology Programs and Associate Professor, School of Psychology</i> Jeremiah Sullivan, <i>Executive Director, School of Communication, Media &amp; Journalism</i> Juneau Gary, <i>Professor, Counselor Education Department/Ocean Program Coordinator</i> Gillian Scott, <i>Managing Assistant Director, Institutional Effectiveness</i> Feng Qi, <i>Associate Professor, College of Science, Math, &amp; Technology</i> Craig Konyk, <i>Associate Professor, School of Public Architecture, Michael Graves College</i> Bok Gyo Jeong, <i>Assistant Professor and Non-Profit Coordinator, School of Public Administration</i> Orley Wainberg, <i>Director, Financial Planning and Analysis</i> Ed Johnston, <i>Associate Professor, Robert Busch School of Design, Michael Graves College</i> Valerie Winslow, <i>Director, Conference &amp; Events Services</i> Gail Verdi, <i>Associate Professor and Executive Director, College of Education, School of Curriculum &amp; Teaching</i> Jane Webber, <i>Assistant Professor and Doctoral Program Coordinator, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, Department of Counselor Education</i> Franklin Turner, <i>Executive Director, School of Psychology</i> Muhammad Hassan, <i>Executive Director, Nancy Thompson Library and Learning Commons</i>



Role	Members
<b>Logistics Team</b>	Neva Lozada, <i>Assistant Vice President, Administration</i> Mukul Archarya, <i>Acting Director, Office of Accreditation &amp; Assessment</i> Jeremy Gusset, <i>Graduate Student in the Michael Graves College and Graduate Assistant for Campus Planning</i> Charles Lartey, <i>Director, Accreditation &amp; Assessment, Wenzhou-Kean University</i> Tiffany Johnson, <i>Executive Assistant, Office of the Senior Vice President &amp; Special Counsel</i>
<b>Editing Team</b>	Margaret McCorry, <i>Associate Vice President, University Relations</i> John Wooten, <i>Director of Arts Programming</i> Lauretta Farrell, <i>Director, Human Rights Institute</i>
<b>Editing Liaisons</b>	Lauretta Farrell, <i>Director, Human Rights Institute</i> (Standard I) Tamika Quick, <i>Executive Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</i> (Standard II) Susan Polirstok, <i>Professor, College of Education</i> (Standard III) Scott Snowden, <i>Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs</i> (Standard IV) Patricia Morreale, <i>Professor, School of Computer Science</i> (Standard V) Rafael Inoa, <i>Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership</i> (Standard VI) David Farrokh, <i>Assistant Dean, College of Business and Public Management</i> (Standard VII)
<b>Design Team</b>	Joey Moran, <i>Creative Director, University Relations</i> Craig Coughlin, <i>Managing Assistant Director, Office of Government Affairs and Community Partnerships</i>
<b>Senior Leadership Advisory Team</b>	Karen Smith, <i>Vice President, University Relations</i> Andrew Brannen, <i>Senior Vice President for Finance</i> Matt Caruso, <i>Vice President, Student Affairs</i> Maximina Rivera, <i>Associate Vice President, Student Affairs</i> Marsha McCarthy, <i>Vice President, Enrollment Services</i> Audrey Kelly, <i>Chief of Staff &amp; Executive Director, Board of Trustees</i> Michael Salvatore, <i>Senior Vice President of Administration</i>

Table 4: Members of the Self-Study Steering Committee

### A Guide for the Reader

In collaboration with the Steering Committee, each Working Group examined Kean University’s compliance with the MSCHE Standards and Requirements for Affiliation. Utilizing the General Guide and the Kean University Self-Study Institutional Priorities, each Working Group systematically identified and analyzed supporting evidence for the respective Standard as well as applicable Requirements of Affiliation when responding to the lines of inquiry for which they were charged. Working Group Co-Chair s worked closely with the Evidence Inventory Team since the start of the Self-Study to seek out evidence, discuss standardization of evidence listings, and ensure utilization of the Digital Commons tool (described below) to organize evidence documents. Each Working Group also coordinated closely with its designated Senior Leadership Advisory Team and Executive Team liaisons to communicate needs and seek support on required evidence and protocols. In addition, Working Groups have worked directly with the Office of Accreditation and Assessment and the University Planning Council to obtain assessment data, reports, and documents to support the analysis pertaining to its lines of inquiry. Each Working Group reported results and offered opportunities for future development and innovation to ensure continuous institutional effectiveness and improvement.

The assertions made in this Self-Study report have been verified and supported by evidence. All evidence documents referenced within the report were uploaded to Kean University’s Digital Commons, a cloud-hosted repository managed by the University Library. Digital Commons provides unique citation identifiers (referenced in the report as EI, #) for each piece of evidence to ensure easy reference and accessibility. The Evidence Inventory Team actively worked with other Working Groups throughout the self-study process to upload supporting documents to Digital Commons.

### How to Read Each Standard Chapter

Standard Chapters are consistently formatted as follows for ease of reading:

- **Statement of Standard.**
- **Statement of success in meeting the Standard, Criteria and Requirements of Affiliation.**
- **Narrative section including analysis and examples that align with Kean University’s Strategic Plan goals and Institutional Priorities.**
- **Citations throughout directing the reader to the Evidence Inventory in the Digital Commons.**

# Standard I



## MISSION AND GOALS



# KEAN

### STANDARD STATEMENT

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the four criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard I compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria, and the narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this Standard.

### Mission Statement

The current Mission Statement emphasizes Kean's dedication to excellence and a student-centered educational environment. The following excerpt is a specific example of how the Mission Statement emphasizes academic rigor and research:

*Kean is a teaching university, and Kean faculty dedicate themselves to student learning as well as academic rigor. The focus on teaching excellence is supported by a commitment to research, scholarship, creative work, and innovative uses of technology. The focus includes the advancement of knowledge in the traditional disciplines and the enhancement of skills in professional areas. Kean is committed to providing global educational opportunities for students and faculty (Evidence Inventory [EI], 1).*

### Goal-setting: Engaging the Community

Kean University is committed to providing affordable, accessible and world-class educational opportunities that prepare students to think and respond critically and creatively in a rapidly changing world and serve as active and contributing members of their communities. Through name changes, physical moves, and expansions throughout New Jersey and into China, the Mission has kept the University focused on its most important priority – its students (EI, 1).

Kean's Mission Statement was modified in 2006 to add globalization to the University's longstanding commitment to diversity, excellence, and equity by broadening its institutional scope, encouraging global thinking, and committing to global educational opportunities for faculty, staff, and students.

While the University's Mission remains relatively constant, the Strategic Plan, which is the roadmap to fulfilling the Mission by representing the University's goals, evolves over time to meet the changing needs of the Kean community.

### University Strategic Planning

University strategic planning, led by the University Planning Council (UPC), is the core process through which institutional goals and objectives are identified. The UPC further ensures the Strategic Plan advances the University's Mission and Vision (EI, 1) and that plans are directly linked to annual assessment processes that inform resource allocation, as demonstrated on the Kean University Assessment Process Flow Chart (EI, 82). These assessment processes are comprehensive and inclusive of all institutional units, academic programs, and Divisions, and they are cyclical as exemplified by annual assessment reviews (EI, 121). The oversight and support the UPC provides in

strategic planning and assessment processes ensure planning, resources, and institutional improvements are inclusive of members representing the Kean community at large.

The UPC is made up of representative members of the Kean community, inclusive of University leaders, faculty, staff, and students (EI, 104). Membership includes the Chair person and Vice Chair, who, in addition to six other members, are appointed by the University President. Also included are members representing each of the Colleges and bargaining units (i.e., KFT, KUAFF, CWA, IFPTE, and NJSPBA). Fourteen members are representatives of major University Divisions (e.g., Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and University Relations). Other members include a University Senate Chair person or designee; the Kean Foundation CEO and one designee; and Ex Officio members from the offices of Assessment and Accreditation; Institutional Effectiveness; and Institutional Research. And of great importance to equitable and inclusive leadership, there are three Kean students – one undergraduate, one graduate, and one part-time student. This representative composition of the UPC membership guarantees balanced and diverse perspectives in institutional decision making. Terms of service are for a period of three years with the exception of student members and bargaining unit representatives. Two consecutive appointments will be followed by a one-year hiatus with the exception of Vice Presidents and Ex Officio members.

The UPC webpage and posting of general and special meeting minutes (EI, 104) also serve to document planning and improvement processes and communicate with University members and stakeholders. The UPC reports its findings and makes recommendations in an annual report to the President (EI, 121), a verbal report to the Board of Trustees (BOT), and through an open forum to the Kean community. However, it is not only the representative membership of the UPC that engages in critical aspects of institutional improvement. By the time the UPC reports its findings, the Kean community at large, including all units and Divisions, have been continuously and actively engaged in the planning and improvement processes throughout the institution.

For the Kean University Strategic Plan, the UPC identifies key goals, develops objectives related to each goal, and establishes actionable items as part of an action plan (EI, 97). The action plan becomes a roadmap for successfully achieving the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. There is also clear and direct alignment between institutional and divisional goals and objectives. Specifically, each Division has its own set of goals aligned to the goals and objectives found in the institutional Strategic Plan, allowing Divisions to focus on centralized priorities that emerge within the context of the overarching goals of the University.

There are goals, objectives and action plans created internally at the unit, program, divisional, and institutional levels. Actionable items also emerge externally from unit and divisional collaborations with professional accreditation agencies. There are 61 Kean University undergraduate and graduate programs that are accredited through agencies outside the institution. These agencies establish program-specific goals and objectives that help maintain the integrity of Kean’s programs and degrees by providing additional requirements, assessment processes, and reporting cycles to inform decisions and resource allocation at all levels of the institution. Kean University publicizes an updated list of accredited programs and their accrediting agency information (EI, 114) for reference and transparency, and to highlight these critical partnerships.

In line with the UPC, the institutional units, academic programs, and Divisions, and the external accrediting agencies, there are two offices that are critical to strategic planning and institutional improvement at Kean University. The Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA) and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) manage regular comprehensive assessments in pursuit of excellence, equity, and institutional improvement. These offices provide support to all academic and administrative units, programs, and Divisions at Kean in the development of mission-specific objectives that align with the University’s Strategic Plan at the start of each academic year. Further, OAA and IE provide ample training, both in-person and on-demand, focusing on best practices for data collection, using multiple measures, and demonstrating impact in alignment with previously stated goals to ensure sufficient support is offered throughout the assessment cycle (EI, 82).

See Standard VI for additional information on the assessment process.

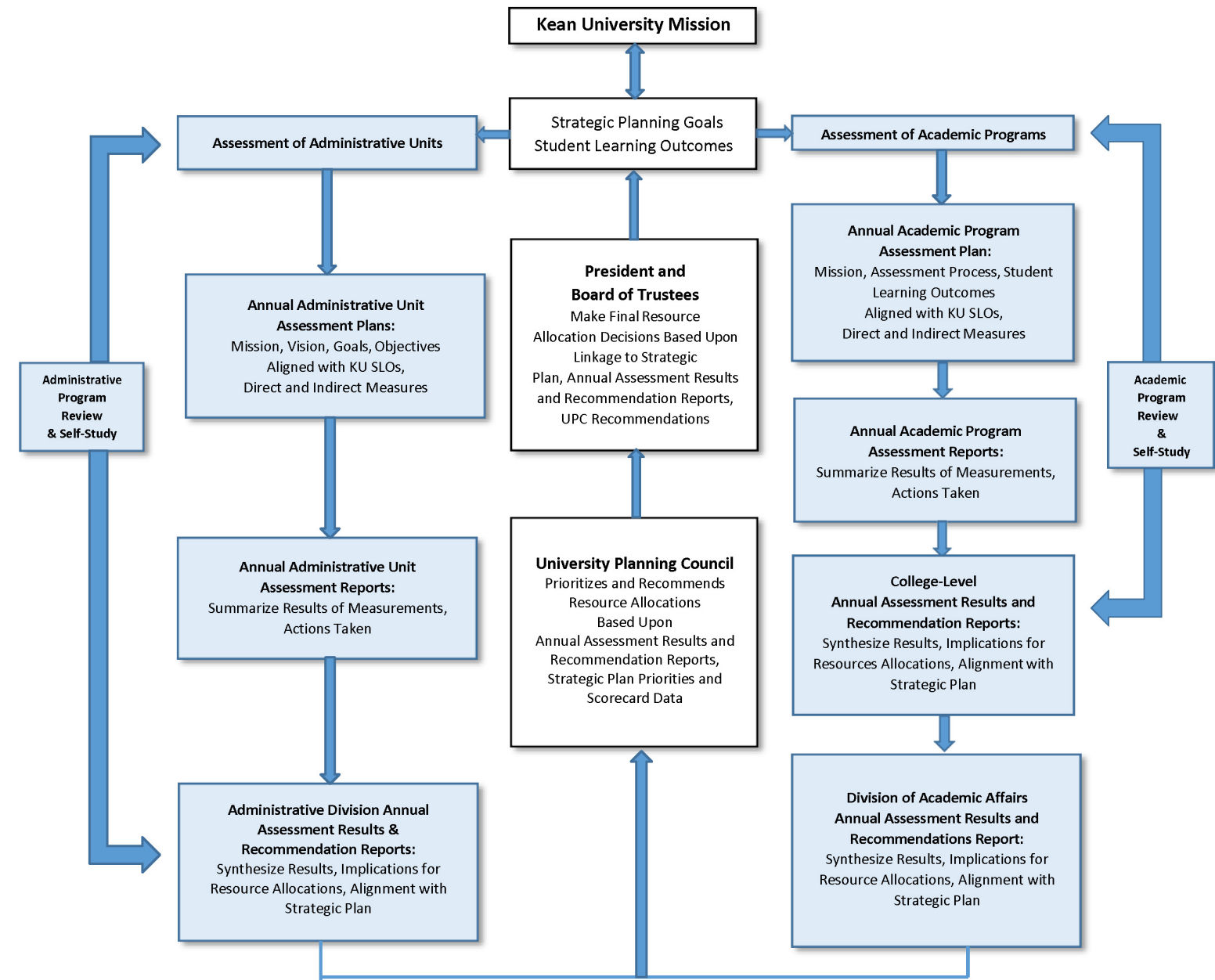


Figure 1: Kean University Assessment Cycle

## VISION 2020

As Kean moves forward under new leadership, it is important to reflect on the successes and shortfalls of its previous planning and assessment efforts. Vision 2020 represented the Strategic Plan that guided the University's operations from 2013 through 2020 (EI, 122).

### Significant Accomplishments

At the conclusion of Vision 2020: Kean University 2013-2020 Strategic Plan (EI, 122), the UPC produced a summary report on the success of the cycle, outlining key Strategic Plan accomplishments and successes (EI, 179).

**Academic Programs.** Academic programs were added that garnered significant student interest; responded to local, regional and national needs; and leveraged Kean's existing strengths, including doctoral programs in Counseling and Supervision, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech-Language Pathology; master's programs in Educational Administration – Principals, Supervisors and School Business Administrators Option, Genetic Counseling, Psychology – Forensic Psychology Option, and Special Education – Applied Behavioral Analysis and Autism Spectrum Disorders Option; and bachelor's degree programs in Architecture at both Kean USA and Wenzhou-Kean University (WKU), Earth Science – Environmental Option, Mathematical Sciences, and Public Health (EI, 122). The addition of these programs exemplifies Kean's prioritization of identifying growth opportunities to prepare the University for continued evolution.

Kean University's baccalaureate programs were revised to comply with the State of New Jersey's 120-credit mandate, making a college education more affordable and accessible for the majority of students (EI, 415).

**Student Success and Retention.** The Office of Student Success and Retention (now a Division), designed to enhance more effective collaboration between the Divisions of Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs, was initially established in 2018 to support students by creating a multi-faceted retention program to identify at-risk students and facilitate academic and administrative interventions to assist students in persisting through to graduation. These high-impact, strategic retention initiatives advance the institution's commitment to achieving social mobility through higher education for all students.

**Research and Scholarship.** Kean's commitment to research, scholarship, creative work, and the innovative use of technology was expanded through its Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF), which develops partnerships between Kean faculty and undergraduate students, advises students interested in pursuing national fellowships, and hosts the University's annual Research Days (EI, 191). The work of CURF demonstrates Kean's dedication to the intellectual growth of all its members. Additional information on student and faculty engagement in research and scholarship is further detailed in Standards IV and V.

**Equity, Engagement, and Justice.** Kean's historic commitment to mutual respect, excellence, equity, civic engagement, and social justice was advanced in several ways. For example, the University's Diversity Council (DC), managed by Kean's Holocaust Resource Center (HRC), fosters the continued growth of active and compassionate individuals in order to reduce intolerance and harassment/intimidation, and promote social justice in a democratic society. The Human Rights Institute (HRI) was created to broaden the University's longstanding efforts to promote awareness of human rights issues and violations around the globe. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) was established in 2020 to lead and support a campus-wide agenda that fosters the values and promotes the diversity of the Kean community (EI, 202). The Women and Gender Studies Program sponsors programming throughout the academic year to bring a voice and awareness to intersecting social identities.

## TRANSITIONS AND CHALLENGES

### Presidential Transition

Dawood Farahi, Ph.D., announced his plans to step down from the University's presidency on August 29, 2019. The University's Board of Trustees (BOT) immediately began a national search for his successor, led by a search committee comprised of a representative group of Kean community members, including Trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, and students (EI, 286) and facilitated by the national search firm Storbeck/Pimentel & Associates (SPA).

At its May 11, 2020 meeting, the BOT announced its selection of Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., the former New Jersey Commissioner of Education, as the first Black president and 18th leader of Kean University. On July 1, 2020, President Repollet, a Kean alumnus and former member of the BOT, assumed this position.

### COVID-19

The University's response to the pandemic is ongoing and continuous; it benefits from a strong partnership with Union County that provides COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites on campus for county residents and the entire Kean University community of students, staff, and faculty. In addition, Kean independently established a federally certified diagnostic lab to process COVID-19 tests (EI, 414). Moving forward, the pandemic continues to play a role in all planning decisions the University is making, both in the short and long term.

### Beyond 2020: Kean University Strategic Plan for 2020-2025

A thorough assessment of Vision 2020 – its successes, shortfalls and transitional goals that remained meaningful in moving the University forward – was produced by the UPC in Academic Year (AY) 2018-2019 (EI, 435) and posted on the UPC webpage after a summary was shared with the University community at the BOT Public Meeting in May 2019 (EI, 98) so that relevant unmet goals could inform the development of the current Strategic Plan, Beyond 2020: Kean University Strategic Plan for 2020-2025 (EI, 122, 97).

In the creation of Beyond 2020, input was sought from all internal constituencies, as well as alumni, donors, and community partners, by members of the UPC who served as liaisons to respective constituencies. The UPC provided direction in solidifying the vision, goals and objectives of the next Strategic Plan (EI, 97) with the Kean University community fully engaged in the process by identifying priorities, submitting suggestions and feedback through in-person meetings, a plenary community-wide meeting during January 2020 (EI, 106), and a dedicated web portal. The current Strategic Plan was approved by the BOT on December 5, 2020 (EI, 97).

### Student Success and Retention

At his first Opening Day address, President Repollet announced the elevation of Student Success and Retention to a full Division. With expanded support and focused leadership, this priority Division is committed to addressing the academic and co-curricular needs of students through advisement, targeted programs, and outreach initiatives that connect students to a network of resources to promote academic and social success with the ultimate goal of a timely graduation (EI, 116). This is explored in greater detail in Standard IV.

**Research, Scholarship, and Service**

In November 2021, Kean was designated New Jersey’s first public urban research institute (EI, 454). An important step in this direction was the addition of the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research that focuses on research and practical, achievable solutions that will improve the lives of people living in urban communities. The Institute builds on the University’s commitment to scholarship and community service, as the University works toward Carnegie R2 classification.

**Partnerships**

Building on the University’s High School Partnerships, the new Kean Scholar Academy offers qualified high school students the opportunity to earn college credits and participate in pre-college mentorships, internships, and other enrichment activities that support their academic journey toward college. By the time they graduate high school, students may earn up to 12-15 college credits in their selected major and be well on their way to a successful college career (EI, 295).

**Communicating University Mission and Goals**

The University’s Mission and Goals are prominently displayed on Kean’s website to ensure that they are always accessible to the entire Kean community, campus affiliates and partners, and the general public. The Mission and Goals are also shared and discussed in regular meetings of the BOT, University Senate, employee unions, student government, and through widespread distribution by University Relations (EI, 447). Additionally, the University’s progress in meeting goals is highlighted in the President’s annual Opening Day Address (EI, 446) and the Kean University Foundation’s Annual Report.

Vision 2020 Goals	Summary	Met Criterion	Examples	Beyond 2020 Initiatives, building on Vision 2020
Goal 1	Expand and Strengthen Academic Initiatives	X	New bachelor, master’s and doctoral programs established; Open Educational Resources; Research Days; each student given at least one internship opportunity	Kean pursuing R2 Carnegie research classification
Goal 2	Attract and Retain Students	X	Pre-pandemic, increased freshman enrollment; new scholarships and support services	Division of Student Success and Retention
Goal 3	Attract and Retain Faculty Scholars	X	In five years prior to Fall 2019, 511 new faculty members both here and abroad	DEI Office; Equity in Action Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship; hiring practice
Goal 4	Continued Commitment to Diversity	X	Hispanic-Serving Institution; Center for Int’l Studies; Sobel Global Wenzhou Scholarship	Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Equity Postdoctoral Fellowship
Goal 5	Cultivate Partnerships	X	High School Partnerships program; Holocaust Resource Center’s educational programs	County of Union COVID-19 Emergency Response; Kean Scholars Academy; John S. Watson Institute; Entrepreneurial Education Initiatives
Goal 6	To Become a Globalized University	X	Wenzhou-Kean University	Virtual International Internships
Goal 7	Strengthen Financial Infrastructure	X	Kean Foundation - new targeted approach to alumni engagement and fundraising	Sr. VP for Finance
Goal 8	Strengthen Physical Infrastructure	X	NAAB Building; Cougar Hall; new residence halls	Hennings Research Wing; Hynes Hall
Goal 9	Strengthen Technological Infrastructure	X	Nancy Thompson Digital Learning Commons; new student life software	VISER Teaching and Immersive Studio
Goal 10	Strengthen Security and Promote Public Health	X	Active Attacker Incident training for faculty, staff and students	COVID-19 protocols

Table 5. Vision 2020 and Beyond 2020 Strategic Plan Goal Examples

# Standard II



## ETHICS AND INTEGRITY



# KEAN

### STANDARD STATEMENT

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the nine criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard II compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria, and the narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this Standard.

### Academic and Intellectual Freedom

Kean University supports academic and intellectual freedom and protects intellectual property rights. Faculty have the academic freedom to create courses, and develop course content and programs. The mechanisms for creation and approval of these courses are outlined in the University Curriculum Committee Manual, which is administered through the University Senate (EI, 208). Respect for academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and intellectual property is demonstrated in the labor contracts between Kean and its faculty and its intellectual property rights policies (EI, 209, 210, 211, 212). Academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and freedom of expression are articulated in the Free Speech and Dissent Policy (EI, 203, 204). The Dissent and Demonstration Guidelines, and Distribution of Literature Policy are easily accessed on the Kean website (EI, 205, 206).

