

**PLANNING, ASSESSMENT,  
AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT  
AT MARIST COLLEGE**

**Spring 2011**

Copyright © 2011, Marist College

All rights reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recoding, or by any informational storage system, without written permission from the copyright owner.

# CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
II.	STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND PLANS .....	2
III.	FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING CYCLE – INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL.....	4
	A. Defining Mission and Values.....	5
	B. Analyzing the Environment .....	5
	C. Developing Strategy.....	7
	D. Defining Strategic Goals, Initiatives, and Metrics.....	7
	E. Execution through Operational Planning.....	8
	F. Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptation .....	8
	G. Using Evaluation and Assessment Results for Improvement.....	9
IV.	ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT CYCLE – MAJOR OPERATIONAL AREA AND SCHOOL LEVEL .....	10
	A. Defining Operational Area’s Mission and Purpose .....	12
	B. Analyzing the Environment .....	12
	C. Developing Strategy.....	12
	D. Defining Operational Goals and Strategies.....	13
	E. Execution of Operational Plans .....	14
	F. Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptation .....	14
	G. Using Evaluation and Assessment Results for Improvement.....	15
V.	ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT CYCLE – UNIT AND DEPARTMENT LEVEL .....	16
	A. Defining Unit’s Mission and Purpose.....	17
	B. Analyzing the Environment .....	18
	C. Developing Strategy.....	18
	D. Defining Operational Goals and Strategies.....	18
	E. Execution of Operational Plans .....	19
	F. Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptation .....	20
	G. Using Evaluation and Assessment Results for Improvement.....	20
VI.	FIVE-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS.....	21
VII.	PLANNING LINKS TO BUDGETING.....	22
	A. Operating Budget .....	22
	1. Budget Priorities Committee .....	22
	2. Administrative Budget Process .....	22
	3. Program Budget Development Process .....	23
	B. Capital Budget .....	23
	1. Campus Master Planning.....	23
	2. Capital Budget Development.....	24

VIII.	PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING .....	25
	A. Core/Liberal Studies Program (General Education) .....	26
	Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle for Core .....	27
	1. Learning Outcomes.....	27
	2. Learning Opportunities.....	27
	3. Assessment .....	28
	4. Data Analysis/Action.....	28
	B. Academic Programs/Majors.....	28
	Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle for Academic Programs/Majors.....	28
	1. Learning Outcomes.....	29
	2. Learning Opportunities.....	29
	3. Assessment .....	29
	4. Data Analysis/Action.....	30
	5. Academic Program Reviews.....	30
	6. Additional Curricular Review.....	32
	C. Course Level .....	32

APPENDIX A – MARIST INSTITUTIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS (KPMs)

2011-2016 .....	i
-----------------	---

APPENDIX B – LIST OF UNITS BY MAJOR OPERATIONAL AREA.....	iii
---	-----

APPENDIX C – LIST OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS .....	v
---	---

## I. INTRODUCTION

A culture of planning, assessment, and continuous improvement informs everything that Marist College does in support of its mission: to help students develop the intellect, character, and skills necessary to lead enlightened, ethical, and productive lives in the global community of the twenty-first century. As detailed in the College's Values Statement, the mission is fulfilled through the pursuit of the core ideals of excellence in education, a sense of community, and a commitment to service. Together, the Mission and Values Statements form the foundation of strategic and operational planning at Marist.

In planning and assessing, we seek out vital information and hard data from every corner of the college community while also staying tuned to external changes. We then subject the results of our inquiries to these essential questions: *What should we be doing? Are we doing it? How well are we doing it? and How can we do it better?* These questions are asked throughout the year in all areas and at all levels of the College. An ongoing series of Cabinet and faculty retreats, Board of Trustees committee meetings, and campus-wide progress reviews are only the most formal expressions of the iterative process that is planning and assessment at Marist. Everything the College does is subjected to constant evaluation and the application of the resulting feedback to those continued efforts. We believe this is vital to the health of the College.