The University has a commitment to integrity and protecting intellectual property rights. This allows students, faculty, staff, and business incubators working at Kean the security and knowledge that their creative works, scholarship, and innovations will be protected and celebrated. This culture of respect for intellectual property rights permeates the classroom and community.

### A Culture of Respect

Kean has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the most ethnically diverse universities in the northern United States (EI, 214). The University's leadership, faculty, staff, and students see Kean's diversity as one of its greatest strengths. As such, Dr. Repollet created the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) early in his tenure as President of the University. DEI follows the Association of American Colleges and Universities "Making Excellence Inclusive" model and framework. DEI is assessing and collaborating with campus offices and academic areas in developing and facilitating new inclusion initiatives to provide a safe and unbiased learning environment for all students (EI, 202).

While Kean has a racially-diverse student body, the faculty composition does not reflect this diversity. Institutional data shows current faculty makeup is 16.7% Asian, 7.9% Black, 7% Hispanic, and 67.2% White (EI, 306). Addressing this discrepancy is a priority for the University as it moves forward. The Equity in Action Postdoctoral Fellowship initiative is one of several initial steps toward recruiting and retaining a more racially diverse faculty. This initiative will diversify the faculty, while also providing support to post-docs, which includes balanced teaching schedules, mentorship, and professional development. This empowers post-docs to pursue a tenure-track position at Kean or elsewhere.

Since January 1, 2021, Human Resources (HR) records show more than 50 percent of the faculty and staff hired are people of color, an increase of more than five percent as compared to Fall 2020 (EI, 161). In 2021, over 50 tenure-track faculty were hired. A comparable number of tenure-track positions are expected to be filled in the next academic year, to better align with the tenure-track faculty to student ratio at peer institutions (EI, 449).

Kean continues to explore ways to support faculty in equitable and inclusive teaching and learning practices. The University recently created and filled a position for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Academic Affairs Program Director. This position will work with faculty across the University in developing antiracist and equitable pedagogical practices and ensure the development of a curriculum that is inclusive. In this charge, Kean is exploring the development of campus-wide education efforts that could be administered virtually. DEI also offers workshop sessions that explore self-reflection and pedagogy development (EI, 343).

Students have also taken an active role in DEI efforts, actively forming a diverse coalition of groups, consisting of 44 cultural organizations. These student-led organizations provided over 540 cultural events throughout the 2020-2021 academic year, including workshops, performances, and heritage recognitions.

### **Campus Climate**

DEI has initiated a campus climate survey, facilitated by Rankin & Associates Consulting, to provide the institution with the data necessary to assess and act upon inclusion and climate needs, while also providing a benchmark for assessing progress. A comprehensive outreach plan will encourage widespread, active participation from students, staff, faculty, and the BOT. Town Hall events, where students share questions and concerns, are already being offered.

### **Culture of Respect Collective**

In early 2021, Kean joined 20 colleges and universities from across North America in NASPA's Culture of Respect Collective, a program that takes a proactive approach to addressing sexual violence on college campuses (EI, 302). Participating institutions are provided with tools, resources, and programs to support this work. To implement this effort, a campus leadership team was established to coordinate responsibilities, an assessment was completed, and personnel from NASPA worked with the campus team to facilitate the process of creating an action plan.

### **Campus Pride**

Kean is also specifically committed to its LGBTQ+ population, to ensure that the institution's policies, practices, and efforts at inclusion align with those outlined in the "Campus Pride Index" (EI, 309). This effort, overseen by the Campus Pride Task Force, which includes faculty, staff, and students, has assessed the current campus climate for the LGBTQ+ community and assigned areas of focus for further exploration and improvement.

### **Religious Tolerance**

In recognition of the diversity in religious faiths practiced at Kean, an Interfaith Council has been established to support students across religious groups and practices. The Council utilizes the Interfaith Youth Core Interfaith Campus Inventory to assess the community in relation to inclusivity of different faiths (EI, 310).

### **Heritage Months**

To further honor the unique diversity of its campuses, DEI uses an interdisciplinary approach to acknowledge and celebrate heritage month celebrations and significant commemoration days throughout the year, including: Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Month, Indigenous Peoples Month, Trans Day of Commemoration, World AIDS Day, and Ramadan (EI, 440).

### **Grievances, Discrimination, and Bias Complaints**

The University works to address grievances raised by students, faculty, and staff promptly, appropriately, equitably, and in compliance with all policies and stakeholder contracts (EI, 417). Kean's policies and procedures are applied fairly and impartially, including in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees. Violations of the State Policy are adjudicated through student conduct or Office of Affirmative Action (AA) programs. Students are notified annually of the Student Code of Conduct and that notification outlines how they may access the Code on the University website (EI, 207). Alleged violations of Title IX are adjudicated through AA Programs and the Title IX Coordinator.

AA is committed to providing fair and equitable treatment for all members of the campus community and works to ensure that they are protected from all forms of discrimination and harassment, including gender-based discrimination. Kean follows the State of New Jersey Model Procedures for Processing Internal Complaints Alleging Discrimination in the Workplace and the Kean University Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures (Title IX) regarding the reporting, investigating, and remediating claims of discrimination/harassment. Violations of either policy may be adjudicated through the Kean student conduct process or by AA.

Individuals across campus are required to complete Affirmative Action and Title IX training and reporting processes. A bias response policy and reporting mechanism, which will include the option of anonymous reporting, is in development. AA and DEI are working with Public Safety to ensure that the policy coincides with guidelines for law enforcement.

### **Ethics and Conflict of Interest**

Kean University adheres to a strict code of conduct that applies in all of its dealings – with students, faculty, staff, vendors, and governmental and non-governmental partners.

As a public university in the State of New Jersey, Kean is governed by the ethics policies and procedures set forth in the State's Uniform Ethics Code (EI, 296) and the Plain Language Guide to New Jersey's Executive Branch Ethics Standards (EI, 297, 298). The Kean University Supplemental Ethics Code (EI, 13) addresses issues that are unique to the University. In addition, each Trustee, officer, and employee must complete and sign the Disclosure of Outside Activities (EI, 11).

These policies and required documents are shared with the appropriate parties in various ways: as part of the Office of Human Resources (HR) onboarding process for any new hire at Kean University; in the procurement process; and through regular emails (EI, 433) from Kean University's Ethics Office and the Ethics Liaison Officer (ELO). The information, and links to all required documents, are also contained on the Ethics Office webpage.

### **Ethics Liaison Officer**

The ELO oversees Ethics Training for State Officers (full-time faculty and staff) or Special State Officers (part-time employees, academic specialists, and adjuncts). The Full Ethics Training (EI, 300) must be completed every three years by all full-time faculty and staff. The ELO also receives ethics complaints (EI, 11) and takes part in disciplinary

investigations, hearings, and actions. In addition, the ELO administers the Request for Approval for Attendance at Event Form (EI, 271), the Supervisory Conflicts of Interest Certification Form (EI, 49), and the Financial Conflicts of Interest Form (EI, 299).

### **Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action**

Kean University is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) employer and follows fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees. HR recruits, develops, and retains a high-performing diverse workforce and fosters a healthy, safe, unbiased, and productive work environment for students, employees, and the public in order to maximize intellectual, cultural, and personal/professional growth for all. Hiring practices are guided by multiple resources, including the Employee Handbook (EI, 235), Search Committee Guidelines (EI, 292), Affirmative Action guidelines, State regulations, and union agreements.

### **Bargaining Units and Policy Development**

Since July 2020, President Repollet has met regularly with labor leaders on campus. A newfound sense of collaboration and respect has been cultivated. Multiple agreements regarding promotion and professional development have been renegotiated. The spirit of collaboration is increasing and is clearly a priority for the new administration. Over this period of change, the new leadership has expressed the need for an increased focus on policy documentation, development, and refinement. The Office of University Counsel and UPC are currently assessing new standards and policies, ensuring that they align with the ethics of the University to successfully engage in improved documentation and disclosure.

### **Transparency of Communication**

University Relations (UR) has enhanced its promotion of the institution with a primary focus on delivering accurate, timely information to all audiences. By producing engaging content and delivering it via the web, social media, and external media promotion, the University is raising awareness of Kean, its people, and programs to support enrollment strategies and advance other important goals as outlined in the Strategic Plan. Additionally, the President communicates weekly with the Kean community through his “A Message from President Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D.” email. UR also distributes a university-wide, weekly Kean News email, with top stories, announcements, featured events, and more. Updates on critical department initiatives, accomplishments and inclusion efforts are provided to the university community (EI, 439).

### **Affordability and Accessibility**

To effectively serve the needs of the student population, Kean promotes affordability and accessibility, helping students understand funding sources and options available to them, value received for cost, and methods for making informed decisions about incurring debt. Specialized programs are in place for incoming students, such as PASSPORT, EOF (open to transfers as well), SUPERA, and the Entry Program into College (EPIC) for students aged 22 and over, offering tailored pathways for students with unique needs (transfer, first-generation, low-income, and Spanish-speaking populations) to navigate the college environment and foster the promise of achieving social mobility through higher education.

### **Admissions**

The Admissions Office prioritizes transparency with programs offered, application procedures, and deadlines. Maintaining openness and truthfulness in its recruiting and admissions practices are paramount. All materials, events, information sessions, and site visits have consistent messaging around affordability, accessibility, academic excellence, and diversity. Kean offers a “Financing Your Kean Degree” workshop five times each year that is open to all prospective students. The program includes assistance for freshmen, transfer students, and graduate students with the financial aid process, navigating student accounting requirements, and scholarship applications (EI, 248).

Up to 7,000 students visit the University annually; when including their families, that number increases to over 20,000. Kean is a member in good standing with the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and is governed by the organization’s guiding principles for truthfulness and transparency as identified in the Code of Ethics and Professional Practices (EI, 344).

### **Financial Aid and Scholarships**

Kean prioritizes award notifications to students applying for financial aid early in the application process so students can plan accordingly. The Financial Aid and Scholarship Services offices provide students who have not yet completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with a Net Price Calculator to provide greater transparency for students and families as they consider their college options. WKU students also receive clear communications outlining tuition costs. Prospective students are assigned a designated financial aid counselor to assist them through the financial aid application process and with any other cost-related questions they have. The Financial Aid and Scholarship Services webpages are designed to be informative, containing links and resources to assist students in making decisions regarding the various awards (EI, 303). FAFSA completion workshops are offered annually to encourage early filing, and descriptive award letter packets containing next steps for new students with an accompanying video link are sent by text to new students.

Kean offers a number of need-based scholarships, such as the Centennial Fund and Garden State Equity Scholarships, designed to act as last dollar awards to supplement federal and state grants, thus minimizing the need for students to borrow large loan amounts. In recognition of the challenges precipitated by the pandemic and the high cost of federal and private loans, Kean has not increased tuition rates for the last two years, while simultaneously expanding scholarship awards (EI, 363, 455).

### **Compliance**

Kean University is in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and MSCHE reporting policies, regulations, and requirements to include reporting regarding the full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification, and licensure or licensing board pass rates; the institution’s compliance with the Commission’s Requirements of Affiliation; substantive changes affecting institutional mission, goals, programs, operations, sites, and other material issues which must be disclosed in a timely and accurate fashion; and the institution’s compliance with the Commission’s policies. Kean has been submitting the Institutional Federal Compliance Report and Annual Institutional Update to MSCHE as required by MSCHE.

### **Assessment**

Assessment of the University’s ethics policies, processes, and practices occur annually (EI, 82). More information about the assessment process can be found in Standard VI.



# Standard III



## DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE



KEAN

### STANDARD STATEMENT

An effective institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the eight criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard III compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria. The narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this standard.

### A Tradition of Success

Kean University has a long tradition of access, opportunity, and affordability for students seeking a college degree. Each year, Kean proudly and proactively builds on this distinguished history as it stays focused on guiding students to academic and professional success, thereby fostering social mobility. For the third year, U.S. News & World Report has ranked Kean University as a top-performing school for helping economically disadvantaged students succeed and graduate, and was also named among the most ethnically diverse universities in the northern United States. The University graduates students with less debt than the national average, is among the top five most diverse schools in the nation, and is a Hispanic-Serving Institution which recognizes the demographic changes that have been taking place in New Jersey (EI, 213).

An established regional and cultural center and a leader in the advancement of human rights, the University was named the first Urban Research institution in New Jersey, an important step in its pursuit of Carnegie R2 status (EI, 97).

### Continuous Course and Program Assessment

Kean University is dedicated to academic excellence and provides rigorous, coherent learning experiences to prepare its diverse student population for the future, via degree programs at the bachelor, master's and doctoral levels, certificates of training, and student engagement activities to meet the employment and leadership needs of the 21st-century global market. Courses and programs are routinely assessed internally and externally by various outside accrediting agencies by content area (EI, 114). All campus facilities are continually updated and improved to prepare the University for continued evolution (EI, 251, 252, 254).

Kean University's Office of Accreditation and Assessment provides leadership for the planning and implementation of student learning outcomes assessment, annual assessment plans and reports, academic program review, university assessment and assessment-related training, and the development and refinement of assessment tools to identify growth opportunities for continuous improvement (EI, 192, 194). This process is discussed in greater detail in Standard VII.

### Program Offerings

Kean University offers more than 50 bachelor's degree programs and more than 70 options for graduate study leading to master's and doctoral degrees, professional diplomas or certifications across a full range of academic subjects (EI 217, 220). Degree programs are offered within the liberal arts, natural sciences, social sciences, health professions, applied sciences, visual and performing arts, as well as in business, architecture, design and teacher education across five undergraduate Colleges as well as the New Jersey Center for Science, Technology and Mathematics, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, and Kean Online. Kean University believes in delivering an educational experience that prepares students to succeed in a competitive global economy through hands-on innovative curricula, a full and vibrant campus life, state-of-the art learning environments, and academic support services and campus resources that continuously evolve to align with their needs.

For 61 of Kean University's undergraduate and graduate programs, accreditation by national and international external professional associations (EI, 114) require that the University's academic offerings meet professional standards that supplement MSCHE requirements. These accreditations also influence program length to ensure profession-specific learning is accomplished. Data indicating enrollment by College and major at Kean University can be found in the Data Book provided by the Office of Institutional Research (EI, 192).

### 120 Credits

In 2019, to comply with new State legislation, most undergraduate programs at Kean were revised to require a total of 120 credits to complete degree requirements. Under the New Jersey State Administrative Code, Title 9A, a "semester credit hour" is defined as "150 minutes of academic work each week for 15 weeks in one semester, which is typically accomplished by 50 minutes of face-to-face class activity each week complemented by at least 100 minutes each week of laboratory or outside assignments (or the equivalent thereof for semesters of different length), but may also be accomplished through an equivalent amount of academic work as established by an institution, which may include additional class time, laboratory work, internships, practical studio work, and other forms of academic work" (EI, 328).

While the number of credits were reduced, each program curriculum was reorganized to ensure that all necessary topics and training to meet program accreditation requirements were still maintained. The proposed changes did not affect program content or established learning outcomes. No changes were made to graduate programs and exempted undergraduate programs as a result of this law.

### Access to Requirements for Academic Programs

Kean University's website contains comprehensive information about all programs of study, courses, and degree requirements. An Online Catalog for Undergraduate and Graduate programs, archived by year, contains all course descriptions and degree requirements as well as graduation requirements per program and general University guidelines (EI, 217, 220). Each program's landing page on the website includes a synopsis of the program, as well as links to curriculum sheets and four-year plans.

### Curriculum Sheets

Curriculum Sheets are easy to comprehend, one-page listings of requirements for each baccalaureate degree. All guides are standardized in their design and include the title of the degree program, College, school, degree code, and total credits required for completion. The sheets include all required courses with general education requirements

organized on the left side and major requirements and electives on the right side. Additional notes clarify grade requirements, prerequisites, and other program-specific information. Four-year plans are designed to visually organize the courses and credits to be taken in eight semesters that would lead to timely graduation. By indicating which courses need to be taken in what order, students see how they can stay on track with prerequisites and can complete their courses in the appropriate time frame. The interface to the KeanWISE registration portal, called Student Planning, is available so that students can see all degree requirements and course plans recommended by their advisor; a visual progress bar displays progress toward degree completion.

### Faculty and Curriculum Development

Developing and maintaining a highly qualified faculty means that procedures for both hiring and faculty evaluation are highly selective and implemented systematically. To ensure that all faculty are qualified to deliver instruction, new full-time faculty are recruited through a rigorous search process which includes input from current faculty and academic leaders and verification of credentials through HR.

Program faculty within a discipline create courses and design programs based on needs assessments of the community, the profession, and the students. New courses and course revisions are authored by faculty and submitted to the school/department/program curriculum committee and then reviewed by the entire school/department/program. Following this collaborative review and approval, each course outline document is submitted for review and approval by the appropriate College curriculum committee. Once the approved document reaches the University Senate, one of the repositories for University curricula, the Senate sends the new or revised outline to the appropriate College Dean for approval (EI, 208). The Associate Deans at WKU receive curriculum revisions and work with staff at KUSA to implement the revisions with consideration for any specific needs that may be present in the WKU student population.

### Professional Development

Monthly faculty meetings of programs and schools, and semester meetings of College faculty, encourage cross-fertilization of new teaching pedagogies and technologies. During Summer 2020, the University developed a required series of training events for faculty to become proficient in Blackboard, then required all Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 courses to be planned and the majority taught using Blackboard. Faculty can acquire knowledge of more advanced Blackboard technological functionalities or learn other available technologies through workshops and online tutorials provided by the Nancy Thompson Learning Commons (NTLC). Since February 2020, 95 workshops have been offered to 1,624 faculty participants on additional Blackboard skills in creating tests and assignments, a grade center, and utilizing rubrics (EI, 274, 275). The University's work to develop a systematic training program in Blackboard and to establish standards for the remote delivery of courses is laudable and enabled Kean to offer a full complement of courses during the pandemic (EI, 81).

Kean provides professional support to faculty through release time and small research grants through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). These include the Faculty Seed Grant, Untenured Faculty Research Initiative (UFRI), Released Time for Research & Creative Works (RTR), Students Partnering with Faculty (SpF), and Research or Travel Support. A recent addition to the internal awards, made available in 2021, is the Summer Research Fellowship Program for all full-time faculty. Annual opportunities to apply for sabbatical leave offer untenured faculty the opportunity to focus on scholarly pursuits, professional growth, and innovation for a single semester or entire academic year (EI, 21).

The University made a commitment to establish a Teaching and Learning Center to provide faculty with opportunities to improve their pedagogical practices. During Spring 2021, a proposal for a more ambitious Professional Development Center was drafted, incorporating best practices from peer and Carnegie R2 institutions. This proposed Center will support Kean's pursuit of becoming a Carnegie R2 university and can help to bring faculty from different Colleges together to discuss ways in which faculty collaboration can take place and how such collaboration can enrich teaching and learning on campus (EI, 164).

### Experiential Learning Opportunities and Resources

Hands-on learning opportunities, student life engagement, international travel, and other resources are available to students to support the academic program and achieve planned outcomes. Experiential learning opportunities, including career-relevant internships, research activities, and global education, provide students with authentic learning experiences that enrich the program of study and enhance a student's career readiness. Such programs exemplify the institutional commitment to excellence by advancing the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of students.

### Research

Engaging in research builds a cadre of students who see the value of a systematic inquiry process and has been demonstrated to support student retention. A three-year study that followed Kean students from freshman year to graduation (2016-2019) revealed that entering freshmen participating in faculty-mentored research projects showed an extraordinary five-year graduation rate of 92%, more than double the rate of the control group with similar demographics in both student groups (EI, 437).

Research opportunities are available to students beginning in their first year through the Freshman Research Initiative (FRI), which introduces students to faculty-mentored research early in their academic careers in order to deepen their learning, develop critical thinking and innovation skills, and contribute to students' future success at Kean and beyond. The initiative is part of a new Center for Undergraduate Research and Fellowships (CURF), a "go-to" center where students throughout their academic journey at Kean can learn how to take part in research, creative projects, and other academic opportunities (EI, 330).

Independent study courses provide a more traditional opportunity for students to work with faculty on a student-directed and faculty supervised project. In addition, there are grant-supported programs such as McNair Scholars, Students Partnering with Faculty (SpF) and the Summer Research Fellowship (EI, 161). Since 2009, Kean Research Days (EI, 191), a two-day event where faculty and students participate in oral or poster presentations of their research, has steadily grown. Although held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Research Days in 2020 and 2021 yielded more than 1,400 presentations in poster or video format by both undergraduate and graduate Kean students. Concurrently, WKU faculty and students have been dedicated to student-engaged research that is supported by external funding from national, provincial, and municipal funding agencies, and internal funding mechanisms, including SpF grants and international research collaboration grants. More than 20% of WKU students presented research and creativity outcomes at the 2021 WKU Student Research Day.

The mission of ORSP is to grow the research enterprise throughout the University with an emphasis on faculty-student research. ORSP offers internal funding opportunities for faculty/student research; funding is also available through external funding entities (EI, 176, 161). Several different research awards to faculty and students are administered by ORSP yearly, including Faculty Seed Grant, 3-Minute Pitch Program, Untenured Faculty Research Initiative, Released Time for Research and Creative Works, Students Partnering with Faculty Summer Research Program, and research and travel support (EI, 305). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a new Faculty Seed Grant for COVID-19 Research Projects was established in 2020. These grants facilitate support for equipment purchases, release time from teaching, faculty and student stipends, and travel and conference expenses.

ORSP also supports several Research Institutes and Centers that foster research collaboration, advance knowledge, address social issues, and provide various services to the larger community (EI, 161). Examples include the Center for Cybersecurity (College of Business and Public Management); the Child Care and Development Center – Learning Lab (College of Education); the Liberty Hall Academic Center and Special Collections Research Library and Archives (College of Liberal Arts); the Food Scraps Composting Laboratory (College of Science, Mathematics and Technology); the Institute for Life Science Entrepreneurship (New Jersey Center for Science, Technology and Mathematics); and the Kean Community Cares Occupational Therapy Clinic (Nathan Weiss Graduate College). WKU has also established 22 research institutes and centers, and its Bioinformatics Research Center is recognized as the Zhejiang Province Bioinformatics International Science and Technology Research Collaboration Center.

The majority of graduate programs incorporate research through supporting curriculum and required independent research projects at the master's or doctoral level. Through the University's public-serving clinics, graduate students in relevant programs are provided authentic opportunities for research and scholarship. Services provided to the community also reflect the institutional priorities of diversity, equity, and inclusion and reflect the University's long history of service.

Graduate Assistantships are offered competitively, further promoting student-faculty research collaboration within and across disciplines.

### Internships

Working collaboratively with academic programs to ensure that these experiences support each program's goals, the Office of Career Services offers internships and experiential learning opportunities. Professional partnerships with industry offer students the opportunity to apply their knowledge and learn new skills beyond what they learn in the classroom or laboratory. An Online Employment and Internship Portal lists internship opportunities in every academic major; academic credit is available for some internships and some internships are paid.

As a part of a major curriculum overhaul during the 2018-2019 academic year, each academic major was tasked with creating an option for students to participate in an internship experience within their respective field of study. As a result, Kean has vastly expanded its internship options over the past two years (EI, 371). Students' academic progress is supported by participating in an internship: the retention/graduation rate for the University for Fall 2020 was 74.1%, whereas the retention/graduation rate for students with academic credit internships was 93.4% by comparison. The average undergraduate GPA for the University was 3.1 in Fall 2020, as compared to 3.5 for students with internships during this same period (EI, 456).

### Partnerships

Several Kean programs are offered in partnership with other institutions (EI, 397). These programs include:

- **Clinical Laboratory Science, B.S.: Medical Laboratory Science Option (Rutgers: Medical Lab Sciences Courses, 45 credit)**
- **Medical Technology, B.S.: General Option – Senior year Clinical Preceptorship I and II, 30 credit: Jersey Shore University Hospital (Neptune), Monmouth Medical Center (Long Branch) or the Valley Hospital (Ridgewood)**
- **Health Information Management, B.S. (Rutgers: Academic Major 61 Credit)**
- **Psychology and Psychiatric Rehabilitation, B.S. (Rutgers: Psychiatric Rehabilitation Courses, 45 credit)**

All of these partner institutions have secured or are currently seeking accreditation through their respective specialized agencies and/or Middle States.

### Practicums, Field Experiences, and Clinical Rotations

Many Nathan Weiss Graduate College (NWGC) academic departments require practicums, field experiences, and clinical experiences for academic credit. The departments have a combination of on-site clinical supervisors or University faculty/staff who supervise students using evaluation criteria widely accepted within the discipline. To provide these opportunities, some programs, such as Speech-Language Pathology, Psychological Services, and Occupational Therapy, offer clinics on campus that serve community residents for free or at reduced rates. The Department of Occupational Therapy coordinates a half-semester service-learning requirement in which students, under supervision, provide services to residents in the community at sites such as senior centers, Recovery High (substance abuse), Bridgeway (mental illness), and Project Opportunity (brain injury). Additionally, many College of Education (COE) students, based on their major, are required to pass student teaching assignments in schools, under the supervision of Kean faculty and staff with input from cooperating teachers and school districts.

### Alternative Learning Approaches

Alternative learning approaches include simulation/clinical skills labs, typically connected to a course, and the Interprofessional Grand Rounds. Interprofessional Grand Rounds provide the opportunity for a student or professor from one of the NWGC departments to present a detailed case study, allowing for participants to evaluate the case from an interdisciplinary perspective and offer intervention strategies. Attendance is optional, and no credit is given. It is not a department requirement but provides a platform for alternative learning.

### Global Education

Through the Center for International Studies (CIS), Kean supports various study abroad opportunities at WKU and other locations around the world, exposing students to different perspectives and preparing students to compete in a global marketplace after graduation. Kean University's location in Wenzhou, China provides an opportunity for student exchange for a semester or for an entire academic year, further enriching participants' studies (EI, 188). CIS also oversees Travelearn options for Kean students and hosts international students and scholars at Kean USA.

Cooperative agreements with overseas universities and institutions expand opportunities for faculty and students from either institution to live, work, conduct research, or study abroad while fostering a sense of community, cultural growth, and sharing of knowledge for the greater good. Kean University currently has six active cooperative agreements with overseas institutions. Partnership agreements with EAE Business School in Spain, Hof University of Applied Sciences in Germany, and ESC Pau Business School in France gives Kean University students in the Global Business program an opportunity to visit partner institutions and participate in an international consulting internship abroad (Global Practica Program) for 3-4 weeks over the summer. In exchange, their students are welcomed at Kean for a semester of study abroad. The University's newer partnership with Soongsil University in South Korea also gives our students the opportunity to study Global Citizenry abroad and participate in international internships with global non-profit organizations.

Kean University has active partnership agreements with multiple study abroad providers to give students varied opportunities to study and intern abroad.

Travelearn enables students to pursue a degree while visiting and learning about a new part of the world by combining academic studies with short-term travel to various destinations. Travelearn programs typically consist of lectures and excursions related to a particular topic and are led by faculty members who are experts in the respective program's field of study.

Kean students also have a unique opportunity to study abroad at WKU for up to a full year. Simultaneously, students from WKU have the opportunity to study at the campus in Union. This international exposure prepares both groups of students to work within a global community while facilitating cross-cultural exchanges.

### General Education

The University's General Education (GE) Program is the essential underpinning of all undergraduate degree programs offered at the University (EI, 158). The GE curriculum is implemented and assessed through the School of General Studies (SGS) in collaboration with participating departments and programs. Through GE, students learn to integrate knowledge and methods to address historical and contemporary questions and develop habits of mind, including proficiency in communication in both oral and written forms, quantitative literacy, critical thinking, and information and technology literacies (EI, 149). In addition to cultivating critical skills, the GE curriculum exposes students to a variety of disciplines, including the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and mathematics. For students who have yet to decide on a career path, this exposure provides the opportunity for exploration and self-discovery.

The program is structured into two major components which consist of Foundation Requirements (13 credits) and Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Distribution Requirements (typically 28 – 29 credits for B.A. degree programs and 19 credits for B.S., B.M., BFA and BID degrees). Through the coursework for these foundation and distribution requirements (EI, 158), students in all majors have common educational experiences and opportunities to acquire and develop the skills, habits of mind, and values associated with a broad liberal arts and sciences education to support students in their pursuit of an academic major and career.

### Equity, Diversity, and Multicultural Awareness

The University's GE program expands students' cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity in various ways. Diversity is a student learning outcome (SLO) defined as, "A commitment to promote inclusivity in a diverse world". This GE SLO aligns with the University student learning outcome number one to "Think critically, creatively and globally (KU SLO 1); and number three to "Serve as active and contributing members of their communities" (KU SLO 3). It also contributes to the University's Mission as outlined in the Strategic Plan and furthers the institutional priority of inspiring students to be upstanders (EI, 97).

The Diversity SLO is assessed in a number of General Education Foundation and Distribution courses, including the required one-credit foundation course, Transition to Kean (GE1000). In this course, there is the common assignment, the Cultural Diversity Assignment, which is used in all sections, that provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the definition of "diversity" after engaging with multiple forms of media. Sociology 1000 and World Literature ENG 2403 also focus on diversity in their curricula, and capstone courses assess diversity on a rotating basis. In Fall 2021, a Common Read text, *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo, was integrated into the Transition to Kean course to bolster the sense of community in the classroom and across the First-Year student population, and to align with the University's emphasis on diversity and inclusion as outlined in Strategic Plan, Goal 5 (EI, 97). The Common Read reflects diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics and enriches teaching and learning around the Diversity SLO. GE assessments of this SLO use the Diversity rubric as the assessment tool, which is based upon the Diversity Value Rubric developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) (EI, 336).

### Thinking Critically and Creatively

The University's general studies curriculum is designed so that students acquire and demonstrate oral and written communication skills.

The Communication Literacies: Speech and Writing GE SLO is consistent with the University's Mission and KU SLO 4: Advance knowledge in the traditional disciplines and enhance skills in professional areas. Communication literacy is defined as "the ability to speak and write effectively to convey and make an evidence-based argument." As such, this SLO is divided into two separate measures, speech and writing, that have separate rubrics, one for oral communication and one for written communication. Two introductory-level foundation requirements, Speech Communication (COMM1402) and College Composition (ENG1030) address each of these areas, respectively, on an annual basis.

The Quantitative Literacy GE SLO is also consistent with the University's Mission and KU SLO 4. Quantitative literacy instruction is an essential element of the General Education program; all students must take a GE math course to fulfill a foundation requirement and the curriculum stipulates that students have at least one lab science course.

The GE Program prepares students to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field through the Critical Thinking SLO. This SLO was developed and implemented for students to gain the ability to utilize reflective analysis to draw informed conclusions. The Critical Thinking SLO is consistent with the University's Mission and KU SLO 1 to think critically, creatively and globally. GE distribution courses that focus on and assess Critical Thinking include Introduction to Sociology and Introduction to Philosophy.

The general studies curriculum also develops students' skills in the areas of technological competency and information literacy in various courses such as Research and Technology (GE 202X) and Transfer Transitions (GE 3000). The GE SLO Information and Technology Literacy is defined as, "The ability to utilize information and communications technology critically and effectively in a rapidly changing world." This SLO is aligned with the University's Mission and the University student learning outcomes KU SLO 2: Adapt to changing social, economic, and technological environments and KU SLO 4: Advance their knowledge in the traditional disciplines and enhance their skills in professional areas.

### Accountability, Community Responsibility, Service, and Integrity

The study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives are incorporated in a variety of courses. For example, Research and Technology (GE 202X) and Transfer Transitions (GE 3000) develop students' research skills and assess the Ethical Judgment and Integrity SLO, which is defined as "the ability to draw reasonable conclusions from ethical questions to guide personal conduct."

Research and Technology (GE 202X) is a required foundation course and has sections dedicated to the various Colleges; it addresses ethical judgment and integrity as part of its curriculum. Ethical judgment and integrity has been assessed in this course using a certificate training through the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Assessment data in that area demonstrated that the University might further challenge students with this learning outcome and a signature assignment was developed in place of the NIH certificate as an assessment tool in this course.

This signature assignment was then coupled with the CITI Training in Research and Technology to address ethical issues in research from various perspectives. The one-credit course GE 3000, Transfer Transitions, also focuses on the learning outcome of ethical judgment and integrity and students in GE 3000 also participate in the CITI Training in order to successfully complete that course.

### School of General Studies

The creation of the School of General Studies (SGS) in 2009 as a locus for oversight of assessment and the identification of the GE Curriculum Committee as custodians of the program's mission laid the groundwork for a progressive path forward for the GE. Actions and improvements made in response to previous MSCHE recommendations have included the incorporation of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives in the GE SLOs consistent with the University's Mission and goals; a clear articulation of GE SLOs that are assessed in a coherent and consistent manner; and the demonstration that students are learning in the areas identified in the outcomes; among other changes and enhancements.

The GE SLOs were updated in 2015 through a collaborative effort among GE Committee members, faculty, and staff to streamline the learning outcomes and to align them more clearly with the University-wide learning goals and the Strategic Plan.

### GE Committee

The GE Committee brings together faculty and staff to provide support for GE and underscore the significance of its assessment. Standardized processes around the submission of revised or new GE Foundation or Distribution courses were created to ensure that student learning in GE SLOs and teaching were central to the curriculum review process. All course outlines for Foundation or Distribution courses are required to identify GE SLO(s) that will be assessed in the course prior to approval by the GE Committee.

### Assessment

The University allocated additional resources to GE Program assessment within SGS in the role of the GE Assessment Coordinator, who brings consistency to the processes of annual academic assessment. Greater support for this role has allowed for more regularized communication of assessment results, the development of small group meetings regarding GE assessment processes and findings, and greater emphasis on strategies for responding to assessment data that may be utilized successfully in various Foundation and Distribution courses.

GE uses the annual academic assessment process to gather evidence to understand and improve student learning in the Foundation and Distribution courses offered. This assessment process provides faculty with diagnostic information about areas for improvement in student learning that can be employed to tailor efforts for programmatic and curricular improvement. Interventions responsive to learnings resulting from the annual assessments include professional development and workshops that focus on teaching strategies and pedagogical practices, rubric norming sessions, and the development of signature assignments.

The Program has continued to employ assessment findings to enrich teaching and learning both at the course level and the program level. Consistent with the University's assessment cycle, GE is currently undergoing a five-year program review, and the learning resulting from those findings will provide guidance for continuous improvement. Forthcoming adaptations or enhancements will build on the strides the GE Program has made thus far and data collected regarding student learning will direct continued progression in terms of course offerings, teaching, and learning. Under the new administration, the General Education Program is poised to move forward in a positive way that will continue to enhance student learning and be meaningful and relevant for students during and beyond their undergraduate experience at Kean.

### Curriculum Review and Approval

Detailed curriculum review and approval processes for new and revised academic programs are prescribed in the University Curriculum Manual of the University Senate (EI, 103) which details the thorough, multi-level review process at the school/department/program, the College, and the University levels. The University Curriculum Committee, composed of elected faculty from across the University, reviews and approves curricula for all new and revised programs, program options, certificate programs, academic minors, conversions of program options to degrees, and conversions of degree designations. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at WKU reviews the SLO data with the Associate Deans of WKU to consider recommendations for continuous improvement. Proposed new programs must also undergo review by the Academic Issues Committee (AIC) of the New Jersey President's Council (NJPC) (EI, 208). New program proposals include detailed descriptions of the evaluation of curricular design, student achievement, program success, and stakeholder satisfaction. The AIC process requires feedback from academic leaders at other institutions in the state. Once a new program has received approval from the AIC, final approval of new programs rests with the BOT to ensure resource support (EI, 66).

The University also requires that course outlines be updated every three years to ensure that information is current, adequate resources are identified, and linkages to internships and field experiences reflect the most current thinking. Systematic assessment of course design, as well as instruction, provides the impetus for faculty to address ongoing course and program improvement and teaching effectiveness. Course syllabi are updated every semester. Instruction in all courses is assessed every semester using an instrument (SIR II) originally developed by ETS and currently delivered electronically through Kean's Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA) on the Anthology platform (formerly Campus Labs) (EI, 132). This instrument is used to obtain student perspectives on the course, goals, assignment, and instruction. The use of Anthology provides timely feedback to each instructor via a faculty dashboard. An administrator link provides reports to the College Dean, the Executive Director or Chairperson of the school/department, and the Program Coordinator.

The evidence provided shows a wide range of demanding programs dedicated to excellence in instruction and academic support services necessary to assure its socially, linguistically, and culturally diverse students the means to reach their full potential, including students from academically disadvantaged backgrounds, students with special needs, and adults including veterans returning or entering higher education.

# Standard IV



## SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



# KEAN

### STANDARD STATEMENT

Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the six criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard IV compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria, and the narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this standard.

### Policies, Processes, and Programs

Kean University has clearly stated ethical policies designed to admit, retain, and facilitate the success of all students whose interests, abilities, expectations, and goals are reasonable regarding that success.

### Admissions

Kean maintains dynamic, interactive, and updated online information for prospective, transfer, matriculated, non-credit, and other interested students. Admission requirements are available to all prospective students through the University website and prospective students may apply using the University's internal online application or the CommonApp, a multi-institutional college admission application.

Upon acceptance, all students receive their student identification (ID) number and access to the Kean email system, powered by Google, and Kean Web Information System Express (KeanWISE), which enables students to select and register for courses, view grades, and access their financial account. KeanWISE also allows students to access their curriculum map and credit evaluation for their current or proposed academic program.

Once registered, each student also has access to the Ellucian CRM Advise Student Experience (EI, 429) that provides them access to their student success support team, which includes their academic advisor, financial aid counselor, special program advisor, athletic advisor, and other stakeholders from across the community. The online platform gives students direct access to contact any of their support team members to ask questions or seek assistance. Introduced to Kean in Fall 2019, Advise allows faculty, staff, and administrators to holistically support students, resulting in enhanced team integration from enrollment through graduation (EI, 325).

**Transfer Credits.** Kean allows students to transfer credits earned at other accredited institutions following admission acceptance and transfer credit evaluation. Transfer students who earned an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Science degree in 2005, or later, may transfer up to 66 credits to a comparable major, in accordance with New Jersey's Lampitt Law (EI, 308), a comprehensive statewide transfer agreement designed to ease the transfer process from a community college to a public, four-year institution. The legislation requires that a maximum of 92 credits, including a maximum of 66 lower-Division credits, whether taken at a two-year or four-year college, are transferable.

Students who enroll as freshmen at Kean may also take courses at two-year or four-year colleges with approval from their current academic programs. However, all students, regardless of major, must take at least 32 credits with at least 50% of their academic major credits at Kean in order to receive a bachelor's degree from Kean University.

Articulation agreements with various New Jersey two-year institutions further ease and facilitate the process of college credit transfer. Programs such as the Pathway to Kean program (EI, 307), provide a joint admission option for students who do not currently meet the freshman admission criteria to earn a four-year college degree from the University. By beginning their first two years at community college, the Pathway to Kean program allows students to transfer into Kean as provisional juniors to complete their bachelor's degree while also taking advantage of other program benefits. These benefits include an application fee waiver, fully transferable credits from the lower-tuition community college, and unlimited support and services from Kean offices and personnel.

### Competency-Based Assessment

All first-time, full-time Kean students are placed into the appropriate level of reading, math, and writing courses through the use of multiple measures including SAT, high school GPA, and high school transcript evaluations. All reading, math, and writing courses give students a diagnostic test in the first week of the semester in order to ensure proper placement.

Kean offers non-credit, developmental courses in math, reading, and writing to improve the skills of entering students whose academic record and diagnostics indicate a need for additional work prior to starting for-credit, college-level courses. A new credit-bearing English composition course, ENG 1025, was created to provide students with additional support with college writing. ENG 1025 is designed as a preparatory course for College Composition, offering an introduction to academic expository writing and the writing, reading, and critical thinking processes used across the college curriculum.

### Student Information and Records Maintenance and Release

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain rights, privileges, and protections relative to individually identifiable student education records maintained by the institution. Students are notified of their FERPA rights at least once per year by email and through the University catalog. This notification permits the release of directory information without prior written consent of the student. FERPA rights are also shared online on the Office of the Registrar webpage (EI, 83).

When prospective students apply to Kean, they entrust a great deal of personal information to the Admissions staff. This information is processed and stored in an online student recruitment and admissions portal. Kean is transitioning to Slate for portfolio documentation and communications for Fall 2022 starts, and for full recruitment purposes for Fall 2023 students. For prior year incoming cohorts, Kean used Ellucian CRM Recruit. An active member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), Kean abides by the NACAC Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission and operates within the guiding principles of transparency, professionalism, and confidentiality.

### Financial Aid

Financial aid information is communicated through many different outlets. Both emails and postcards are sent to remind students to apply for financial aid using the FAFSA form. Information is also provided on the awarding process, the types of financial aid available, the rights and responsibilities associated with financial aid receipt, award packages, additional documentation to provide, disclosure statements, and financial aid updates.

In addition to electronic and mail notification, financial aid information is also distributed through person-to-person interaction. Professional staff provide in-person information on expenses, financial aid, scholarships, grants,

loans, repayment, and refunds. Interactive events include: FAFSA Workshops, University Open Houses, Financing Your Kean Degree events, Family Day, Retention Day, New Student Orientation, EOF sessions, PASSPORT sessions, Accepted Student Day, SUPERA sessions, plus information sessions through Admissions, support service offices, academic departments, and other Office initiatives. In-person information sessions are conducted at all campus locations, including WKU when relevant to international students. While outreach to students about these events is ongoing, the events are also listed on the University's admissions and financial aid webpages (EI, 255). Finally, students can schedule online appointments to meet with a financial aid advisor.

When a student's application has met the admissions criteria and has earned acceptance into the University, the Office of Financial Aid staff will determine the appropriate financial aid package to support matriculation. This package is based on financial need as reflected in an estimated family contribution (EFC) on the student's completed FAFSA and, additionally, may include merit-based scholarships/grants. Members of the Office of Financial Aid follow standards of confidentiality as promulgated in the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) code. The Office of Financial Aid utilizes Ellucian Colleague, an online student information system, to keep student information protected while allowing the appropriate staff permission to access the necessary information.

In order to continue to receive financial aid, all students must adhere to the Kean University Academic Progress Policy (EI, 278). The policy conforms to federal regulations and state regulations that govern financial aid programs and requires all financial aid recipients to be in good academic standing and to be making academic progression toward a degree in a reasonable amount of time before the financial aid Office disburses any federal funds for the subsequent semester. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is monitored at the end of each Fall, Spring, and Summer semester. Students are required to meet both the qualitative and quantitative components of SAP (EI, 278). Good academic standing (maintaining a 2.0 GPA for undergraduates and 3.0 GPA for graduate students) fulfills the qualitative component, while academic progression that marks their pace to completion by monitoring credit hours attempted and completed fulfills the quantitative component.

### Tuition and Fees

Information about expenses, such as tuition and fees, is posted online for students and their families and shared through both email and postal mail (EI, 363). Further, a sample tuition bill is generated through the Office of Student Accounting and sent to new students in June, prior to the generation of the actual bill. Once actual bills are determined, notifications are sent to all registered students on an ongoing basis.

### Maximum Time Frame

Students are notified regarding the maximum time frame in which they must complete their degree, which is 150 percent of the time frame published in the University Catalog (EI, 278). Students may continue to receive financial aid if their total attempted credit hours do not exceed 150 percent of the credits needed to complete their program of study. For example, if the program of study requires 120 credits for completion; a student may attempt 180 credits. Advance standing hours applied toward the student's degree program (e.g., transfer and AP) count in the maximum time frame.



### Registrar

The Office of the Registrar provides many services that include registration, course scheduling, academic record maintenance, and degree conferrals. The Office of the Registrar utilizes a system of operations known as the One Stop Service Center (One Stop) (EI, 261) to provide quick access to physical and digital resources, various forms, and policies. This ranges from student educational records release to independent study and thesis approvals. Students may visit One Stop in person or virtually using QLess, an online queuing system that allows students to wait in a virtual line rather than a physical line when seeking assistance from One Stop. The University strictly adheres to FERPA guidelines to protect personal information.

### Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs provides resources related to policies and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records, including Academic Integrity Policy, Academic Amnesty, Affirmative Action Policy, Registration Policies, New Student Attendance Policies, FERPA Policies, Course Audit, Leave of Absence, Problem Solving Procedures, and Uniform Ethics Code. A full list of resources is published online within the policies section of the Kean website (EI, 206).

Allegations of sexual assault, misconduct, and violence are addressed through the following policies, which are available online and distributed annually through the Campus Security and Fire Safety Report: Sexual Assault, Misconduct and Violence: Policy, Prevention and Resources; Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Section 304; Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights; Sexual Harassment Policy; and Sexual Misconduct Policy (EI, 206).

### Student Code of Conduct

Kean is committed to providing a campus environment where students can grow intellectually and develop as people. The Kean community depends on shared values and principles. In support of Kean's institutional priority of developing upstanders, the Student Code of Conduct (EI, 207) is a guide to community values of integrity, community, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Violations of the code may be received from individuals, police reports, or incident reports referred through another department within the University using an online reporting form (EI, 347). A student conduct conference or a student conduct hearing may be held to determine if a violation of community standards occurred. The Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct works closely with the Residential Student Services Judicial System, Greek Senate Judicial Board, Office of the Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Office of Affirmative Action, the Department of Athletics and Recreation, and the Department of Public Safety and Police.

Additionally, many academic departments have student handbooks that clearly state how students are expected to abide by the discipline's code of ethics, which are developed or informed by professional associations relevant to the academic discipline or profession (EI, 410, 408).

### Athletics and Recreation

The Kean Department of Athletics and Recreation follows a code of ethics for players and coaches. All student-athletes must complete a series of compliance documents in order to be eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics (EI, 427). As a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III member institution, Kean complies with all applicable rules and regulations of the NCAA in the conduct of its intercollegiate athletics program. Members of the Athletics department staff, student-athletes, and College officials associated with Kean Athletics all share in the responsibility of awareness of the governing NCAA Division III legislation (EI, 428) and adherence to it, in compliance with the Principle of Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct within the NCAA's Principles for the Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics (EI, 364).

Student athletes are required to follow the eligibility requirements of the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC). These guidelines stipulate that student athletes must meet minimum credit load and cumulative GPA requirements for NCAA eligibility and participation, which are defined as having a full-time course load of at least 12 credits per semester and maintaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 1.6 for freshmen, 1.8 for sophomores, and 2.0 for juniors, seniors, and graduate students. Kean holds its student athletes to a higher standard and requires a minimum 2.0 GPA for all athletes. To ensure compliance with this academic standard, study halls are conducted on a team-by-team basis. Coaches convey the requirements, hours, and rules concerning study halls to all team members.