The planning and assessment process at Marist is cyclical. Through assessment, we glean critical performance data that are then fed into the next phase of planning, allowing us to adapt to changing conditions and improve the quality of what we do at every level as an institution, from the boardroom to the classroom. Strategic and operational planning produce specific goals for which the College's executives and administrators are held accountable. Institutionally, those goals provide measurable ways for the vice presidents, deans, area administrators, and staff to gauge their success in supporting Marist's mission and vision. Planning and assessment is also a key opportunity for faculty members to further contribute to the mission of the College and to identify ways to enhance student learning.

The Marist community maintains a commitment to continuous improvement by ensuring that the formal processes are supplemented by active, informal processes during the operation of the College. Informally, administrators and faculty members continuously monitor curriculum, programs, and operations, not waiting for formal assessment milestones to make necessary improvements. Consistent with this tenet, this guide is a living document that serves as an outline of these processes without seeking to define them in their entirety. Planning and assessment are done in some capacity every day by faculty and staff and must be adapted to changing conditions with which no single document can keep pace. At Marist, planning and assessment is a vital ongoing process, never a finished product.

## II. STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND PLANS

Planning and plans are interrelated but they are different. Planning is a rational method for making decisions about future directions and activities of an organization. It helps the people who comprise an organization to decide what *should* be done, what *can* be done, *how* to do it, *when* to do it, *who* will do it, *how much* it will cost, and how to know when it is *successfully completed*.

Planning is an intellectually demanding process because it requires individuals to gain an understanding of their organization, its parts, its environment, and how they all interact and interrelate prior to making decisions about the future. Only through such a process can an organization set realistic goals and know it stands a good chance of attaining them.

While planning is primarily an intellectual process that requires one to “think” about what an organization can and should do, a plan is a written statement of the conclusions reached during the planning process. It is not a document to be placed on a shelf and forgotten after planning is completed, but rather a statement of major decisions that should be used to assist in the coordination, control, and assessment of the activities called for in the plan.

At the most basic level, there are two types of planning in organizations: strategic and operational. Strategic planning requires an organization to make decisions about its mission, environment, institutional strengths and weaknesses, and goals. Operational planning requires the various parts of the organization to make decisions about the role they will play in helping to fulfill the organization’s mission and accomplish its goals. Good strategic and operational plans need not be voluminous. Planning documents are written to be read, not weighed. A short, well-written plan is far preferable to a long, tedious one.

At Marist, planning and assessment take place at the institutional; major operational and school; and unit and department level. Our overall strategy is guided by our five-year Strategic Plan; our annual operating plans allow us to implement our yearly goals while at the same time measuring our incremental success on the Strategic Plan.