### Ethical Policies and Process to Admit

Students who choose to apply as incoming freshman, transfer, graduate, or online students must submit an application based on the criteria listed on the Kean Admissions website. Information provided on the Enrollment Services website is based on the NACAC's Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission. In summary, students are provided information on application instructions and deadlines, financial aid and scholarships, how to visit Kean, and next steps for accepted students.

Once Enrollment Services has finalized the incoming class for the upcoming semester, newly accepted students are informed in two ways: (1) acceptance packets and (2) phone calls from admissions counselors, faculty or both. Acceptance packets are sent out to freshmen, transfer, graduate, and online students. Each packet includes five steps in order for accepted students to complete their enrollment. Instructions are also available online (EI, 246).

Admissions counselors and faculty also make congratulatory phone calls to freshman students upon acceptance. Admissions counselors encourage newly accepted students to attend Accepted Student Day/Night sessions. Each spring, these sessions provide an opportunity for accepted students to meet their future classmates, learn more about their majors and academic requirements from respective College Deans and faculty, and begin to envision life as a Kean student. As part of the University's safety protocols amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Accepted Student Day was hosted online using Zoom in Spring 2020 for Fall 2020 freshmen, and with a socially distant outdoor event in Spring 2021 for Fall 2021 freshmen.

Newly accepted students are also invited to participate in Dinner with Deans. Due to COVID-19 restrictions for on-campus events, in Spring 2020, Kean transitioned this event into a virtual dinner table around the tri-state area, providing families with pizza and a safe environment to engage incoming students with the Deans.

Counselors also encourage newly accepted students to visit the Accepted Student section of the webpage (EI, 411) to guide them through the enrollment process, including tips on how to maximize their financial aid at the University. Once the admissions counselor and/or faculty member have spoken to the accepted student, an email is sent that encourages students to visit the accepted student section of the website and adhere to the financial aid deadline to complete the FAFSA and the tuition deposit deadline to secure their place at Kean.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

After students are enrolled, there are many programs and interventions in place to help retain and facilitate the success of our students, including but not limited to:

### General Education Mentors (GEMs)

The School of General Studies' peer mentor program supports students in their Transitions courses, offering peer-to-peer support for first-year and transfer students. A select group of Kean undergraduate students, GEMs are embedded in each transition course and, under the supervision of faculty, assist students in acclimating to Kean's campus community. This long standing program has been a model for other peer mentor programs on campus.

### Step-it-Up Academic Coaches

The Step-it-Up Program (SIU) is an academic intervention program designed to assist students struggling academically to improve their chances of persistence and graduation from Kean. The program utilizes graduate students in the counselor education program to mentor these students, under faculty supervision, while gaining practicum or internship experience. SIU is a highly successful program which also offers a suite of workshops to the entire college population, along with those who may be at academic risk. Academic Coaches adhere to the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), as practiced by the Department of Counselor Education faculty members (EI, 325).

### First-Generation Mentors

The First-Generation Mentoring program pairs first-generation students with alumni mentors. The alumni mentors provide an additional layer of support for their first-generation student mentees, not only during their transition to college, but also in their professional life after Kean. The program provides a series of on-campus programs for mentors and mentees as well as additional opportunities for one-on-one engagement. First-generation students are identified via a College Student Inventory (CSI), a non-cognitive assessment that determines a student's motivations and receptivity to support services that is completed at orientation. The only qualification to be part of this program is to identify as a first-generation college student, which is defined as a student for whom "neither parent(s)/guardian(s)" have attended college. To recruit mentors, the Kean Foundation, in partnership with University Relations, distributes marketing materials to Kean alumni who have graduated within the last 20 years to invite them to apply to be a mentor (EI, 325).

### Supplemental Instruction (SI)

The SI program at Kean University began as a pilot initiative through the Office of Student Success and Retention (OSSR) in Fall 2018 to fill a gap in academic support services offered by the University. The initial pilot supported just one course, General Chemistry 1, as it yielded the highest distribution of D and F final grades and withdrawal rate across all introductory courses at the University for four consecutive academic years. Based on the overwhelming success of the pilot semester – 36% average course grade increase for SI participants and the lowest withdrawal rate for the course in five years – the SI program at Kean expanded in Spring 2019 to include two additional courses, General Chemistry 2 and Introduction to Computer Science, with a combined staff of 12 SI student leaders.

In Fall 2019, Kean was awarded two grants to fund the further expansion of the SI program. The first, a \$1.7 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant managed by the computer science program faculty, provides funding to support the integration of SI within the first four courses in the computer science major sequence. The second, a \$1.5 million U.S. Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions grant managed by the new Division of Student Success and Retention (DSSR) with a sole focus on SI expansion, provides funding to support the integration of SI within additional identified courses in math, chemistry, and accounting over the next five years (EI, 370).

### Back on Track (BoT)

In response to the struggles Kean students have faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kean BoT program, funded by the CARES Act, was established in Summer 2020. Eligible students, those who did not successfully complete a required course during Spring 2020, were given the opportunity to get "back on track" toward timely graduation by retaking or enrolling in a credit-bearing, undergraduate course required by their major with the assistance of a tuition grant and personalized support in the form of academic coaching, referrals to University resources, and group workshop participation. While this program is voluntary, 183 students participated in BoT during its pilot semester. Overall, 69.3% of the participants successfully completed the course with a grade of C or above, for which they had BoT program support during Summer 2020, and 78% maintained good academic standing, > 2.0 cumulative GPA, for the Fall 2020 semester.

### Learn, Earn, and Persist (LEAP)

The LEAP program provides micro retention grants for students who demonstrate both financial need and academic achievement. In turn, they are assigned an internship on campus, working closely with an academic or administrative department for a semester to provide a "give-back" experience.

### Center for Advising, Persistence, and Success (CAPS)

The Center for Advising, Persistence, and Success (CAPS) was established during the 2020 academic year to enhance the overall institutional outcomes of persistence, retention, and timely graduation from Kean University. With the creation of CAPS, the University has shifted from a decentralized advising model, where respective academic areas determined their academic advising approach, to structured academic advising, where practices and student advising experiences are more standardized.

With the exception of some specialized academic and support programs at the University, the staff at CAPS serve as the primary advisors for all intended, matriculated, and undecided undergraduate freshmen, sophomore, and transfer students enrolled at the Union campus and online. Juniors and seniors receive advising primarily from their faculty advisors.

CAPS provides holistic, student-centered, culturally responsive, evidenced-based academic advising; evidenced-based academic programming; educational planning; checklist review; early alert management and review; degree audit review; enrolled not registered (ENR) outreach; and registration assistance to Kean students (EI, 115). These services help to ensure that students have positive academic experiences and a successful academic journey.

### **Cougar Connections Center of Social Work**

The Cougar Connections Center of Social Work (CCCSW) is dedicated to providing campus and community services that assist and support students on their path to graduation. It offers support resources designed to enhance and improve student well-being, daily life, and overall collegiate experience. Students are assisted with solving and coping with social, economic, emotional, and behavioral problems that may be related to challenges with food, housing, clothing, or personal/family issues. The goal of CCCSW is to provide a holistic multifaceted approach to social services and support, including but not limited to the following: Food, Shelter, and Clothing Resources; Emergency Financial Services; Case Management Support; Advocacy; Life Skills Development; Safe Space Support; Family Resources; Career Enhancement.

### **Center for Veterans Student Success (CVSS)**

The CVSS is dedicated to providing support to veterans as they transition from a soldier to a student, beginning with recruitment and continuing through graduation, inclusive of career placement services. The CVSS houses two prominent on-campus programs: the Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership program or VITAL, which is a partnership between the Department of Veterans Affairs and local universities with a mission to help veterans achieve their academic goals; and the VETS Center, which is a one-stop to assist veterans with all things related to their education, including financial aid, registration, and academic advising.

### **College Student Inventory**

Within the University, the student experience and programming starts prior to students attending their first class. As part of New Student Orientation (NSO), students complete the College Student Inventory (CSI). This non-cognitive assessment helps the institution better understand a student's motivations and receptivity to support services at Kean (EI, 349). Based on this assessment data of a student's past experiences, initiatives are designed and communications are tailored to particular student populations who could benefit from support.

### **Cougar Climb**

A co-curricular guided pathway, the Cougar Climb steers students through a well-balanced educational experience that includes the following categories: student success; career development; health and wellness; social engagement; and civic engagement. The University creates programming that emphasizes each of these areas and requires that freshmen participate. In 2020, Kean retained more than 85% of students who were in the top 200 of completers of the Cougar Climb; whereas, those who were in the bottom 200 were slower to register. As of May 2020, only 35% of the bottom 200 students had registered for the Fall 2020 term. This data reinforced what Kean already knows: the earlier students engage, the more likely they are to be retained (EI, 325).

### **Nancy Thompson Learning Commons**

The Nancy Thompson Learning Commons (NTLC) offers many services that are designed to meet the academic and information needs of the Kean community. Its mission is to provide an integrated information delivery and learning support system that directly assists students with academic learning, completion of research, and creative and scholarly activities. Learning Commons services include research, tutoring, writing, reading, and public-speaking support (EI, 107). All of these services are provided in-person and online to accommodate the diverse needs of

the Kean community. Online resources include video, instructional information, technical support, workshops, digital databases, open educational resources, peer reviewed journals, research guides and e-books. A 24/7 online chat service offers support around the clock. Faculty input is provided by the elected University Senate NTLC Committee so that academic support continually evolves to meet the current needs of students.

### **Career Services**

The University's Office of Career Services offers students support with job exploration, resume writing, and mock interviews, both during their time at Kean and after graduation. Career Services' staff partner with faculty throughout the University to advance job readiness skills as well as experiential learning opportunities. In addition, Career Services connects students, employers, and alumni through an automated employment and internship portal, information recruiting sessions, and job fairs. In AY 2019-2020, Career Services assisted or presented to over 3,000 students and launched academic internship courses in automated portals (EI, 371).

### **Kean Counseling Center (KCC)**

The KCC provides students with the tools to handle presenting concerns such as academic difficulties, financial worries, conflicts, anxiety, depression, eating concerns, gender/identity concerns, and sexual/physical assault. Students have the opportunity to speak with a licensed clinician and work toward their goals of making changes in their lives. The KCC also offers group counseling, led by a licensed clinician, where students can receive support and feedback from a peer perspective. When indicated, clinicians may refer students for a consultation with a psychiatrist to assess and prescribe any medication needs. Externally to the Kean community, the KCC provides outreach upon request regarding mental-health education, focusing on such topics as sexual-assault awareness, stress management and wellness activities, presentations to classes and student organizations/Greek Life, and promotion through tabling. Students are provided with information on What To Expect on the KCC webpage (EI, 329).

### **Performing Arts Programming**

Kean presents a highly diverse assortment of events in seven unique venues across the Union campus, attracting 35,000 patrons in FY20, including numerous Kean students who were afforded discounted tickets. Premiere Stages at Kean's nationally recognized groundbreaking programming (EI, 453) attracts significant external funding to support student initiatives, includes a highly competitive summer internship program, and is one of only a handful of university programs in the country that affords undergraduates the opportunity to earn credits toward membership in Actors' Equity Association while still enrolled. Kean Stage affords students the opportunity to take master classes and perform with high-profile artists in dance, theatre and music presentations (EI, 452). The Theatre Conservatory offers a mentorship program that prepares a diverse pool of students for careers in theatre, television, and film (EI, 451). The Music Conservatory offers highly individualized and personalized instruction in an environment where students develop strong relationships with faculty mentors and their peers.

### **Office of Accessibility Services (OAS)**

OAS aims to provide all students with an accessible and equitable learning environment. Services to students include classroom and testing accommodations, academic assistance, adaptive technology (i.e. for hearing or visually impaired students), accommodations needed for residence halls, supportive coaching for students (mentorship

program), and oversight of service and emotional support animal requests. Effective in Spring 2022, OAS will also provide students registered with its Office the opportunity to participate in live forums and a social club.

### **Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS)**

AODS provides support to students who have substance use concerns either for themselves or for a family member. Services that directly support this objective include counseling offered through weekly sessions – both one-on-one and group sessions – that outside support groups can also supplement. AODS also provides educational programs (Choices I, Choices II, and Alternatives) to students of possible concern regarding substance use. Choices I and II are alcohol-prevention and harm-reduction programs that provide educational information to better enable students to make more-informed decisions. Alternatives similarly serves as a harm-reduction program but for cannabis prevention. For freshmen, AODS participates in Transition to Kean workshops and provides online drug and alcohol training; this outreach consists of harm reduction to all incoming freshmen and aims to provide students with tools to make well-informed decisions in situations where substances may be present. Additionally, AODS provides outreach upon request to student groups, Greek Life, and the Kean community (EI, 426).

### **Student Health Services (SHS)**

Students can visit Student Health Services in-person or via telehealth appointment for a myriad of reasons: primary-care appointments, women's and men's health, STI testing, physicals for professional and Athletics' requirements, TB tests, free HIV testing, sexual-assault reporting through the Office's student-support advocate, lactation rooms, oversight of medical leaves of absences, and LBGTQ+ services. Students can receive both over-the-counter medication and prescriptions from one of the office's nurse practitioners. SHS provides outreach upon request to student groups and Greek Life as well as student trainings, testing clinics within the Miron Student Center, annual days where the Kean community can receive flu vaccines, and outreach to the Kean community as related to student health. SHS has received state and federal recognition for its outreach to students in advocating for flu vaccines and for students to enroll in the health insurance open market. SHS also provides oversight of the University's immunization program, which consists of implementing state guidelines regarding student compliance for vaccines that protect against measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and meningitis; and New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and CDC guidelines for protecting against COVID-19. The medical staff at SHS follow the ethical codes of their professional organizations and licensing boards, along with those of state and federal authorities, including the Patients Privacy Rights Policy (EI, 412). All documentation and telehealth platforms are HIPAA compliant. All non-medical staff attend confidentiality training and sign a confidentiality agreement.

### **Kean University Behavioral Intervention Team (KUBIT)**

Kean University Behavioral Intervention Team is a multidisciplinary team that provides proactive intervention, caring support, and appropriate institutional response to students exhibiting disruptive and/or concerning behavior. KUBIT also provides consultation, education, and support to faculty, staff, and administration in assisting students; connects students to appropriate campus resources; and monitors students' ongoing behavior over time to ensure a safe and vibrant community for all Kean University students, faculty, and staff (EI, 279), a top priority at Kean.

### **Wenzhou-Kean University (WKU) Student Support Services**

In addition to students at Kean USA, students at Wenzhou-Kean University (WKU) experience an inclusive community that supports student learning and success. An introduction to these services and access and contact information are available to students on the WKU website in the Student Service Guidance Chart (EI, 416). Following the same assessment reporting process as Kean USA, support units apply assessment-informed insights to progressively improve structures and processes that maximize student success.

### **The English Language Center**

The mission of ELC is to “foster an English learning environment and facilitate students’ study of English as a tool for their academic studies.” To this end, a number of programs have been adopted under the ELC including the Pre-University Intensive English Program (PIEP), Learning and Immersion Enrichment Program (LIEP) and Year-1 English Program (ESL). The PIEP and LIEP are short-term, early semester intensive programs that prepare students for the regularized ESL instruction. Annually, the ESL program is assessed to determine the success of the English language program for WKU freshmen. ESL assessment reports have clearly defined learning expectations adopted for effective writing and revision, evaluative and analytical writing, and proficiency in academic English (EI, 420). The ELC also organizes competitions, such as video making, public speaking, and debate competitions, to make practicing English fun.

### **Writing and Revision**

With the application of rubrics-based collation and interpretation of assessment data, some critical amendments were made to further improve the ESL program. The Writing and Revision program staff sequences assignments to enable students to perform better with cumulative knowledge from past assignments. The Evaluative & Analytical Writing program staff separated writing from analytical rubrics in order to ascertain relative progress of the two expectations. This was essential to the design and delivery of distinct instructions that target the two areas. The Proficiency with Academic English program staff set realistic expectations for the argument component of the proficiency rubric. In short, the English language program for WKU freshmen uses assessment data to continuously improve curriculum and instruction to benefit students.

### **Student Academic Services Support Center**

The Student Academic Services Support Center (SASSC) hosts a number of programs to support students at various risk levels, as determined by the outcomes of WKU's Early Alert System. SASSC combines academic tutoring with supplemental instruction programs for select at-risk students while developing pervasive intervention programs for probationary students. With outcomes based on the number of students who go through these intervention systems and who are able to transition to successful academic paths, these programs are assessed annually to ascertain areas of program success and areas of improvement.

### **WKU Student Affairs**

From the provision of counseling services to the establishment of a well-maintained living and learning environment and the application of a Student Code of Conduct, the Office of Student Affairs sponsors a number of programs to ensure student success at WKU. For example, there are a number of events geared towards student career

success. The Student Career Development Center (SCDC) organizes Career & Internship Fairs. In addition, they hold an entrepreneurship competition at the student-run cafe, The Social Dog Cup, with the winners managing the cafe for the year. The SCDC, in partnership with WKU Center for International Studies, works closely with Kean USA in launching a virtual internship exchange. The outcomes of these programs and policies are assessed in the context of the offices' annual assessment reports. Insights drawn from these assessments are applied to make programmatic improvements.

### **Library and Information Services Center**

The Library and Information Services Center (IT) follow requisite programs and policies to ensure the success of WKU students. The library provides training to students to enable them to make full use of resources, including databases and research support systems. Through annual assessment reports, the library applies indirect measures of assessment (e.g., surveys, focus groups) to ascertain the training and resource needs of students in order to respond accordingly to popular demands and expectations of students. In addition, IT supports technology and network-related needs of students 24 hours a day. To keep WKU students up to date on constantly evolving technological systems, IT has been pursuing a comprehensive assessment and evaluation agenda over the years. The IT combines direct and indirect measures of assessment to facilitate the application of assessment data to the improvement of technological services at WKU (EI, 434).

Wenzhou-Kean students have free and unfettered, 24/7 access to the Internet and all of the Kean USA online library resources. Wenzhou-Kean students access the internet through a virtual private network (VPN) that operates via satellite to a portal in nearby Newark and into Kean's VPN on campus. It assures a seamless connection and access to Kean USA's library, databases, and all of the resources attainable online, including traditional and social media sources, search engines, and all other information and entertainment.

### **Successful Student Support Outcomes at WKU**

From admissions to academic intervention services to career guidance and the application of assessment data for process improvement, WKU has been conscientious with the advancement of student learning experience. The average retention rates at WKU over the past four years (96%) and the average four-year graduation rate for the last two cohorts (85%) reflect the meticulous efforts to prepare and assist students for success (EI, 448).

### **Student Government**

Kean supports two student governments: Student Organization of Kean University, representing the full-time undergraduate student body, and the Graduate and Part-time Student Council (GPSC), representing the part-time undergraduate and graduate student government. Each board promotes leadership and student engagement and consists of an executive board and senate, or council, that is composed of representatives by academic year and campus location. A Vice President position on the executive board and several senate positions are dedicated to students enrolled in courses at Kean Ocean. These student government boards represent the students of Kean University by encouraging student feedback and acting as the voice for student needs. In addition, these boards host various events on and off campus that contribute to social, academic, cultural, and professional growth.

### **Greek Life**

Greek Life at Kean University empowers members of the Greek-letter organizations to promote and preserve the ideals of scholarship, service leadership, campus involvement and brotherhood/sisterhood. Membership in Greek organizations promotes personal development and a strong sense of identity with the institution, as well as post-graduate association. Greek chapters enhance the quality of life for students on and off campus by providing a range of opportunities for meaningful individual involvement and growth.

### **Center for Leadership and Service**

In order to manage the quality of student organizations, the Center for Leadership and Service (CLS) coordinates the process of student group recognition on all Kean campuses. These student groups include honor societies, recognized student groups, fraternities, sororities, and student governments. Each organization must have a full-time faculty or staff member that serves as an advisor, a guiding document that outlines the structure, mission, membership criteria, and other guidelines that govern the organization and at least 10 active Kean student members. Each executive board member must also complete an annual training that includes sessions on risk management, the Code of Conduct, incident reporting, conflict resolution, event planning and policies, and organizational development, which includes recruitment, membership retention, and goal settings.

### **Residential Student Services**

The Office of Residential Student Services (RSS) staff believes that every experience in a student's life can be educational. A student's education at the University is not limited to an expansion of his or her academic knowledge but includes the development of a moral and ethical code that allows the student to function properly in society. Furthermore, a student's education includes an awareness of responsibility to others, their status as a member of a social group, and how to live within the rules necessary for proper functioning of that and other groups in society. The policies, which are written as prohibitions, stated as behavior that is prohibited in all residence halls, buildings, and grounds, are enforced through the Office of Residential Student Services and can be found in the Resident Student Handbook on the RSS web page (EI, 401).

### **Assessment of Programs Supporting the Student Experience**

As an institution, Kean receives ongoing assessment guidance from several areas including but not limited to the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs, University Relations, Office of the Registrar, Office of Institutional Research, and Office of Institutional Effectiveness. As academic and administrative units gather data, they work with these units to incorporate the data into the planning and implementation of student programs and services to support the student experience. For more information on the process for assessing programs in support of the student experience, please see Standard VI.

# Standard V



## EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT



### STANDARD STATEMENT

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the five criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard V compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria, and the narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this Standard.

### Culture of Assessment

Kean has established and sustained a culture of assessment through the development and implementation of annual assessment of academic and administrative programs. Building on a suggestion from the Periodic Review Report in 2017, the University has continued systemic academic program review, while actively adopting and using best practices, tools, and methods in assessment such as a newly adopted Assessment Management System supported by Watermark.

### Educational Goals

The University's educational goals are organized in a tiered structure with the Mission Statement serving as an overarching umbrella (EI, 1), organizing and driving the University's Strategic Plan (EI, 97) and all sub-levels of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) (Figure 1). Kean's four University-wide SLOs (EI, 311), derived from the Mission Statement, are: think critically, creatively, and globally (SLO 1); adapt to changing social, economic, and technological environments (SLO 2); serve as active and contributing members of their communities (SLO 3); and advance their knowledge in the traditional disciplines and enhance their skills in professional areas (SLO 4).

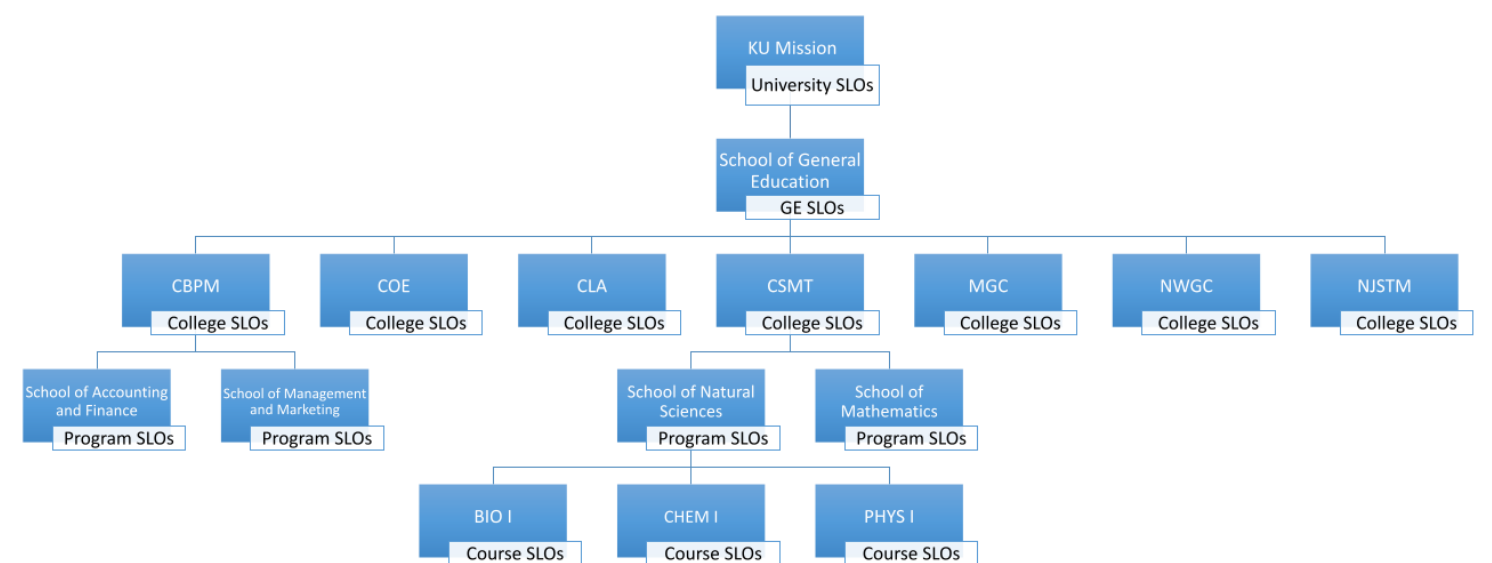


Figure 2 : Hierarchy of Kean University Education Goals

In addition, the University has established eight General Education (GE) SLOs (EI, 159) which elaborate on the University SLOs and aim to build a strong foundation of skills at the institution level. These GE SLOs are:

1. **Transdisciplinarity: The ability to integrate knowledge and methods from different fields to address historical or contemporary questions.**
2. **Critical Thinking: The ability to utilize reflective analysis to draw informed conclusions.**
3. **Quantitative Literacy: The ability to utilize numerical data accurately and effectively to address real world problems.**
4. **Communication Literacies: The ability to speak and write effectively to convey and make an evidence-based argument.**
5. **Information and Technology Literacy: The ability to utilize information and communications technology critically and effectively in a rapidly changing world.**
6. **Active Citizenship: A commitment to lifelong civic engagement at a local, national, and/or global level.**
7. **Ethical Judgment and Integrity: The ability to draw reasonable conclusions from ethical questions to guide personal conduct.**
8. **Diversity: A commitment to promote inclusivity in a diverse world.**

GE courses supporting the attainment of these SLOs include foundation courses and distribution courses (EI, 158). Foundation courses include English Composition, Mathematics, Public Speaking, and Research and Technology and focus on building quantitative, communication, information and technology literacies (GE SLO 3, 4, 5). Distribution courses are in Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science and Mathematics and stress the GE SLOs on transdisciplinary, active citizenship, diversity, ethical judgment, and integrity (GE SLO 1, 6, 7, 8). Critical thinking (GE SLO 2) is introduced at the GE foundations and distribution courses, reinforced through specific major concentration courses, and mastered with a GE Capstone requirement during the senior year. The School of General Studies Curriculum Map (EI, 421) serves as a template and illustrates how the SLOs are introduced and reinforced, and assessment evidence is collected and mastery demonstrated throughout the curriculum. A series of standard GE Assessment Rubrics (EI, 149) are used for systematic assessment of these SLOs throughout the curriculum.

Aligned with the University and GE SLOs on critical thinking and enhancing professional skills, research and inquiry-based educational experiences are emphasized across disciplines and are incorporated in and outside of the classroom through instruction methods such as experiential learning, practicums, internship support, student research support through internal grants, publishing student research, and university-wide initiatives, including Research First Initiative, Freshman First Initiative, and Research Days activities. All programs require students to take a 2000 level Research and Technology course early in their educational experience to build foundational research skills. Individual programs offer higher-level, inquiry-based research courses and a final capstone course to reinforce the skills and prepare students for the specific professions.

The sub-levels to the KU SLOs include College-level SLOs (EI, 312), program level SLOs (PSLOs) (EI, 312), and SLOs of individual courses (CSLOs). Individual programs align their PSLOs with the University and College SLOs using a program SLO-alignment template developed by the OAA (EI, 323). The PSLOs are developed by faculty in the discipline, using national norms and standards, and aim to build a strong foundation of knowledge and skills. CSLOs are aligned with PSLOs through program curriculum mapping (EI, 324), which are reviewed in the program review cycles.

### Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Each academic program performs a yearly assessment of student progress in achieving PSLOs; outcomes are measured against defined goals using yearly program-generated data (EI, 80). Every program produces a Five-Year Program Review tracking results of the yearly program assessment goals (EI, 77).

The assessment process identifies changes or actions that programs take for continuous improvement. The PSLOs are reevaluated using a standardized rubric (EI, 313) and realigned with University and GE SLOs every five years as a part of the program review cycle engaging faculty and students in the programs. An example of such a program review is included in Evidence Inventory (EI, 322), where pages 8-12 list the PSLO alignments. Revision of PSLOs is guided by such factors as assessment data collected through annual program assessment, University strategic planning updates, external standard changes and career outlooks.

An example of how educational effectiveness assessment has been used to improve program offerings at Kean is provided by the Supplemental Instruction Program (SI). After determining that campus-wide student success and retention was adversely impacted by student performance in select first year courses, the SI program was piloted in 2018 with CHEM 1083 Chemistry I, with students receiving one hour of weekly, out-of-class enrichment. Based on the initial success, CHEM 1084 Chemistry II was added the following semester. At this time, SI has been expanded to include several other areas, and 53% of all enrolled students at Kean are in SI-supported courses (EI, 321). In Spring 2021, those students made almost 6,000 visits to SI sessions. Students who participate in SI see an average 30% increase in their course grade, when compared to students who did not participate. The use of SI, prompted by assessment and data review, has significantly improved student course outcomes for participating students (EI, 321). This example speaks to Kean's institutional priority of continued evolution in alignment with students' needs.

### Institutional Support for Assessment

Kean's Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA) utilizes Google Shared Drives for data management, providing access to both program and yearly assessment reports. These reports are maintained in the designated Google Share Drive folders and accessible by the public on the Kean OAA website (EI, 320). OAA offers a variety of other Assessment Products for Academic Assessment through a public link on its website, which includes program SLOs, GE Assessment Rubrics and assessment reports, and administrative unit assessment reports, among others. Course Evaluations represent another assessment system that is utilized across the University. All courses are evaluated every semester using the online instrument by Anthology (formerly Campus Labs) after Fall 2019 and SIRII instrument originally developed by ETS before Fall 2019. The results are shared with faculty and academic leaders to enrich the student learning experience. Starting Spring 2021, the OAA administers an exit survey to all graduates that seeks feedback on their learning experiences (EI, 318). The results from these are shared with various stakeholders to enrich student learning and experience.

During 2020-2021, OAA evaluated Assessment Management Software systems that could be fully integrated with other Learning Management Software; Watermark was selected as the provider. A pilot program with Watermark is underway in AY 2021-2022 and is anticipated to replace the Google Shared Drive system by AY 2022-2023.

Specific disciplines may use additional assessment systems as well. For example, many of the Health Science programs in Nathan Weiss Graduate College and the School of Health and Human Performance are migrating to EXXAT software, which will house student data, such as location sites for clinical internship, assessment data, and curriculum mapping. The College of Education currently utilizes the Chalk & Wire software platform for student assessment, allowing faculty and department heads to evaluate student learning outcomes and mastery at the pro-

gram level. Other forms of direct measure for assessment of academic programs include certification or licensure exams and clinical skills assessments through clinical internships of clinical programs (PT, OT, AT, Speech, etc.) as well as comprehensive exams (EI, 189, 190).

In addition to meeting Kean's assessment and program review criteria, 61 programs engage in external accreditation, certification, or endorsement, fully supported by Kean's administration. A complete list of Kean's external accrediting agencies is included in evidence inventory (EI, 317).

### Assessment of Meaningful Curricular Goals

Curricular goals are reflected in the SLOs at different levels. Based upon the mission and goals of each academic program, PSLOs (EI, 312) reflect specific criteria relevant to their course of study. PSLOs vary by discipline and use national norms and standards to offer quality academic programs. A number of Kean's programs are accredited by external national organizations, ensuring educational and professional standards that are nationally recognized (EI, 317). CSLOs are aligned with PSLOs through curriculum mapping (EI, 324) and are driven by the content of the disciplines for students to gain in-depth knowledge and practical skill sets in the disciplinary tracts. The CSLOs are clearly stated on each course syllabus (EI, 316) and assessed through assignments, projects, examinations, and other methods as determined by program faculty. Courses which are foundational to the GE curriculum are assessed using rubrics that have been standardized by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) (EI, 149). During the pandemic, Kean adopted standardized course modules on the Blackboard system. Each course clearly designated its corresponding CSLOs to individual units, readings, assignments, and other instructional components (EI, 315). This also provided for consistency across Kean Online degree courses and the standard curricular programs offered through hybrid and face-to-face instruction.

Assessment results are tabulated, reported, and summarized during the programs' annual assessment exercise and five-year program review. An Annual College Assessment Results and Recommendations Report provides College-level summaries (EI, 127). The Office of Academic Affairs then summarizes all Deans' reports in an Annual Division Assessment Results and Recommendations Report for consideration alongside other Division Reports during the University Planning Council's annual "closing the loop" exercise.

### Sustained Assessment and Communication of Student Achievement

Kean University conducts annual assessment of academic programs, led by designated assessment coordinators in each academic program, in collaboration with Kean's Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA). Program reviews are conducted every five years, engaging faculty, students, and alumni for a comprehensive assessment. Both annual program assessment and program review results are communicated to stakeholders through direct sharing of reports and providing access to program assessment data. See Standard I for additional information regarding the assessment workflow.

### Systems that Sustain Assessment of Student Achievement

Five units work together to support and sustain the assessment of student achievement, detailed below: Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA), Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE), University Senate Assessment Committee, University Planning Council (UPC), and the Division of Academic Affairs.

### Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA)

OAA provides leadership for the planning and implementation of academic program review, student learning outcomes assessment, University assessment, and assessment-related training. Specifically, OAA:

- **Convenes assessment coordinators from individual academic programs, and oversees and coordinates the annual assessment and five-year program review schedules.**
- **Oversees the accreditation of the University and its programs by state and other accreditation agencies.**
- **Coordinates administrative unit assessments with IE.**
- **Maintains assessment products including academic program SLOs, College SLOs and their alignments with University SLOs, academic assessment reports, GE assessment rubrics and reports and, in coordination with IE, administrative unit assessment reports.**
- **Utilizes Anthology (formerly Campus Labs) to conduct campus-wide course student evaluations of instruction and creates evaluation reports.**
- **Coordinates with the University Senate's Assessment Committee to conduct training to establish a culture of assessment on campus across units.**

### University Senate Assessment Committee

This committee oversees matters related to student-learning outcomes and program (institutional) effectiveness. The goal of this committee is to monitor protocols for informing the University community about the assessment process and feedback and linking recommendations from the program review cycle and the OAA to policies and procedures at the departmental level. It also organizes assessment training sessions with the OAA to establish a culture of assessment on campus.

### University Planning Council

In addition to its primary task of writing, implementing, and assessing the University Strategic Plan, the University Planning Council (UPC) creates linkage between assessment activities and resource allocation. Annually, the UPC reviews Annual Assessment Results and Recommendations Reports submitted by each Division, which summarize assessment findings and requests for funds from all units and programs within the Division. Funding requests are prioritized and funding recommendations are included in an annual report to the President. See Standard I for more information on UPC.

### Division of Academic Affairs

This Division is central to the success of academic and academic support programs, promoting high academic standards for faculty and students, and administering the resources, policies, and plans that sustain them. Academic Affairs encompasses all of the academic components of what is now a comprehensive, diverse, and growing state university.

### Systems that Communicate the Results of Student Achievement Assessment to Stakeholders

The results of student achievement assessment are communicated to stakeholders by the Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA), the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (SVPAA), the University Planning Council (UPC) and the Office of University Relations (UR).



### Use of Assessment Results to Improve Student Learning

Academic programs annually assess the extent to which students are meeting the SLOs. Assessment data is used to improve educational effectiveness at different levels in the annual Closing the Loop process (Figure 3). Data helps faculty directly involved in assessment adjust instructional methods to improve student learning (a), improve pedagogy and curriculum (b), and inform program revisions and identify support services (c). Assessment data from individual programs shapes the recommendations from College Deans for professional development activities (d) and future resource allocation decisions (e). Academic Affairs coordinates these assessment results and recommendations.

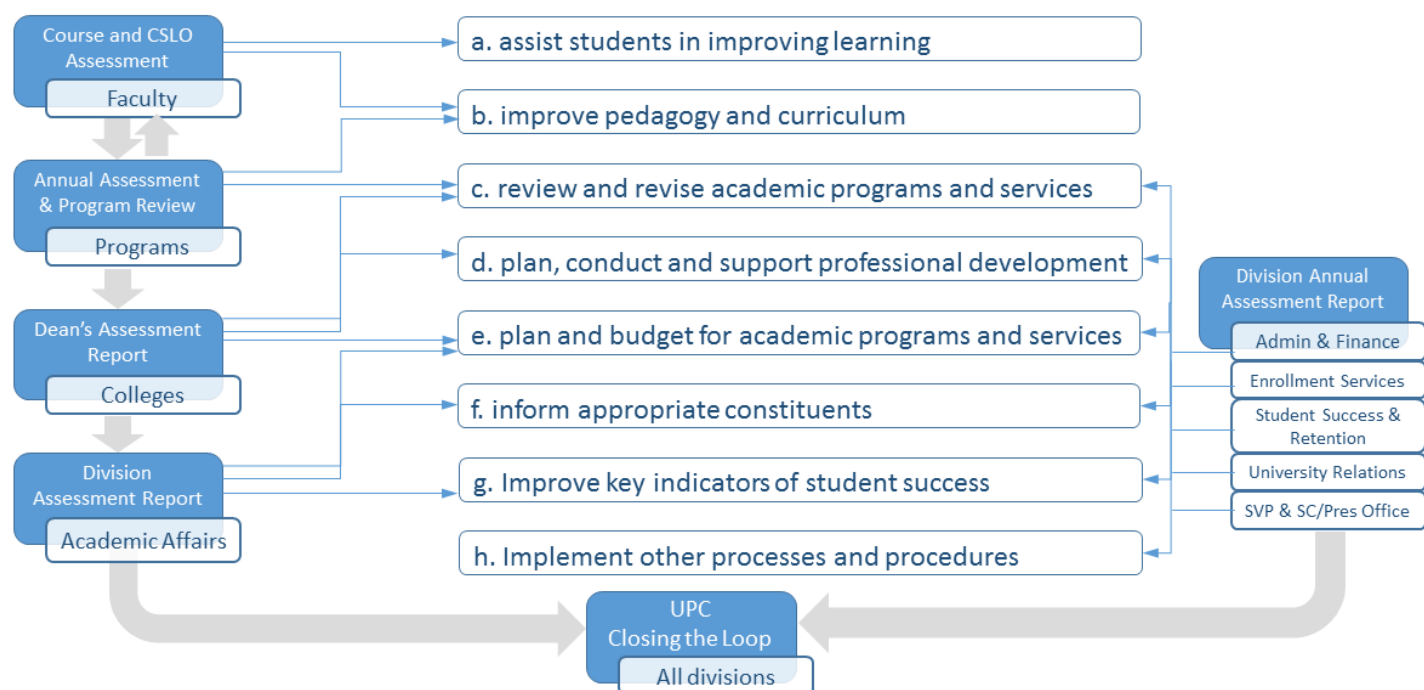


Figure 3: Kean University Annual Assessment and Closing the Loop Flowchart

In the UPC's annual Closing the Loop activity, results from Academic Affairs are shared with other Divisions to identify priorities and action items for Student Support Services (e, with Student Affairs), planning and budgeting for programs and services (e, with Administration and Finance), informing appropriate constituents about the institution and its programs (f, with University Relations), improving key indicators of student success, such as retention and graduation (g, with Student Success and Retention and Enrollment Services), and implementing other processes and procedures to improve programs and services (h).

See Standard VI for additional information on UPC's Closing the Loop Prioritization process.

### An Example Examination of the Closing the Loop Cycle

In this Self-Study, the completed Closing the Loop cycle of 2018-2019 is used to illustrate the use of assessment data in the process to improve educational effectiveness in the individual categories. Table 6 below illustrates examples of changes implemented as a result of annual assessment and program review.

College	Program	Actions resulting from Program Review
College of Business and Public Administration	M.A. Public Administration	Collaborated with the Writing Center to improve student writing skills (EI, 384) Provided more global components in the curriculum to enhance students' global awareness (EI, 378)
	B.S. Accounting	Provided additional examples of adjusting entries (EI, 379)
Nathan Weiss Graduate College		Changes in pedagogical approaches across programs (EI, 387)
College of Science, Mathematics and Technology	B.S. Biology	Increased quantitative analysis and writing activity (EI, 386)
	B.S. Chemistry	Suggested the systematic introduction of technical writing in lower-level courses (EI, 382)
	Selected courses in: Chem/CS/Hist/Math	Addition of Supplemental Instruction (SI) to improve student success
College of Education	B.S. Physical Ed (Teacher Certification)	PED 2810 Lesson Planning developed to provide students with education on planning, for success in the edTPA planning section (EI, 445)
College of Liberal Arts	General Studies	Prompted the program to consider moving Research and Technology to a 1000-level course (EI, 383) Identified communication and composition programs for improvement (EI, 385)

Table 6: Examples of Selected Actions for Program Improvement

Five programs were also randomly selected from the pool of recently completed five-year program reviews to further study the use of assessment results in this self-study. These programs include the B.S. Accounting of CBPM, B.A. Art Education of COE, B.A. Biology of CSMT, B.A. Psychology of CLA, and M.A. Communication Studies of CLA (EI, 391-395).

Program review reports followed a standard template and addressed assessment results in four of the sections: 1. Program strengths identified and described; 2. Program areas of improvement identified and described; 3. Needs specifically identified for resource allocation; 4. Recommendations for allocations to improve teaching-learning process. All five programs submitted in-depth data collection and tracked SLOs across the five-year period to determine how the strengths/limitations of the program impacted students. The allocation recommendations submitted by the programs highlighted different categories addressed above, including: a. changes to the current curriculum for improved teaching-learning enhancements (i.e., replace old curriculum with current material, create honor tracks for exceptional students), b. modifications to the external environments (i.e., more labs, computers, furniture), and c. additional staffing and faculty resources (EI, 77).

### **Assist Students in Improving Their Learning**

Areas of improvement vary by program. For example, informed by assessment results, Master of Public Administration faculty collaborated with the Writing Center to improve students' writing skills (EI, 378). The B.S. Accounting assessment suggested faculty give more examples of "journalize and post adjusting entries" and explain ethical situations (EI, 379). The B.S. Biology assessment exercise suggested providing faculty with tools to promote student understanding of real-world applications of biology and improve skills related to quantitative analysis and writing (EI, 380). The need to better prepare new students for advanced coursework was identified across disciplines. In response, the First-Year Seminar was established in 2020 (EI, 381) and has expanded to include the Common Read in Fall 2021 to support students in acquiring the in-depth reading skills that are required for college-level work.

### **Improve Pedagogy and Curriculum**

Following the annual assessment, the Master of Public Administration faculty discussed providing more global components in the curriculum to enhance students' global awareness (EI, 378). At the college level, CBPM increased research coursework, and started a project-based curriculum update (EI, 384); CLA identified communication and composition programs for improvement (EI, 395); NWGC discussed changes in pedagogical approaches within programs (EI, 387). Expansion of practicum courses and student internships were indicated in the assessment data for many programs (EI, 381).

### **Review and Revise Academic Programs and Support Services**

During the last Closing the Loop cycle, some programs revised their PSLOs to meet changing standards. CBPM updated all its programs (EI, 384). The NJCSTM revised SLOs to ensure alignment with core STEM competencies and New Jersey Department of Education requirements (EI, 388). Commonalities identified included a need to support student internships and experiential learning. An example of a university-wide action is the enhancement of the University Career Services Office to increase internship opportunities and develop co-curricular experiences for all Kean students (EI, 381).

### **Plan, Conduct and Support a Range of Professional Development Activities**

Using recommendations from the UPC Closing the Loop assessment exercise, Academic Affairs organizes annual faculty Professional Development Days that include workshops on pedagogy, assessment, and retention. Colleges plan and conduct professional development activities in support of the needs identified in their assessment. For example, CLA created a new lab to provide training in digital humanities, offering professional development in the use of digital methods in the humanities (EI, 385). It also developed support materials and workshops for adjunct faculty. NWGC identified a need to provide mentoring sessions to adjunct faculty (EI, 387).

### **Plan and Budget for the Provision of Academic Programs and Services**

Staff and resource needs are identified for individual programs during the annual assessment process. General resource needs are also identified for all Colleges. For example, program assessment findings for the NJCSTM identified a need for the hiring of new faculty and staff, as well as program space and research support for its new MS Genetic Counseling program (EI, 388). CSMT identified a need to acquire equipment and hire additional research faculty in Biology, Computer Science, and Mathematics for research expansion (EI, 386). Academic Affairs prepares its resource request with a UPC template for all Divisions (EI, 389). All resource requests are reviewed by the UPC with a rubric (EI, 390), prioritized and reported to the President's Office.

### **Inform Appropriate Constituents About the Institution and its Programs**

Academic Affairs joins other Divisions at the UPC Closing the Loop activity to incorporate assessment results in their programming. University Relations announces programs through Kean News and social media and works with the President's Office to communicate with the University community through President Repollet's weekly e-newsletter and Student Town Hall meetings, both new in AY 2020-2021. Enrollment Services organizes open house events and high school partnerships. Student Services informs student organizations.

### **Improve Key Indicators of Student Success**

One of the actions taken to improve student retention and graduation rates was to strengthen academic advisement by centralizing academic and administrative units for collaborative work. A full-service One Stop Center was created and located in the Center for Academic Success. The location enables offices from several Divisions – Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Student Success and Retention – to jointly serve the multifaceted needs of first-year students, undecided/undeclared students, students changing majors and those with academic difficulty (EI, 381).

### **Implement Other Processes and Procedures to Improve Educational Programs and Services**

As the common need to enhance student research skills emerged from program assessment results, several university-wide initiatives were implemented. ORSP launched a Freshman Student Research Initiative to support first-year student research experiences. A faculty seed grant was established to involve more students in research activities. The University holds its Research Days event annually in spring, with students presenting their research to the community. The number of student participants has increased from 92 to 2026 since its launch in 2009 (2021 data) (EI, 191).

Collectively, the University uses assessment results for continuous improvement of educational effectiveness through the annual assessment and periodic program review activities initiated by programs and faculty and through the collective procedure of the annual UPC Closing the Loop activity involving all University Divisions.

### **Periodic Assessment of the Process**

The OAA employs rubrics for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and assessment activities with a Program SLO quality check rubric (EI, 313) and an Assessment Plan and Report Quality Rubric (EI, 399). OAA has published Guidelines for Academic Program Reviews (EI, 77). Following the program review, the team makes program recommendations. A College-led committee, composed of the Dean, all Executive Directors, two faculty members and one student, completes a report that consists of an evaluation of the findings, recommendations within the context of Kean University Strategic Plan, and budget requests. The Provost/SVPAA reviews assessment reports from all Colleges and compiles an Academic Affairs Division report. The UPC reviews all Division reports to provide further recommendations to the President. All members of the University community can access the UPC recommendations to the President on the UPC webpages. See Standard VI for more information on UPC's Closing the Loop Prioritization process and the alignment of resource requests with assessment outcomes.