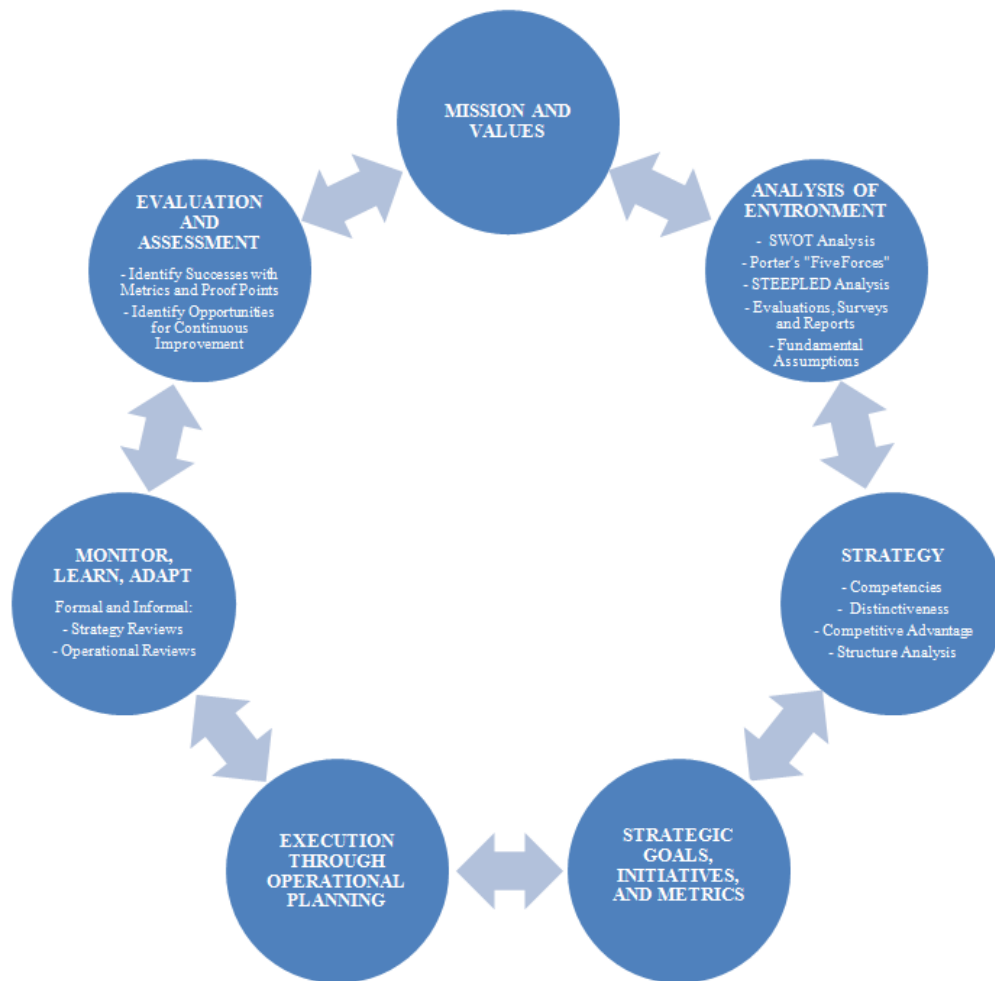


Our process is cyclical in nature, with year-end evaluations feeding into the development of plans for the coming year (see model on page 4). This unified approach ensures that our annual operating plans are aligned with our Strategic Plan, and also meet or exceed the standards and principles of excellence set by our accrediting body, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, as well as any other accrediting bodies the College is involved with (e.g., NCAA, AACSB, RATE, CSWE, CAATE, NAACLS, etc.). Although the strategic planning process is not synchronized with the decennial Middle States accreditation process, the context is important to keep in mind.

### III. FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING CYCLE – INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Marist uses a comprehensive strategic planning process that engages the entire campus community, resulting in a diverse application of skills, creativity, and analysis to shape the College’s future. The result is a Strategic Plan that is updated every five years.

#### Strategic Planning Cycle – Institutional Level



It is important to note that the arrows in this planning model point in both directions. To use this model effectively, planners at Marist must abandon the sequential thinking that is so prevalent in our lives. Sequential thinking is a thought process that considers one idea after another in the order in which they occur. The deficiency of this approach is that it fails to recognize the interrelatedness of ideas and how they bear on each other.

Sequential thinking is also implicit in many planning models in which the user is asked to go step by step through the model, starting with the mission statement and working through to

evaluation. The planning model presented here, and for that matter any other, should never be used in a sequential, step-by-step manner.

The systems nature of organizations requires planners to use integrative thinking in their planning activities. Because of the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of each of the stages, a change in one stage may necessitate changes in the stages that come before or after it.

Therefore, each stage of planning at Marist is developed and implemented in contemplation of the other stages. When any one stage is completed, it must be validated by questioning its consistency with all other parts of the model. Work may be undertaken on several stages of planning concurrently, but no stage can be considered complete until it is reviewed for consistency with all other stages. This process of assuring consistency (logical coherence) among the different parts of the organization is a key element in systems-based planning. The arrows pointing in both directions in the model are intended to represent this need for integrative thought throughout the planning process.



### A. Defining Mission and Values

In the first steps of the strategic planning process, the President appoints a Strategic Plan Steering Committee, normally co-chaired by the Executive Vice President and a senior faculty member, and charges the Committee with developing a draft Strategic Plan. This Committee consists of representatives from all campus constituencies, including faculty, staff, student government, alumni, and the President’s Cabinet.