Strengths of these assessment processes include improved procedures and a wealth of University data collected. Evidence demonstrates clearly defined educational goals aligned with the University's Mission and Strategic Plan to offer educational experiences through experiential learning opportunities, including career internships, research activities, and global education opportunities; and to engage students through immersion of culturally rich and diverse communities, which enhances a student's local and global awareness.

Assessment results are used for continuous improvement of educational effectiveness. Examples include assisting students in improving their learning; improvements in pedagogy and curriculum; review and revision of academic programs and support services; support for a range of professional development activities; budgeting for the provision of academic programs and services; informing appropriate constituents about the institution and its programs; improvement in key indicators of student success, such as retention, graduation, transfer, and placement rates; and implementation of other processes and procedures designed to improve educational programs and services.

# Standard VI



## PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT



# KEAN

### STANDARD STATEMENT

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the nine criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard VI compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria, and the narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this Standard.

### Equity, Excellence, Evolution, and Continuous Improvement

Kean University, in its pursuit of excellence, equity, evolution, and continuous improvement, utilizes clear processes to identify institutional objectives.

In line with the work of the University Planning Council (UPC) (EI, 104), as presented in greater detail in Standard I, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) and the Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA) manage regular comprehensive assessments of units, programs, and Divisions in pursuit of excellence, equity, and institutional improvement.

### Office of Institutional Effectiveness

IE supports the administrative component of the University's Mission, goals, and institutional priorities through the implementation of evaluation and improvement initiatives that foster a timely, measurable, and systematic assessment process. The Office works with all administrative units to ensure that they are provided training and support to assess the work of their units more effectively, while also identifying appropriate unit objectives that are aligned with the Strategic Plan, and to ensure a multi-faceted assessment plan with multiple measures to determine impact. IE further ensures assessment results are used for decision making and closing the loop, with the goal of realizing continuous improvement in meeting and exceeding targets of institutional and unit objectives. The Office ensures accountability from all administrative units through the tracking of assessment report submissions, training participation, and communications (EI, 112).

### Office of Accreditation and Assessment

OAA's management of academic assessment, including its annual assessments and five-year cycle program reviews, are part of the documentation, communication, and participation of units and Divisions in processes linked to institutional improvement. Academic Program Review provides an opportunity for programs to identify areas of strength and address areas needing improvement. The five-year program review process is also an important tool for documentation and communication (EI, 77, 76). At each level of academic review and non-academic unit review, recommendations are made to ensure the University preserves the strengths of programs and units and that areas needing improvement are addressed. These recommendations are made with oversight from program Executive Directors / Chairs and Deans at the academic review level, and with oversight from managers, directors, and Vice Presidents at the non-academic unit review level. The assessment processes at the institution and the feedback loops that result under the guidance and management of OAA are foundational to university-wide communication, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

### Collaboration

Planning and collaboration at Kean ensures assessment processes focus on the pursuit of excellence, equity, evolution, and continuous improvement, as assessment results are the main source of decision making and communication. Through university-wide collaboration, assessment of individual programs and units are collected by Colleges and Divisions. Summary reports are reviewed by the UPC, and requests for resources, which emerge from the Division reports, are considered at the annual “Closing the Loop” meeting of the UPC. The UPC further prioritizes these requests and submits them to the President in a tabled report, who then reviews and presents recommendations to the BOT (EI, 121).

As opportunities emerge, University leadership creates task forces, working groups, and committees to make recommendations or to address and manage important issues that impact the Kean community. These groups represent different parts of the organization.

### Task Forces

Examples of current task forces include the Learning Management System (LMS) Task Force (EI, 137); the Open Educational Resources (OER) Task force (EI, 134); the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Task Force (EI, 136); and the Hunger Task Force (EI, 135).

The LMS Task Force is charged with providing a thorough review of three LMS products (i.e., Blackboard Learn Ultra, Canvas, and D2L/Brightspace), among other supporting technologies, with the culminating goal being to make compelling recommendations for adoption to the President. The OER Task force is charged with the advanced and innovative task of supporting the Kean Community in its quest to reuse, revise, remix, redistribute, and retain OER course materials that boost learning and access to high-quality and seminal resources at a low cost. The Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Task Force is charged with developing comprehensive methods to address the various alcohol and other drug issues that arise within the University community. A final example is the Hunger Task Force, which is charged with developing, implementing, and monitoring goals to achieve a hunger-free campus.

### Student Participation

In addition to the task forces, working groups, and committees, the University and the President actively collaborate with students on institutional matters, understanding that student feedback is crucial to improved learning, student life experiences, and institutional improvement. Kean excels in methods used to obtain student feedback to inform student betterment decisions. The Office of Student Government consists of two student governing bodies at Kean University through which the voices of the students are heard. These governing bodies include Student Organization and Graduate and Part-time Student Council (GPSC) (EI, 133). Through continuous dialogue, active feedback, and participation in the University community, these student groups ensure optimum student rights and an environment where diversity and free expression thrive. An example includes the Student Town Hall meetings where students engage directly with the President, who responds and addresses current and pressing matters; the Student Town Hall webpage documents the issues raised and provides feedback to the entire community (EI, 131).

### Organizational Approval Processes

With all the stakeholders and stakeholder groups represented across the University, organizational structure is of critical importance. Kean’s hierarchy, as shown in the Organizational Chart (EI, 163), is the structure that provides the chain of command and areas of responsibility within each Division at Kean. Approval processes move from the requestor to the department head to the divisional Vice President and to the divisional senior Vice President. Many

approval processes also require the approval of the Senior Vice President of Finance and/or the Budget Office for use of funds. Examples of the origin of requests include the Capital Project Budget Request Form (EI, 167), Budget Amendment Form (EI, 168), Travel Authorization Request Form (EI, 130), Check Request Form (EI, 118), and ID Card Funds Request Form (EI, 129). In addition, and as standard practice, legal contracts are reviewed for compliance and approved for execution by the University Counsel.

### Policies and Guidelines

Policies and guidelines also set the precedent for business operations and accountability. These can be evidenced in the institution’s Employee Handbook (EI, 223), Kean Adjunct Faculty Handbook (EI, 413), Student Employee Employment Guidelines (EI, 2), Procurement Policy Manual (EI, 165), Kean Credit Card Guidelines & Procedures (EI, 120), and Budget Amendment Guidelines (EI, 128).

### Additional Stakeholders

Two other essential stakeholder groups of Kean’s organizational structure include the University Senate and its Board of Trustees (BOT), both of which work directly with the University President on matters related to institutional improvements.

### University Senate

The University Senate communicates recommendations to the President on such matters as faculty affairs, curriculum, instruction, student affairs, finances, and other matters relevant to the welfare of the institution. The Senate acts as a dynamic advisory board, providing guidance on pertinent issues as they arise. Recommendations in the form of new institutional priorities and actionable items are made in pursuit of the values and goals of educational excellence, equity, evolution, and continuous improvement. University Senate meeting minutes, memberships, and committees can be referenced on the University Senate webpage (EI, 103).

### Board of Trustees

The Kean University Board of Trustees (BOT) is the governing body of the University. It consists of 15 members appointed by the Governor of New Jersey, as well as a student Trustee and alternate elected by the student body, and a University Senate representative elected by the members of the Senate. Pursuant to the Higher Education Restructuring Act of 1994, the BOT has general supervision and oversight of the University. Board resolutions are informed by established bylaws, made in the interest of the public, and voted upon by the BOT. Each resolution is linked to a rationale for decision making, provides a clear line of responsibility to the President, and is appropriately documented through BOT meeting minutes. All meeting minutes and bylaws are published and can be referenced on the BOT webpage (EI, 98).

### Assessment

The annual assessment cycle, spanning from September to June, consists of two main pillars of assessment: academic program review and administrative program review. These two pillars contribute to university goal setting and to continuous and cyclical feedback focused on student learning and institutional effectiveness. The assessment process requires that objectives and budget request items be linked to one of the goals outlined in the institutional Strategic Plan, with each link documented on the Assessment Report Template in two locations: above the listed objective and alongside the budget request line (EI, 125).

Retention, persistence, and time to graduation data are another critical part of the assessment processes at Kean University. These data are documented for each academic program by the Dean in the College Annual Assessment Report and Recommendations (EI, 127) and are additionally reported in the Academic Affairs Division Assessment Report and Recommendations (EI, 126). The academic leadership – comprised of school and department Executive Directors, College Deans, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs – prepare the annual assessment reports. Throughout this process, both annual and longer-term trends emerge and guide how resource requests are prioritized and how funds are allocated. Resource requests move up the chain of command, while attention to performance in need of improvement is directed down the chain of command by the academic leadership.

### Resources Prioritization

The Resources Prioritization and Allocation for Funding Request form (EI, 389) was implemented for the 2021-2022 academic year, with the goal of prioritizing requests that further Kean University's Mission and strategic goals in alignment with academic plans, administrative units, or College annual assessment reports or program reviews. As part of the ongoing assessment process, these requests are submitted to the UPC and scored using the Resources Prioritization and Allocation Rubric for Funding Requests (EI, 390). Funding requests are granted based on the rationale of the alignment to program/unit or College's annual assessment or program review, student learning objectives, outcome measures, and assessment data, while keeping financial sustainability in mind, in support of the institutional priority of continued evolution.

### Closing the Loop

Annual and five-year assessments of individual programs and units are reviewed by Colleges and Divisions for reflection and recommendations. Annual Division Assessment Reports and Recommendations (EI, 126) are submitted by the Division Vice Presidents for review by the UPC. Requests for resources, which emerge from these reports, are considered at an annual Closing the Loop meeting held by the UPC (EI, 104). The UPC prioritizes these requests using the Resource Prioritization and Allocation Rubric for Funding Requests (EI, 390) and submits them to the President.

This institution-wide Closing the Loop meeting also serves to alert University leaders and upper management of the critical needs at the institution, from which new initiatives are born. For example, in Fall 2020, Kean reconfigured the Office of Student Success and Retention (OSSR) into a new Division which boasts the Center for Advising, Persistence, and Success (CAPS) (EI, 115), which is open 12 hours per day to help students persist and succeed to degree completion. The new Division works in tandem with the Division of Enrollment Management, which runs a One-Stop student assistance center in a space adjacent to CAPS. These two Divisions work in concert with Academic Affairs and the Nancy Thompson Learning Commons to provide students with regular academic support targeted to their specific academic needs.

The primary goal of Kean's assessment processes, from the local program or unit level to the institution-wide Closing the Loop meeting, is to ensure continual improvement in realizing the University's Mission (EI, 1) and its Strategic Plan, goals and objectives (EI, 97). The students, faculty, staff, and administrators who participate in the assessment processes have a direct impact in moving the institution toward continual improvement. The assessment cycle culminates in an annual "Closing of the Loop," but it is the ongoing endeavor of planning, assessing, allocating resources, and planning again that moves the institution towards meeting its goals, which include continued evolution.

### Division of Finance

The Division of Finance oversees the Budget Office. In Spring 2021, the Division of Finance began exploring new finance and budget practices along with budgeting software that will allow for ease of analysis of the revenues and expenses associated with each program, major, and College. This data will help to guide decisions on resource allocation and cost containment. Additionally, the institution will establish a process that systematically captures both R2-related activities as well as associated revenue and cost data to support the sustainability of the University's R2 initiative. As of Spring 2021, the Division of Finance has also taken steps to incorporate a new Financial Planning and Analysis role, whose function is to bring clarity to the way funding is aligned to Kean's priorities and to make recommendations resulting from its assessment processes.

Through prudent and proactive fiscal planning, Kean continues to hold a strong financial net position and a consistent, healthy, and increasing year-end surplus, despite reduced state appropriations as evidenced in the annual audited financial statements for FY 2018-2020 (EI, 141, 140, 139). The reference to Kean's increases in net position can be found within the financial statements in the section titled "Statements of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position." Further evidence demonstrating Kean's strong financial position can be found in Kean's Standard & Poors' (S&P) bond rating of "A-" with an outlook of "stable" (EI 172, 171). As stated in the S&P rating letter, Kean's rating "reflects the University's continued strong operating margins and an enrollment profile that has remained fairly consistent for the rating, with no significant pressure, even in light of the COVID-19 pandemic." With S&P's rigorous standard to achieve a positive and stable outlook, it is relevant to compare Kean's stable outlook with its peer institutions in New Jersey who have mainly received an outlook of "negative" as of April 2021, as evidenced in the New Jersey Public Institution Bond Ratings (EI, 166). IPEDS Financial Data from 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 further show that even over the years that state appropriations were declining, Kean's net position, in contrast, was increasing.

### Finances

Assessment processes are directly linked to resource allocation, aligning financial planning and budgeting with the institution's Mission and goals through strategic budgeting and through the UPC's work in guiding the assessment processes of the University. In consultation with the President, funding amounts and initiatives are identified, with each initiative aligning to one or several goals found in the current Strategic Plan. The building of the annual budget and its processes are evidenced in the Budget Department Procedures Manual (EI, 187).

### Budget

The annual budget process is months long, beginning in January each year and ending when the final budget is approved by the BOT in June. Throughout this process, reports are provided showing a multi-year history and current trends in spending by department. As a preliminary budget is created, the Budget Office collaborates through planning discussions, meetings, and reporting with all administrative and academic units. Additionally, an annual tuition hearing (EI, 334) is held that is open to the public for feedback. The preliminary budget is reviewed by the President, who incorporates institutional priorities and initiatives. The budget is then finalized by the Board Finance Committee and ultimately approved by the BOT.

Kean has also prudently conventionalized, expanded, and better defined the allocation of annual fund balances as referenced in "BOT Resolution – Amended Distribution of Annual Fund Balance" (EI, 181). The guidelines, as originally set forth in December 2019 and amended in March 2021 by the BOT, authorize that the Emergency Reserve be at least 5% of the annual budget; that the University's Reserves include an amount equal to one year of debt

service payment; the creation of a Presidential Initiatives Fund with a starting balance of \$2.5 million; the creation of a Career Services and Student Retention and Development Fund with a starting balance of \$2 million; and that the University's Unrestricted E&G surplus not exceed 5% of the following year's annual operating budget.

### Outcomes-Based Funding

The State of New Jersey annually awards Kean University outcomes-based funding in recognition of its ability to help first-generation and other students with financial need achieve their dream of earning a college degree. Kean allocates outcomes-based funds by the guidelines as originally set forth in May 2020 and amended in March 2021 by the BOT. These actions authorize that all outcomes-based funding be invested in both student scholarships and other key initiatives designed to support student services and retention as evidenced in "BOT Resolution – Amended Use of Outcomes-Based Funding" (EI, 182).

### Student Fees

Kean has also apportioned revenues from its two mandatory student fees, namely the Capital Improvement Fee and the University Center Fee, to be used distinctly for capital improvement projects and debt service payments as well as improvements to the University's Miron Student Center. A breakdown of the usages, projections, and planning of these revenues can be found in Kean's annual analyses and can be referenced for 2020 and 2021 in the Analysis of Capital Improvement Fee vs. Expenses (EI, 183) and in the Analysis of University Center Fees vs. Expenses (EI, 184).

It is through its financial planning and funds allocation, led by the Division of Finance, that Kean University proudly maintains the lowest tuition and fees as a four-year public institution in the State of New Jersey, despite reduced state funding.

### Audit

The University also undergoes an annual independent audit review of its financial viability through the University's financial statements, which according to the institution's auditor are "presented fairly, in all material respects," as cited on the "Independent Auditor's Report" section of the Financial Statements (EI, 173, 174, 175). This classification is considered an "unqualified opinion," which is the highest opinion the University can receive.

In both FY 2019 and FY 2020 the auditor's report within the Financial Statements (EI, 173, 174, 175) did not include any findings or comments on internal control which would require follow up. Evidence of follow-up can be seen in the University's "FY 2018 WISS Financial Statements Audit – Management's Responsibilities" (EI, 139) which includes a management response addressing one finding regarding internal control. The management response was followed through in the subsequent year resulting in this finding being removed from the "FY 2019 WISS Financial Statements Audit – Management's Responsibilities" (EI, 140).

### Human Resources

Kean assesses the efficiency of its Human Resources (HR) unit through its hiring processes, staffing levels, the annual Faculty Position Request Process (EI, 160), and its efforts in professional development.

In Fall 2020, Kean employed 921 full-time faculty and staff and 971 adjunct faculty as detailed in the Institutional Research Fact Book for Fall 2020 (EI, 161). Needs for hired talent are continuously reviewed and assessed.

### Academic Affairs

At the beginning of the academic year, each College is asked to identify positions that will be needed for the following academic year. A Rationale for Faculty Position Request (EI, 16) is required information that includes five-year enrollment trends, enrollment projections, number of full-time faculty within the program, number of adjuncts assigned to courses in the preceding two semesters, and any other relevant information such as accreditation requirements. These requests are synthesized and prioritized by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and submitted to the University President for consideration. The President then confers with the Senior Vice President for Finance, and subsequently identifies positions to be advertised. When faculty resign, retire, or are not reappointed during the academic year, each College provides the same information in its request for a replacement position. Under the new administration, Colleges are preparing faculty staffing plans for any gaps in the 2021-2022 approved positions. This process can also be evidenced in the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs synthesized report "Faculty Position Requests, Analysis, and Recommendations 2021-2022" (EI, 160) and in the Senior Vice President for Finance's Memo to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs of approved faculty positions recommendations in 2021-2022 (EI, 162).

### Hiring Process

HR also instituted a new hiring process/portal that utilizes a Human Resource Information System (HRIS), Workday™, that went live in January 2021. The integrated HRIS includes the modules Core Human Capital Management, an applicant tracking for recruitment and processing of new hires, payroll management, time and attendance, compensation, benefits, and performance management. The system eliminates manual processes that previously existed within all areas of Human Resources. Within the recruiting module, the entire recruitment process has been automated from the beginning, when a request for a position is made, to the end, when an applicant is hired and onboarded within the system.

The hiring process starts when the request for a position, or job requisition, is entered into the HRIS, replacing a paper form and routed virtually through an approval chain. The requisition is sent to the Vice Presidents and Senior Vice Presidents for the respective requesting department, to the Budget Office for fund approval, and ultimately ends with the Senior Vice President for Finance to evaluate the position, the budget implications, and issuance of final approval. Once a position is approved, the job advertisement is posted on an enhanced job-posting site, where applicants can search open positions with key words and apply for the position directly from the posting. Additionally, the new posting site enables the University to share links for individual jobs and target the recruiting areas to specific demographics or publications. The University also partners with various job posting sites (e.g., Diverse Jobs.com, HigherEdJobs.com) to sweep and pull new postings, so the advertisements stay updated beyond an initial posting or single site, leading to larger pools of applicants and creating more opportunity to find skilled talent.

### Professional Development

Kean has always maintained a focus on professional development for learning and awareness and invested twice a year in weeklong events, titled, "Professional Development Days," with mandatory attendance requirements for faculty and staff (EI, 106). In Spring 2021 University leadership formed a Professional Development Committee charged with identifying a new professional development structure. The committee identified that learning should be ongoing with continued access to resources throughout the year and not dedicated to bi-annual, stand-alone events. The committee was separated into two working groups, one to highlight faculty needs and the other for administrative staff needs. A proposal was submitted to create a Professional Development Center that would provide

teaching innovation, development opportunities, a research and support center, employee education, and a staff development center (EI, 164). Each faculty member would be required to attend 30 hours of professional development each year with 25% being asynchronous participation.

### Procurement

Other processes that safeguard the financial position of the University include the procurement process for spend management as laid out in the Procurement Policy Manual (EI, 165), the Budget Amendment Form (EI, 168), the Capital Project Budget Request Form (EI, 167), and Kean's travel procedures as described in the Travel Manual (EI, 19). These processes also include senior levels of approvals and sign off from the Budget Office to ensure availability of funds.

### Space Utilization

Another important part of resource allocation is deciding how spaces at the University are utilized. The Office of the Registrar and the Division of Academic Affairs work together to provide a review of class offerings and analysis of operational efficiency by examining how courses are scheduled, faculty and adjuncts are assigned, low enrollment courses are canceled, and space is utilized. The University Course Scheduling Procedure, which is currently being evaluated to deliver further improvements, outlines these processes for the purpose of ensuring an effective use of resources (EI, 138).

Additionally, the Office of the Registrar has begun to utilize EMS Software™. EMS is a scheduling software that assists in maximizing the use of academic space on campus. While there is no lack of classroom space at Kean, space could be used much more efficiently allowing room for more events to be scheduled on campus, the opportunity to build new laboratories and/or enhanced learning spaces, and planning for future growth in enrollment. EMS will also allow the Office of the Registrar to use course attributes, like course type, enrollment, and instructional method, to program the software to optimize space utilization. This software is scheduled to be fully utilized in Spring 2022 to create the classroom assignments.

Space utilization is also a priority for the Office of Conference & Events Services, which provides an additional source of revenue by booking on-campus conferences, events and lodging to outside constituents. Additionally, residential room occupancy rates are reviewed to determine the adequacy of the number of student residential units. Kean currently holds 2,024 rooms within student housing in Union and 2,280 rooms in Wenzhou. Since Fall 2016, with the exception of the 2020-2021 COVID-19 year, room occupancy rates ranged from 87% to 94% (EI, 443).

### Systems Software

Kean University has leveraged the power of technology through software platforms that facilitate decision making and resource allocation. These platforms also help streamline processes and reduce workloads for faculty and staff.

Ellucian CRM Advise is a platform that provides a consistent, cohesive, and personalized approach to each student's success planning from first semester through graduation. This platform and its support of student success is discussed in greater detail in Standard IV.

Kean has also recently purchased Watermark, an Assessment Management System that launched in September 2021. Watermark will enrich assessment data collection processes and streamline the entire Annual Assessment cycle. Like CRM, Watermark facilitates the work of the University's most precious resource used to support students: faculty and staff.

In support of all of the aforementioned measures, purchasing guidelines (EI, 59) as documented in the Procurement Policy Manual (EI, 165) ensure the accountable use of University funds. Kean responsibility in spending and resource allocation is further evidenced by its ability to continuously expand and modernize its facilities and technological infrastructure, as explained in the section that follows.

### Infrastructure

Evidence for world-class facilities and technologies includes the construction of new buildings and significant renovation and improvement projects at all Kean locations. Many colleges and universities have challenges in deferred maintenance, and Kean University has done exceptionally well in providing students and faculty a great learning environment and community experience with a well-maintained campus and the best technologies needed to operate efficiently.

Maintaining the campus at Kean University in Union is a continuous process. The Facilities and Campus Planning group uses a multi-angled approach to prevent, limit, and resolve any issues that may arise. As an institution, Kean utilizes a work order system through the SchoolDude platform. This program allows facilities management to log all equipment and schedule preventive and routine maintenance. It also allows all end users at Kean to report different types of issues to facilities management. Issues could be related to anything on campus, such as a trip hazard, cleaning and painting needs, temperature inconsistencies, damaged tree limbs, and so on. Over 20,000 requester-initiated and system scheduled work orders are reported each year.