One of the very first tasks assigned to the Committee is a careful review of the College’s Mission and Values statements. These statements help to define Marist’s particular purpose, character, and individuality as an institution, and comprise the opening pages of the published Strategic Plan. After careful consideration on the part of the Steering Committee and consultation with stakeholders, the statements are refined as needed to ensure that they remain relevant and up to date. Because of the iterative nature of the planning process, this task and the analysis of the environment (see below) may occur simultaneously.



### B. Analyzing the Environment

To set the context for a broad-based planning process, all faculty and staff are invited to a series of campus briefing sessions on the importance of strategic planning and the unique

challenges and opportunities that face private institutions of higher education like Marist. Senior administrators present comprehensive analyses of the internal and external environments. Internally, the Marist student profile, academic programs, the College's financial position, and physical plant are all reviewed. Externally, data are shared that illuminate the trends and challenges in student demographics and recruitment, as well as the economic forecast for higher education.

All faculty and administrative staff are encouraged to provide input on key issues and concerns, and to offer suggestions for future directions and priorities. Recommendations of the campus community are collected in a variety of ways (in college-wide forums, school meetings, divisional discussion, by email, and in person) by the Office of the Executive Vice President, which compiles them into a comprehensive list for use as an information reference base and as a starting point for the Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee develops a thorough analysis of the external environment, including a look at the College's competition in higher education. It reviews a variety of relevant resources, including: planning assumptions from the previous Strategic Plan; concerns and recommendations of the campus community; and conclusions and recommendations received in response to the College's *Institutional Self-Studies and Periodic Review Reports* to The Middle States Commission on Higher Education. It may also draw upon frameworks for analysis including Porter's "Five Forces:"

- The threat of the entry of new competitors
- The threat of substitute or alternative services
- The bargaining power of prospective students and markets
- The bargaining power of suppliers
- The intensity of competitive rivalry

or what is known as a STEEPLED analysis, which considers the following factors:

- Social
- Technological
- Economic
- Environmental
- Political
- Legal
- Ethical
- Demographic

Planning assumptions are updated by the Committee in order to capture significant ongoing conditions, and to reflect the unique challenges and opportunities ahead. Drawing upon the above sources, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis is completed, identifying the College's internal strengths and weaknesses, and its external opportunities and threats. The SWOT Analysis is further refined based on input from the President's Cabinet, whose members are intimately familiar with all facets of the College. Drafts

of these documents are shared with the Board of Trustees (who review the documents and provide recommendations at a planning retreat) and the campus community.

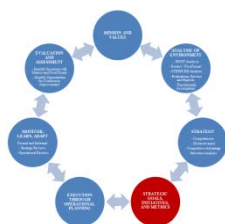


### C. Developing Strategy

Next, the Steering Committee draws on the SWOT Analysis and the recommendations of trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumni to develop a strategy designed to make Marist a more distinctive institution, and to give the College a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

The formation of this kind of broad, institutional-level strategy frequently requires planners to recognize and make use of the College’s specific competencies, as well as to identify those competencies that are lacking, or which may require further development. This analysis should be factored into the planning process and addressed with specific goals and initiatives. The development of institutional strategy may also frequently require planners to undertake a structure analysis; in other words, *does the College’s organizational structure allow us to do what we say we want to do, or are there changes that need to be made?*

At each step in the process, the Steering Committee and Cabinet recognize and embrace the recursive nature of planning. It is often necessary to revisit prior steps, reviewing the recommendations of the campus community and reevaluating the planning assumptions and SWOT Analysis. This helps to ensure that the College’s strategy is ultimately based on a true understanding of Marist’s competencies and current standing in the world of higher education, and to ensure that it will be able to fulfill its mission.