The facilities and campus planning group also monitors and routinely inspects every building once per week. With 24 academic buildings, this amounts to approximately five buildings per day. During these inspections, maintenance issues are noted, and work orders are created to address any observed and documented needs. These audits are done on a rotational basis, so that different staff members walk through each building in a different week. Having multiple staff members continuously inspect Kean buildings helps the institution stay ahead of potential mechanical problems and other facilities related issues (EI, 422).

### COVID-19 Response

One of the key indicators illustrating that the infrastructure at Kean University has been adequately maintained was in the Spring and Fall 2020 when classes turned to remote learning because of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, Kean made timely best efforts to transition to remote learning and remote work. Given the challenges associated with the need for limited occupancy and safe social distancing, necessary large-scale adjustments were made expeditiously across the entire University. Not only were scheduled classes shifted to alternative modalities and locations, but air filters were upgraded, cleaning routines were adjusted, plexiglass barriers were installed, traffic flow was modified, and technology support from the Office of Computer and Information Services (OCIS) adaptively responded to increased needs. Had institutional facilities not been maintained appropriately, Kean University would not have been able to accommodate all COVID-19 related challenges at a moment's notice. Technology was also a critical part of Kean's infrastructure that made its wide-scale institutional response to the pandemic a success (EI, 425).

### Technology

Kean's computing and network infrastructure is constantly evaluated and updated in line with institutional requirements. Examples include recent investments in infrastructure that resulted in upgrading the campus WiFi technology to WiFi v6 across all academic buildings on the Union campus (EI, 423). These investments also led



to roughly a dozen learning spaces being equipped with highly immersive technology that supports the University both from an in-person and remote-instruction perspective. Additional examples include maintaining a virtual lab infrastructure that allows students to access software programs that they would not readily have available to them off campus as well as transitioning to virtual contact centers to support students from an administrative perspective during highly remote times.

The institution maintains and supports its technological infrastructure in many ways. The most obvious is technical support for both in- and out-of-classroom requirements. The University runs a service desk that operates Monday through Saturday that responds to all technical issues both onsite and remotely. The institution also offers a 24-hour support service that focuses mainly on LMS-related needs (EI, 424).

### **The Office of Facilities and Campus Planning**

The Office of Facilities and Campus Planning (FCP) plays a critical role in infrastructure sustainability. FCP continuously meets with other groups within the University to discuss existing performance, needs, and future planning. Regular weekly meetings take place with Residential Student Services, Conference and Event Services, and other groups. As projects are explored, all stakeholders are involved to ensure every perspective is considered. For example, electricians are often involved in the layout of furniture that requires electricity, and HVAC technicians provide insight on system operations and layouts. FCP also maintains a comprehensive building inventory spreadsheet for deferred maintenance, which is updated bi-annually (EI, 142). This tool serves as an indicator for prioritizing necessary infrastructure projects. Additionally, FCP regularly collaborates with other Divisions at the institution. EHS is often consulted on day-to-day incidents and proposed renovation projects. All projects and on-site deliveries are coordinated with Fire Safety and Campus Security. And OCIS network and desktop support are integral to all new construction, reconfigurations, renovations, and relocations.

### **The Office of Computer and Information Services**

The Office of Computer and Information Services (OCIS) works closely with FCP and with many other campus areas, including academic leadership. OCIS personnel serve on many different governance groups, such as the UPC and the University Senate. Currently, multiple representatives work on a task force with academic leadership to review and assess needs around learning technologies, and specifically LMS technologies. OCIS is committed to providing high-quality technology services to students, faculty, and staff. With social equity in mind, the University and OCIS maintain a commitment to academic and economic accessibility to technological resources. Specifically, Kean University lends laptops to students as part of its focus on reducing the digital divide. During the COVID-19 pandemic, OCIS greatly increased the lending project so that students could successfully continue their studies remotely.

### **Sustainability**

Considerations of sustainability and deferred maintenance at Kean are addressed through the Facilities Master Plan (EI, 148), deferred maintenance log, and building analysis (EI, 142), energy efficiencies, environmental plans, and the technological management of equipment and software. A deferred maintenance fund is preserved precisely for this purpose. FCP maintains the deferred maintenance log and building analysis as it reviews and prioritizes work based on the needs of the institution. This log is the basis for short- and long-term campus planning to ensure all physical structures are safe and maintained.

### **Facilities Master Plan**

The Facilities Master Plan provides a comprehensive planning framework to guide future development and redevelopment at the University. The plan provides an analysis of existing conditions, a vision for development, as well as recommendations and guidelines to help Kean transition into a more unified and cohesive campus. The Facilities Master Plan also incorporates sustainable design standards (EI, 148).

### **Infrastructure Sustainability**

FCP executes modifications, renovations, or new buildings to sustain growth as well as education and enrollment needs for the University. In Spring 2021, FCP created a new scope of work to embark upon a new vision for 2030 (EI, 148) and is currently seeking proposals from architectural planning firms. The scope of work included a requirement for a five-year deferred maintenance planning schedule that allocates the funding needed each year.

A recent example demonstrating sustainable practices is in the FCP selection and installation of flooring products in both the Miron Student Center and in the Nancy Thompson Learning Commons. Choosing modern plank tiles with a prefinished surface offered a quicker installation time as well as a longer finish life, minimizing the times custodial staff must return to refinish and shine the floors.

Another planning consideration commonly used is in the selection of mechanical systems within buildings. Where possible, products and systems are kept consistent between buildings. This allows for efficient stocking and sourcing of parts and materials, and it allows HVAC and plumbing staff members to efficiently learn and understand equipment across the entire campus. This practice is also utilized in Kean's Fire Protection systems.

### **Reducing Kean's Carbon Footprint**

A key aspect of Kean's sustainability efforts is to reduce its carbon footprint. Kean's plans and programs as it relates to climate and environmental health and safety can be evidenced in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (EI, 143), Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan (EI, 144), Spill Prevention and Control & Countermeasure Plan (EI, 145), and the Respiratory Protection Program (EI, 146). These plans provide clear documentation, instructions, and accountability for ensuring the protection of the atmosphere and environment and speak to the institutional priority of upstanders by incorporating the importance of community responsibility within the institution's operations.

### **Food Scrap Composting Laboratory**

The Food Scrap Composting Laboratory (FSCL) reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills and creates a nutrient-rich soil amendment for use on campus. Since 2010, Kean has recycled more than 579,540 pounds of food scraps and 145,000 pounds of scrap wood chips through composting. This has saved approximately \$40,000 in landfill tipping fees and reduced carbon emissions at the institution by 62 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> (metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent) over landfilling the material. Food waste is collected from campus eateries and delivered to the greenhouse, where student workers support the composting process. It also includes wood shavings from local woodworking plants that would otherwise end up in a landfill.

Additionally, the FSCL laboratory is an integral part of the School of Environmental Science and Sustainability's curriculum. This laboratory is visited regularly by science classes, and its compost is used in research. Tours are offered to any interested group, including schools and colleges and state and local government.

In line with its environmental sustainability and recycling efforts, Kean has been awarded a \$95,000 New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection research grant for a project entitled, An Institutional Wide Educational Campaign and Research to Promote Food Waste Recycling and Composting that began in Fall 2021 (EI, 442). Kean has further adopted a single-stream recycling program, a system that has been shown to increase recycling rates by allowing consumers to commingle recyclables in the same container. In 2019, Kean collected approximately 960 tons of commingled recyclables, resulting in a savings of over \$100,000 in landfill tipping fees, and reduced emissions by 2739 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> over landfilling the material.

### Shuttle Bus Transportation

The State of New Jersey has leveraged proceeds from participation in the Regional GreenHouse Gas Initiative and the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust Fund to provide \$100 million in grants to reduce emissions in various state sectors. In 2021, Kean University received \$1,950,000 of grant funding to modernize the existing shuttle bus transportation system. The project includes seven Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) that will replace the gas-powered shuttle and transit fleet. Industry studies show that fuel mileage for ZEV buses bring a cost of \$.28 per mile as opposed to \$.55 per mile for diesel buses, nearly a 50% savings (EI, 441). Experience from organizations that operate both electric and gasoline-powered vehicles on the same routes achieve a 74% savings on maintenance costs over the life of the vehicles. This project will have a beneficial impact on the University, the local culture and atmosphere, and long-term trends in greenhouse gas emissions.

### Technological Operations

Kean's efforts in sustainability and deferred maintenance can also be shown within its technological operations. When acquiring new equipment, extended warranties that will cover the useful life of equipment are often considered to limit exposure to future maintenance costs. Kean also uses standardized technology equipment where possible to reduce costs (i.e., workstation, network equipment, etc.). From a sustainability standpoint, Kean invested in power over ethernet (PoE) switching equipment that allows the University to be more efficient with its power consumption by powering devices such as desktop phones, network access points, and some lighting systems on campus without the need for separate power feeds. This results in both operational and capital spending efficiencies. Lastly, the University has been transitioning many of its systems to cloud architecture, which limits the deferred maintenance exposure of costly hardware upgrades and/or repairs. An example of such would be the Workday™ HRIS implementation.

Deposits to the Deferred Maintenance Fund are in accordance with the financial management of year-end surpluses with an allocation of 25% as cited in the Board Resolution – Amended Distribution of Annual Fund Balance (EI, 181).

### Kean Skylands

Kean Skylands serves as another instructional site and is subject to environmental ordinances, sitting on 40 acres within an 1100-acre State Park in Jefferson Township, New Jersey. Kean renovated an existing 30,000-square-foot former abbey to serve as the campus' main building, the Lodge. The Lodge has nine classrooms, laboratory space, a gym, 24 residential rooms and flexible space for events. A second building, the Cabin, was constructed and is nestled among the trees and boasts impressive views of the park with its floor to ceiling windows. The Cabin has three levels of flexible classroom space and an open observation deck crowning the building. In addition, there is an elevated, three-level skywalk between the buildings that includes two outdoor classrooms and event space (EI, 252).

The Skylands site is intended to serve as an environmental education center for individuals of all ages in the surrounding community as well as offer Kean University courses: students can complete academic requirements for a Bachelor of Science degree in biology (environmental option), a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice, a Bachelor of Science degree in management (general business option), and a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology.

### Continuous Improvement

The Strategic Plan serves as the University roadmap, guiding the University's general direction and providing actionable steps in accomplishing its goals. The UPC is responsible for assessing the accomplishments of each University strategic plan. A summary report for the Kean University 2013-2020 Strategic Plan was prepared from individual detailed reports of cumulative achievements for each of the goals. The current Strategic Plan, Beyond 2020: the 2020-2025 Kean University Strategic Plan, carries forward many successful initiatives launched under the previous Plan.

### Assessment and Alignment

Under the previous Strategic Plan, Kean University made great strides in cultivating a culture of assessment. The assessment processes became regularized and refined. The recent creation of IE working in parallel with OAA, has provided focused guidance on the assessment of non-academic units that are vital to the institution. The planning and reporting templates outline implementation, milestones, measurements, results, outcomes, professional development needs, and budget requests, which, when approved, identify specific actions to be undertaken by the unit and Division.

### Financial Stability

The strength of the current financial position of the University is a product of efforts previously undertaken under the 2013-2020 Strategic Plan. Fundraising accomplished by a new administrative structure of the Kean University Foundation secured Kean's ability to increase support for students and programs. In the past five years, the total fund balance for the Kean Foundation has increased by 142%. As the cornerstone of the University budget, the Division of Enrollment Services sets ambitious enrollment goals so that tuition revenue remains sufficiently strong. The BOT maintains the University's position by approving conservative tuition increases and new fee structures. Under the new administration and the current 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, the University will continue to strive to maintain financial stability to successfully face future challenges. Currently, the Division of Finance is creating more visibility and transparency within the budget process to provide better analyses of revenues and expenses generated by each unit, program, major, and College that is systematic, reasonable, consistent, and clear.

# Standard VII



## GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION



### STANDARD STATEMENT

The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational systems, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

### Satisfactorily Met the Standard and Criteria

A review of the five criteria established by Middle States as measures of Standard VII compliance indicates that the University satisfactorily meets these criteria, and the narrative that follows will highlight evidence to document how Kean meets this Standard.

### Governing Body

Kean University, as a New Jersey public comprehensive university, is governed by an independent Board of Trustees (BOT), appointed by the New Jersey Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. The Higher Education Restructuring Act of 1994 replaced the former Board of Higher Education (BHE) and Department of Higher Education (DHE) to decentralize institutional governance, shifting responsibilities from the state to the individual colleges and universities. The BHE and DHE were replaced with a Commission on Higher Education, a Presidents' Council, and Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, each with a clearly established structure and set of responsibilities.

The BOT recruits, employs, and annually reviews the University President, who serves as the University's Chief Executive Officer and oversees all activities related to management of the institution. The divisional structure of the University is clearly delineated on the Organizational Chart and includes seven Senior Vice Presidents who have direct responsibility for the functional areas of University operation (EI, 163).

### Transition in Leadership

On May 11, 2020 following a comprehensive national search, Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D., was selected as the 18th President of Kean University by the Board of Trustees. He succeeded Dawood Farahi, Ph.D., who served in this role from 2003-2020.

Dr. Repollet served two and a half years as the Commissioner of Education under New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy before becoming Kean's President. In his first year (2020-2021), he initiated a year of discovery, meeting with all major constituencies, clearly demonstrating a willingness to work collaboratively and focusing on the future direction for Kean University. Additionally, he initiated a transparent communications program with the campus community including weekly campus-wide updates and student-focused question and answer Town Hall meetings. The weekly messages provide updates on pressing issues, information about upcoming events and initiatives, and congratulatory remarks on the achievements of employees and students alike.

### Governance Structure

The University's governance structure engages several internal comprehensive committees, including the Board of Trustees, President and Cabinet, and the University Senate. In addition, the University Planning Council (UPC) is responsible for writing, implementing, and assessing the University's Strategic Plan by establishing measurable goals, objectives, and indicators of institutional effectiveness. The UPC is a broad-based governing body that draws its membership from appointed and elected constituencies throughout the campus. The UPC ensures that all major plans, decisions, and initiatives are consistent with the Mission of the institution and the current Strategic Plan (EI, 104). Student governance bodies include the Student Organization as well as the Graduate and Part-time Student Council (EI, 133).

Kean University also adheres to collective bargaining agreements with unionized labor constituents represented by the Kean Federation of Teachers (KFT), Kean University Adjunct Faculty Federation (KUAFF), Communication Workers of America (CWA), the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association (NJSPBA), the New Jersey Law Enforcement Supervisors Association (NJLESA), and the New Jersey Superior Officers Law Enforcement Association (NJSOLEA).

### Board of Trustees

The Higher Education Restructuring Act of 1994 empowers the Board of Trustees (BOT) with responsibility for the governance of their institutions. Kean's BOT is charged with responsibility for and oversight of the University's Mission. Board members are appointed for a term of six years. There are 15 appointed members of the Board and two student trustees, annually elected by the student body.

Steve Fastook was recently appointed Chair of the BOT. He is an award-winning media production executive in network entertainment, sports, and news. Fastook is currently Senior Vice President of Operations for CNBC, responsible for production and operations of the network. In 2006, Fastook received an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Kean University. He formerly served as Chair of the Kean University Foundation Board of Directors and sits on the board of the International Radio and Television Society, an organization dedicated to enhancing education for media students.

The BOT is responsible for institutional policy and planning, and financial planning and decisions. It oversees legal affairs, directs planning, establishes tuition and fee structures, sets admissions criteria, confirms degree requirements and academic programming, confirms certain personnel decisions, stewards financial investments, fundraising and budgeting, and guides improvements to the physical campuses (EI, 66). It also documents institutional outcomes and reporting and interacts with the state for support.

The BOT, in accordance with the provisions of the State budget and appropriations acts of the New Jersey State Legislature, appoints and approves the compensation of the President of the University, who is the University's chief executive officer and Board's adviser, and an ex-officio member of the Board. All communications to the Board are transmitted through the President of the University except as the Chairperson of the Board shall invite communications (EI, 66).

### President of the University and Administration

The President serves at the pleasure of the BOT. As noted in the BOT by-laws, the executive leadership, responsibility, and management of the University is delegated to and vested in the President of the University to achieve its Mission and goals. The President has the general responsibility for the leadership and management of the University

in achieving its Mission, objectives and purpose – including instruction, research, and service – in accordance with the policies of the Board, the laws of the state and the resources of the institution. All administrators at the University directly or indirectly report to the President (EI, 66).

The University is a comprehensive workplace with main Divisions in Research, Planning, Finance, Administration, External Affairs, Academic Affairs, Entrepreneurial Education Initiatives, Student Affairs, Enrollment Services, Student Success and Retention, and University Relations. The functional Divisions and associated offices work together to achieve the Mission of the University, further the Strategic Plan and make recommendations to the President (EI, 66).

### University Senate

The University Senate is a 30-member elected body of faculty, staff, librarians, and administrators (EI, 103). The Senate and its elected and appointed committees communicate recommendations to the President on such matters as faculty affairs, curriculum, instruction, student affairs, finances, and other matters relevant to the welfare of Kean University.

In the spirit of shared governance, the members of the various committees of the University Senate, agencies, and administration work together as active participants in the development of University policies and programs. The University's Strategic Plan is one example of broad campus input and shared decision making leading to consensus on future direction and new initiatives, with emphasis on supporting and amplifying diversity in the workforce. Campus constituents embrace the shared benefits and responsibilities guiding the University on its path to excellence.

### Faculty and Staff

Roles and responsibilities of full-time employees with faculty, librarian and professional staff titles are articulated by relevant labor agreements. Tenured or tenure-track faculty have defined teaching loads with associated non-teaching duties in scholarly research and/or creative enterprises, service to the University community, and advising and mentoring of students in their respective programs. All full-time faculty, librarians, professional staff, and administrators are members of the University Senate constituency. The Senate constitution forms the basis for organizing faculty to participate effectively in the governance process. The Senate is the principal agent in the faculty governance process. The Senate serves as the forum for formulation and discussion of educational policy. Directly or through appropriate committee structures, faculty participate in the selection of the President, Vice President s, Deans, Directors, and other officers (EI, 104, 292). Faculty governance beneath the college level varies.

### Students

Kean University is focused on inspiring students to be upstanders, helping those in need and fostering a sense of civic engagement, community responsibility, and integrity in all campus life experiences. Student participation is integral to Kean's governance structure. The student body is represented broadly through participation on the BOT, Student Organization (the umbrella organization for undergraduate student groups), Graduate and Part-time Student Council, and on numerous committees across the institution (EI, 133).

On the Board of Trustees, two student trustees are elected by the students; the primary student Trustee has one vote, and the alternate student trustee serves as non-voting. The student Trustees attend and participate in BOT meetings and business of the BOT except where specifically prohibited by law (EI, 66). Student trustees also serve on the Student and University Affairs Committee.

**Transparency**

Transparency of action occurs at each level of governance. At the BOT level, all meetings are held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (EI, 66). Notices informing the public of the date, time, and location of the BOT meetings are published with local print media channels as well as on the University website. The minutes remain available on the website for two years, and then they are archived and available upon request from the Board. Copies of Board resolutions are distributed at every public meeting, sent to the offices of all bargaining units on campus, shared with the University Senate and governing boards of Kean's host communities, and are available upon request from the BOT Office (EI, 66).

**President's Office**

The University President embraces and engages in a transparent leadership role that invites participation, feedback and engagement from all members of the campus community and the many community audiences served.

The President delivers an Opening Day Address at the start of each academic year to share goals for the year with the entire campus community as well as a status report on initiatives undertaken in the previous academic year.

The President embraces a transparent communications program with the campus community that includes a weekly campus-wide communique and periodic student focused Town Hall meetings. President Repollet also maintains an active schedule, speaking at on- and off-campus events that are hosted by the University and outside stakeholders. He has held gatherings for faculty and staff at the President's residence, Kean House, and has worked side-by-side with student volunteers at regularly scheduled food drives. Dr. Repollet has also forged partnerships with the County of Union and school districts throughout the state in support of mutually beneficial programs and initiatives.

In addition, the President embraces transparency through regularly scheduled labor-management meetings attended by the President and Chief of Staff, Provost, and University labor counsel.

**Budget**

The development of the annual budget and the setting of tuition and fees use transparent measures that flow through multiple levels in Kean's governance structure. At the onset, the creation of the budget involves all academic and administrative units where each is provided an annual budget report related to their areas that includes four years of historical data and an opportunity to provide input into their next year's budget in a meeting with the Senior Vice President for Finance and the Budget Director. With this information and other financial assumptions, such as predictive student enrollment, a preliminary budget is created that includes a recommended rate for tuition and fees. The proposed budget is reviewed by the President who incorporates institutional priorities and initiatives (EI, 187).

**Tuition**

As a measure of promoting transparency, a public tuition hearing is set prior to BOT approval. The Divisions of Finance and Student Affairs work together in holding this event and announce to all students, faculty, and staff the upcoming tuition hearing date through an email blast and social media platforms. At the hearing, the proposed budget and tuition and fees are presented and the rationale for the proposed changes are discussed. At the June BOT meeting, the budget is finalized by the BOT Finance Committee and tuition and fees are ultimately approved by the

BOT. In another measure of transparency, the annual budget and tuition and fee rates are published on the Kean website for all constituents to view (EI, 363).

Kean University has structures and processes in place to support the work of the BOT to serve the public interest through broadly announced meetings and dedicated public sessions. The public may put forth questions to the Board and speak during the public session of meetings (EI, 66).

**Mission**

The institution clearly states its Mission through internal and external communications channels such as the University website, Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs, and through alignment with the University Strategic Plan. Each specialized standing committee of the BOT maintains oversight of different aspects of the Strategic Plan (EI, 66). These nine committees include Academic Policy and Programs; Audit; Facilities and Maintenance; Finance; Governance; Legal and Personnel; Student and University Affairs; Nominating; and External Relations. The BOT may also add, alter or abolish standing committees as needed (EI, 66). The BOT maintains a fiduciary responsibility to the University through members' compliance with and adherence to the BOT Code of Ethics (EI, 66). The BOT is accountable for maintaining the academic quality, planning, and fiscal well-being of the University. The BOT acts principally through standing committees, a quarterly review of accreditation, annual review of the University Strategic Plan, annual academic and administrative assessment reports, and the annual University Profile compiled by the Office of Institutional Research.

**Board of Trustees**

The Board strives to ensure its membership is reflective of the students and constituencies it serves and contains the expertise needed to succeed in this field. The Governance Committee reviews recommendations for Trustees, recognizing, however, that the Governor has the ultimate authority to nominate persons to the Board. The Higher Education Restructuring Act of 1994 empowers the Board to recommend appointment of Trustees to the Governor with Senate's consent (EI, 66).

Board members are selected with relevant experience and expertise with biographical information posted on the University website. The Trustees work together, collaboratively, to bring their various expertise to discussions and decision making and work hard to reach consensus on important issues that shape the institution. In addition, new Trustees are offered a comprehensive orientation program upon appointment (EI, 293). Trustees are invited to participate in the Association of Governing Boards annual conference. The Board demonstrates accountability to the institution chiefly through its BOT Code of Ethics (EI, 66).

In their roles as Trustees, members must remain free of political and financial influence and even the appearance of external interference (EI, 66, 237). The BOT safeguards this responsibility through numerous checkpoints: a State mandated Public Officer Financial Disclosure Form (EI, 289), an annual Conflict of Interest form (EI, 288), and mandatory ethics training at the state level. In matters where a potential conflict of interest could arise, the members must recuse themselves, with the recusals recorded in the public minutes (EI, 66).

**Separation of Powers**

The BOT and the administration are able to separate their roles and functions through the vertical alignment of governing and administrative powers. Trustees are guided to direct all questions about day-to-day operations of the University through the Board Office and/or the President. All communications to the Board shall be transmit-

ted through the President of the University, except as the Chairperson of the Board shall invite communications. The BOT Code of Ethics elucidates the role of the Board as a policymaking body and to avoid participation in the administration of policy. The BOT also understands that the President of the University is the agent of the Board in the conduct of institutional affairs and serves as the formal channel of communication to the faculty, staff, and student body.

As described in the University's Organizational Chart, the President serves as chief executive with the BOT as the governing body. Assisted by the Chief of Staff and Executive Director for Board Operations, the President works directly with seven senior members of his administration, including the Provost/Senior VP for Academic Affairs, Senior VP for Research, Senior VP for Planning and Special Counsel to the President, Senior VP for Finance, Senior VP for Administration, Senior VP for Entrepreneurial Education Initiatives, and Senior VP for External Affairs (EI, 163). These Senior Vice Presidents are in charge of academic and administrative units, which oversee the daily operational activities of the University through a comprehensive substructure of offices and programs.

Beyond the vertical alignment of governing and administrative powers, as indicated by the Organizational Chart, are other broad-based committees at Kean University that have decision making capability at the institution. Prominent among these is the University Senate which "communicates recommendations to the President on such matters as faculty affairs, curriculum, instruction, student affairs, and other matters relevant to the welfare of Kean University" (EI, 103).

### Academic Policy and Procedures

The BOT utilizes a strategic committee structure to oversee operations at the policy level. With regard to quality of teaching and learning, the BOT's Academic Policy and Programs (APP) Committee meets at least four times per academic year (September, December, March, and May) to consider academic issues impacting the quality of teaching and learning as well as the approval of new degree programs. The quality of teaching and learning is ensured by this committee's review of all faculty personnel recommendations by the President, such as hiring, reappointment, sabbatical, range adjustment, promotion, and tenure. This committee also considers personnel actions of academic staff who are responsible for the day-to-day operations of each academic program, including Executive Directors and Deans. The BOT is briefed annually on reappointment criteria, the faculty and staff promotions process, and sabbatical leave procedures (EI, 66).

### Curriculum

The quality of curriculum is ensured by the BOT APP Committee by review and action of all new degree programs after consideration and recommendation by the faculty that includes the General Education Curriculum Committee, the College Curriculum Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, the University Senate and final review by the Provost/SVPAA and the President. The aforementioned committees also include members representing the University Senate and the Kean Federation of Teachers. If approved, the BOT will issue a resolution supporting the new degree program to be submitted along with a Program Approval Document to the statewide Academic Issues Committee (AIC) of the New Jersey Presidents Council (NJPC). The AIC of the NJPC serves as peer review by the Presidents or their designee of institutions of higher learning throughout the state. If recommended by the statewide AIC and approved by the NJPC, new degree programs are then submitted to the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education for final approval (EI, 287).

### Teaching and Learning

The quality of teaching and learning is also monitored by the BOT APP committee through discussion of regular academic program review conducted by faculty and staff, matters of accreditation for academic programs accredited by professional organizations that include assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs), and program learning outcomes that are aligned with the University's Mission.

### Research Support

Discussion and review of internal research support and engagement, external funding to support faculty mentoring of students engaged in research, student services and professional development also contribute to the BOT APP Committee's oversight of the quality of teaching and learning by monitoring the quality of learning outside of the classroom (EI, 66).

### Finance and Audit

Pertaining to assurance of strong fiscal management, the BOT convenes the Finance and Audit Committee, has full access to quarterly financial reports, reviews the Annual Financial Audit, and adopts the audit's findings during the public session of BOT meetings. The BOT Finance Committee considers recommendations for funding that support teaching and learning, such as technology upgrades in classrooms and laboratories, and scholarly resources for classroom teaching and student and faculty research, including but not limited to academic software, computer and information services, physical and electronic books and electronic journals and monographs (EI, 66).

### Awarding of Degrees

Approval of awarding degrees is monitored by the University Registrar through degree audits of each candidate for graduation that may include evaluation of transfer credits from other institutions.

### Appointment and Evaluation of the President

The appointment of a new President occurred most recently in 2020. Kean has had 18 leaders in its 166-year history. In Kean's earliest days as a Normal School, those leaders were principals. In 1937, the institution became New Jersey State Teachers College, and its first president was appointed.

In the present era, the search for a new president generally begins by choosing a national, independent search firm to assist in the search process. The Executive Committee of the BOT interviews various firms and reviews their credentials. The committee recommends the hiring of a firm at a public meeting of the BOT, and the BOT votes publicly on the selection. Under the guidance of the search firm, a prospectus for the position of President and candidate profile are created with input from various campus constituencies. Once completed, the prospectus is posted for public review. The Board Chair selects various leaders, stakeholders, and constituents for prospective committee members, interviews all potential candidates for the search committee, and then appoints the Presidential Search Committee (PSC). The PSC members are representatives of the Kean University community, including Trustees, faculty, staff, alumni and students (EI, 286). Once the finalist has been selected, the Board of Trustees considers and approves the appointment and compensation of the President.

### Evaluation

The Executive Committee reviews the contractual conditions annually, makes recommendations and submits the recommendations for BOT approval. The Executive Committee comprises the Board Chair (who shall Chair the Committee), Vice-Chair, Secretary, and additional appointees from the Standing Committees' Chair persons. The Chair of the BOT makes the appointment of the other appointees. The Executive Committee has a minimum of four members but is not to exceed five members. During an executive session, the BOT will annually conduct an informal evaluation of the President, outlining the ensuing year's goals. A formal evaluation of the President is conducted every four years. The BOT appoints an external evaluator with the approval of the President. The Board can evaluate the President more frequently if deemed necessary (EI, 66).

### Good Practice

The BOT ensures that it is informed in all of its operations by principles of good practice through multiple measures. By statute, the role of the BOT for New Jersey state colleges and universities is to ensure self-governance, free from partisanship (EI, 66). The BOT ensures that Kean University's Mission represents the public's need and interest in higher education and does not represent individual constituencies. The Board is responsible for creating and implementing policies in accordance with the Mission of the University (EI, 66). Furthermore, the BOT and its respective committees hold meetings in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-7 et seq. This enables all community members to bring information to the Board's attention. The BOT benefits from the work of its nine standing committees, each focusing on areas of importance for BOT oversight. The BOT also benefits from engagement with the student Trustees, each invited to participate in the full BOT meetings and the Student and University Affairs standing committee (EI, 66). The BOT members subscribe to the Code of Ethics as defined in the BOT Bylaws (EI, 66) as well as the State Uniform Code of Ethics. Kean's BOT is a member of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), a national organization for college and university board members. The AGB provides many support services, workshops, trainings, and data briefings.

### Freedom from Conflict of Interest (COI)

As stewards of a public institution of higher learning, Kean Trustees are briefed during an onboarding orientation, and annually, on Conflict of Interest (COI) regulations and policies. Board members are required to annually update their COI reporting forms with the state Ethics Office and to engage in annual ethics training. Additionally, Trustees must review the University vendor list annually and certify that no conflict exists. The Executive Director of the Office of the BOT and the University's Ethics Liaison Officer (ELO) confirm their filings each year with the state. The Trustees are required to complete a series of online or in-person trainings each year, per the statute. At the beginning of each academic year, BOT members are advised by Kean University Counsel and the ELO of the requirements to recuse themselves in writing on matters that constitute or may appear to constitute a conflict of interest. To avoid a conflict of interest, the BOT members are asked to excuse themselves from conversations on the matter and recuse themselves publicly from a vote (EI, 66).

The New Jersey Conflicts of Interest Law (N.J.S.A. 52:13D-12 et seq.), the rules of the State Ethics Commission (N.J.A.C. 19:61-1.1 et seq.) as well as the University's Code of Ethics contain standards that apply to the Trustees in their official capacity (EI, 268, 237, 236). As the University's governing Board, members must file related forms as well as financial disclosure forms annually with the State of New Jersey Ethics Commission (EI, 289).

### Autonomy

Inculcated in the oath of office, all Trustees endorse the University's Mission and work to support the President to ensure that all actions and decision making stays true to both the Mission and the vision for the institution. Additionally, Trustees participate in ethics training annually that clearly defines their responsibility as state officers to protect the institution from undue influences and conflicts of interest (EI, 237, 268). As an independent body that provides general policy oversight of the University, the BOT supports the President by adopting policies and making financial decisions that reflect a commitment to the Mission of the University and its commitment to excellence, equity, and evolution (EI, 66). Prominent examples include the creation of the Division of Student Success and Retention; expanded scholarship funding; creation of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) office; hiring of Equity in Action Postdoctoral Fellows; and a comprehensive plan to pursue Carnegie research institution (R2) designation.

### Relevant Credentials for the President of Kean University

A Kean alumnus and former member of the Board of Trustees, Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D. came to the presidency after serving as the Commissioner of Education under New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy. During his time as commissioner, he and his team worked to expand early childhood education; promote a school culture that embraces social and emotional learning; and strengthen STEM opportunities for students. During his tenure, New Jersey's public schools were ranked number one in the nation in the Education Week "Quality Counts 2019" report, which captures key data to assess a state's educational performances. Dr. Repollet worked closely with Governor Murphy as New Jersey's public school children shifted to remote education amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2014 to 2018, Dr. Repollet served as Superintendent of the Asbury Park School District. In his early days on the job, he carried a white hard hat to send a message that together with staff and students, they would rebuild the schools. He implemented new instructional and organizational approaches in the district, including a pre-K to grade 12 Literacy Intervention and Leadership Development initiative. This, along with other programs, helped increase the graduation rate by 30%. Previously, he served as principal of Carteret High School, where his leadership garnered national recognition, earning him a reputation for decreasing the achievement gap.

Dr. Repollet has long ties to Kean, having earned his master's degree in educational administration from the University in 2000. He served on the Kean Board of Trustees from 2011 until 2018, assuming the role of Secretary as well as Chair of the Academic Policy and Programs Committee. While on the Board, he visited Wenzhou, China in 2012 when Wenzhou-Kean University first opened and returned again to speak at WKU's second commencement in 2017.

Dr. Repollet has earned honors and recognition from numerous organizations. In 2018, he was honored as an Outstanding Human Rights Educator by Kean's Human Rights Institute. Most recently he received the 2019 Medal of Excellence for Distinguished Service from The College of Education at Rowan University, the 2019 Trailblazer Award from the Innovation for Equity Summit, and the 2019 Conclave Image Award from Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

In addition to his Kean master's degree, Dr. Repollet received his Bachelor of Arts in communication from The College of New Jersey and a Doctorate in Education from Nova Southeastern University (EI, 333).

Having a working knowledge of BOT structure, bylaws, and operations as a former Trustee, as well as being a Kean alumnus, Dr. Repollet is uniquely qualified to lead the University. His experience and expertise make him an extraordinary leader for Kean.

### Presidential Authority and Staffing Powers

The powers of the President are specifically defined in the BOT bylaws and provide broad authority of executive leadership, responsibility, and management of the University in achieving its Mission, objectives, and purpose, including instruction and service in accordance with the policies of the Board, the laws of the state, and the resources of the institution. The President retains the authority to sign documents on behalf of the Board pursuant to the policies of the Board, state regulation, and statute (EI, 66). The President has the authority to develop and implement institutional plans. A timely example of this authority was demonstrated during the recent operational challenges created by the global pandemic. The President exercised his authority in the implementation of an institutional restart plan affecting all Divisions of the University. Related to staffing the organization, academic and non-academic Division leadership makes hiring recommendations to the respective Senior Vice Presidents and ultimately to the President for approval.

### Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness

The President maintains organizational authority for institutional efficiency and effectiveness through organizational structure and accountability. Reporting directly to the President, the Senior Vice President for Administration oversees an Office of Institutional Effectiveness and an Office of Accreditation and Assessment. These offices provide annual assessment data from academic and non-academic programs at the institution. All Divisions engage in thorough annual reviews of associated activities within the Division (EI, 163, 80, 77, 76). Institutional activities must demonstrate alignment with the University Mission and Strategic Plan (EI, 1, 97). Numerous cabinet, divisional, and departmental meetings occur regularly throughout the academic year by University constituents to contribute to institutional efficiency and effectiveness. Summative reporting is provided quarterly by the President to the BOT.

### Organizational Structure and Reporting Relationships

A 15-member Board of Trustees oversees University policy and selects and empowers the President of the University, who serves as the chief executive of the institution. The President has both a Cabinet and Executive Team who serve as the primary managers of various Divisions and initiatives. The Cabinet includes the Chief of Staff, seven Senior Vice Presidents and two Deputy Chiefs of Staff. It is responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of University policy as directed by the President, as well as emergent and/or emergency matters. The Executive Team includes seven Vice Presidents, the CEO of Kean Foundation, Inc., two Special Assistants to the President, all of the University's Deans, and three representatives from other key areas of leadership. This unit is responsible for managing and reporting on many of the critical daily functions of the University, ranging from student accounting to institutional assessment data to admissions and student success. All academic units report to the University Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs through the University's Deans, Executive Directors, and Chairs who are responsible for managing their respective Colleges, schools and programs (EI, 163).

In 2021, the University transitioned to Workday, a digital human resources platform streamlining all activities related to the hiring, development, and retention of staff. All reporting relationships, from entry level to chief executive, are clearly articulated and maintained through this platform (EI, 332).

### Administrator Credentials

Kean ensures that its administrative members possess the appropriate qualities, skills, and characteristics through the requisite skill sets posted in each job description and a competitive hiring process. The Office of Human Resources runs background checks, confirms degrees, and checks that the requirements established in the posted job title are met by the candidates. Administrators are also subject to an array of annual mandatory trainings related to professional development (Ethics, DEI, HR managerial, Student Advisement, Assessment, Workday, Interfolio, etc.). Administrators at Kean are not represented by labor agreements and serve as “no limit” employees of the institution.

Administrators have regular engagement with faculty through shared governance committees, including the University Planning Council and University Senate (EI, 104, 103). Administrators also serve as event hosts, student group advisors, and workshop facilitators to student groups. The President of the University, as the chief administrator, has regular contact with students formally through the President's Advisory Council and student-focused Town Hall meetings held every semester (EI, 285, 284).



# Conclusion



The Kean University described in these pages is an institution finding new ways to pursue a 166-year-old mission of access, excellence, and equity. Building on transformative changes in the University's physical plant during the first two decades of this century, Kean is poised to realize its goal of achieving Carnegie R2 status, newly propelled by its formal designation in November 2021 as New Jersey's first Urban Research Institution. These advancements in the University's capacity to produce distinguished scholarship engage all stakeholders: faculty, students, staff, and the many communities Kean serves beyond the campus. They elevate its constituencies' perspectives as they develop their ability to shape the scholarly landscape that defines academic excellence. That will in turn broaden students' academic and career choices and give them more ways to benefit from a mission largely unchanged in spirit while profoundly amplified in practice.

All of this requires significant change in everything from the size and character of the faculty to the quality and effectiveness of policies. Roughly 20% of all tenure-track faculty now teaching at Kean were hired to those roles in September 2021; by Fall 2022, more than a third of the tenure-track faculty will be new. To make them successful – and to ensure that their success translates into improved outcomes for students and alumni – the University is reorganizing itself and building its capacity to measure the results of all of the interventions undertaken, from curriculum to advisement to scholarship support and administrative structure. There has never been a more exciting time to be at Kean in any role.

Kean University submits this Self-Study grateful for the opportunity to reflect on its endeavors and to bring together in one place all of the many initiatives undertaken to ensure that the mission launched in the middle of the 19th century has adapted in all the ways it must to be compelling and relevant for the middle of the 21st century.



Group	Members
<b>Standard I: Mission and Goals</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Pat Ippolito, Associate Professor, College of Education; Maryam Raja, Director, High School Partnership Office</p> <p>Members: Joe Amorino, Program Coordinator, Fine Arts; Conseula Bonillas, Professor, College of Education; Laretta Farrell, Director, Human Rights Institute; Elvis Gyan, Associate Director, Center for Advising, Persistence and Success; David Joiner, Associate Professor, STEM; Jennifer Lerner, Associate Professor, School of Psychology; Jane O'Brien, Lecturer and Coordinator, School of Psychology, Kean Ocean; Christina Vazquez, Acting Associate Director, Kean Ocean Admissions; Bridget White, Managing Assistant Director, General Education, Math; Sharon McKenzie, Assistant Professor, College of Education; Lindsey Gonzalez, Undergraduate Business Management Major and Student Organization President</p>
<b>Standard II: Ethics and Integrity</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Claire Mulry, Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Entry Level Doctorate Programs; Christine Thorpe, Dean, Nathan Weiss Graduate College</p> <p>Members: Laura Haelig, OPRA Custodian, Office of University Counsel; Kristin Ganley, Legal Counsel, Office of University Counsel; Adara Goldberg, Director, Holocaust Resource Center; Adrienne Garro, Professor, Department of Advanced Studies in Psychology; Chelsey Jaipersaud, Undergraduate Communications Major and Intern, Kean University Ethics Office; Xurong Kong, Assistant Professor, Department of History; Joy Moskovitz, Assistant Vice President, Academic Affairs; Kelly Nemeth, Managing Assistant Director, University Counsel; Jennifer Peters, Director, Human Resources; Catricia Shaw, Managing Assistant Director and Deputy Title IX Coordinator; Tamika Quick, Executive Director, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Ashley Bautista Vasquez, Intern</p>
<b>Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Experience</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Richard Conti, Coordinator, Forensic Psychology Programs and Associate Professor, School of Psychology; Jeremiah Sullivan, Executive Director, School of Communication, Media &amp; Journalism</p> <p>Members: Bridie Chapman, Executive Director, School of General Studies; Jennifer Crupi, Professor, School of Fine &amp; Performing Arts; Gilda Del Risco, Professor, College of Education, School of Curriculum &amp; Teaching; David Mohny, Dean, Michael Graves College, Architecture &amp; Design; Susan Polirstok, Professor, College of Education, School of Special Education &amp; Literacy; Barbara Ridener, Dean, College of Education; Brian Teasdale, Associate Dean and Executive Director, College of Natural, Applied, and Health Sciences; Wenli Yuan, Associate Professor and Assistant Chair, School of Communication, Media &amp; Journalism; Casey Iorio, Undergraduate Criminal Justice Major and Kean Ocean Vice President for Student Organization; Susan Ahern, Lecturer, School of General Studies</p>

Group	Members
<b>Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Juneau Gary, Professor, Counselor Education Department/Ocean Program Coordinator; Gillian Scott, Managing Assistant Director, Institutional Effectiveness</p> <p>Members: Matthew Kreider, Football Defensive Line Coach, Athletics; Kerrin Lyles, Director, Miron Student Center; Jonathan Mercantini, Acting Dean, College of Liberal Arts; Scott Snowden, Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs; Karen Struthers, Associate Director, Financial Aid; Bala Subramanian, Adjunct Faculty, College of Business &amp; Public Management; Rongsun Pu, Associate Professor, Biology; Brianna Alicchio, Coordinator, Supplemental Instruction; Maria Briffa, Academic Specialist, Institutional Effectiveness</p>
<b>Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Feng Qi, Associate Professor, College of Science, Math, &amp; Technology; Craig Konyk, Associate Professor, School of Public Architecture, Michael Graves College</p> <p>Members: Keith Bostian, Dean, New Jersey Center for Science, Technology &amp; Mathematics; Ray Divirgilio, Lecturer, College of Education; Kim-Le Downes, Lecturer, School of General Studies; Jessica Goldsmith-Barzilay, Acting Director, Career Services &amp; International Studies; Rose Gonnella, Associate Dean, Michael Graves College; Roxie James, Executive Director, School of Natural Sciences; Jean Brown, Retention Coordinator; Laurie Knis, Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy; Pat Morreale, Professor, School of Computer Science &amp; Technology; Heaven Vergara, Education Major and Intern for Career Services College of Education Partnership</p>
<b>Standard VI: Planning, Resources and Institutional Improvement</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Bok Gyo Jeong, Assistant Professor and Non-Profit Coordinator, School of Public Administration; Orley Wainberg, Director, Financial Planning and Analysis</p> <p>Members: Jessica Adams, Acting Associate Dean, Kean Ocean; Louis Beaugris, Executive Director, School of Mathematical Sciences; Shuli Xu, Vice Chancellor, Wenzhou-Kean University; Rafael Inoa, Assistant Professor, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, Educational Leadership; Dan Mercado, Professional Services Specialist, Facilities; Fahad Mughal, Technician, OCIS-AVT; Robyn Roebuck, Director of Operations, Kean Skylands; Jin Wang, Dean, College of Business &amp; Public Management; Mariann Moran, Assistant Professor, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, Department of Occupational Therapy; Shanice Allen, Student Representative to the Wenzhou-Kean University Board of Directors</p>
<b>Standard VII: Governance, Leadership and Administration</b>	<p>Co-Chairs: Ed Johnston, Associate Professor, Robert Busch School of Design, Michael Graves College; Valerie Winslow, Director, Conference &amp; Events Services</p> <p>Members: George Chang, Dean, Dorothy and George Hennings College of Science, Mathematics &amp; Technology; Dave Farrokh, Assistant Dean, College of Business &amp; Public Management; Jennifer Gardner, Assistant Professor, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, Occupational Therapy; Robert Kitzinger, Assistant Professor, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, Counselor Education; Holly Logue, Professor, College of Liberal Arts, School of Fine &amp; Performing Arts; Jason Pleitez, Student Trustee, Kean University Board of Trustees; Lauren Mastrobuono, Lecturer, School of Psychology; Eric Yixin Yang, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Acting Vice Chancellor for Wenzhou-Kean University; Veysel Yucetepe, Director, MBA Program, Global Business School; Alyssa Carbone, Managing Assistant Director, Conference &amp; Events Services</p>

Group	Members
<p><b>Requirements of Affiliation</b></p>	<p>Co-Chairs: Gail Verdi, Associate Professor and Executive Director, College of Education, School of Curriculum &amp; Teaching; Jane Webber, Assistant Professor and Doctoral Program Coordinator, Nathan Weiss Graduate College, Department of Counselor Education</p> <p>Members: Joe Antonowicz, Director, General Accounting; Faruque Chowdhury, Associate Vice President , University Procurement &amp; Business Services; Katsumi Kashida, Managing Assistant Director, Center for International Studies; Joe Marinello, Assistant Vice President , Computer &amp; Information Systems; John Raue, Assistant Vice President , Strategic Initiatives; Nicole Rodriguez, Director, Office of Community Standards &amp; Student Conduct; Daniela Shebitz, Executive Director, College of Environmental &amp; Sustainability Sciences; Dongyan Mu, Assistant Professor, School of Environmental &amp; Sustainability Sciences; Gabriella Lapointe, Graduate Special Education Major and Graduate &amp; Part-Time Student Council President</p>
<p><b>Evidence Inventory</b></p>	<p>Co-Chairs: Franklin Turner, Executive Director, School of Psychology; Muhammad Hassan, Executive Director, Nancy Thompson Library and Learning Commons</p> <p>Members: Jeff Toney, Senior Vice President for Research; Hong Gao, Director, Office of Institutional Research; Linda Cifelli, Librarian</p>

*Table 7: Structure and Membership of the Working Groups*



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# Self-Study Report