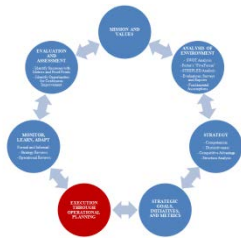
### D. Defining Strategic Goals, Initiatives, and Metrics

At this point in the planning process, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee breaks into several subcommittees (e.g., Teaching and Academics, Community and Networking, Fiscal Stability, Affordability and Growth) and crystallizes its major strategic directions into broad, institution-level Strategic Goals, which are accompanied by a more specific set of Supporting Initiatives. These goals and initiatives are carefully considered and vetted by the Steering Committee and Cabinet, reviewed by the Board of Trustees, and shared with the campus community through a series of briefing sessions.

Indicators of success such as the Key Performance Metrics (KPM’s) are determined after a careful consideration by Cabinet members, Institutional Research and Planning, evaluation

against external benchmarks, and consideration of all of the factors in the environmental and SWOT analyses.

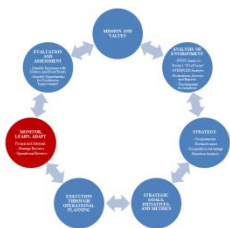
A draft of the complete Plan is distributed to the campus community and revised in light of the critiques of trustees, faculty, staff, and friends of the College. The revised Plan is brought to the Board of Trustees for final review and approval.



### E. Execution through Operational Planning

As Peter Drucker has commented, “the best plan is *only* a plan, that is, good intentions, unless it *degenerates into work*.” The execution of the Strategic Plan through operational planning is the work of producing results. After the formal plan is adopted, one or more vice presidents are assigned responsibility for implementing each initiative. Success at achieving strategic initiatives is measured in various ways. As the vice presidents create action plans for each initiative, appropriate success metrics and means of assessment are developed in parallel. Vice presidents use the Strategic Plan’s goals and initiatives to guide the development of their annual operational plans. This process is fully described in the following section.

The Strategic Plan is considered a living document subject to change based on new developments. It identifies ways for the College to achieve its goals based on the best information available at the time of its creation. The College recognizes that the Plan’s supporting initiatives are not the only ways in which Marist can or will achieve its goals; that the list of initiatives is not exhaustive; and that as new opportunities or threats emerge in the external environment, new initiatives may be added or existing ones changed to reflect those circumstances. In all cases, changes are discussed at appropriate levels prior to implementation to determine congruency with the College’s mission, values, and strategic goals.

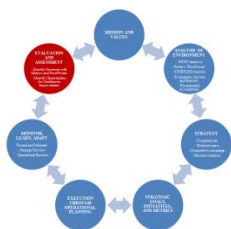


### F. Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptation

Monitoring provides the vital link between plans and performance. Monitoring tells planners whether their work is producing the intended results, and if not, what corrective action is necessary. Operational and unit-level plans take shape in the context of the Strategic Plan and support its implementation. They are also the functional points of first assessment. Assessing

achievement of strategic goals is done incrementally by tracking the completion of operational and unit-level goals and objectives. Using year-end operational reports, results are aggregated across the campus and compared to the success measures established by the responsible vice presidents. Using the benchmarks and methodology identified in the previous step, results of the assessment are compared to the desired results for each strategic initiative. The progress on the Strategic Plan is tracked by the senior administrative team on an ongoing basis.

In addition, Key Performance Metrics (KPMs) are regularly tracked by the College and Board of Trustees. Institutional-level KPMs, a subset of the broader KPMs, are shared regularly with the Board to provide trustees with a summary of results in key strategic and operational areas. Institutional-level KPMs can be found in Appendix A.



### **G. Using Evaluation and Assessment Results for Improvement**

The process of evaluation begins with the identification of the Strategic Plan’s successes with metrics and proof points. At this stage, we evaluate how successful we have been in implementing our annual operational plans, and how well those results have contributed to the accomplishment of our strategic goals. Information derived from this evaluation is then fed back into the next annual operational planning cycle and, every five years, into the strategic planning cycle. The overall goal of this step is continuous improvement towards the accomplishment of organizational and strategic goals. For more information, please refer to the discussion of evaluation and assessment results in the Annual Operational Planning and Assessment Cycle section of this report.

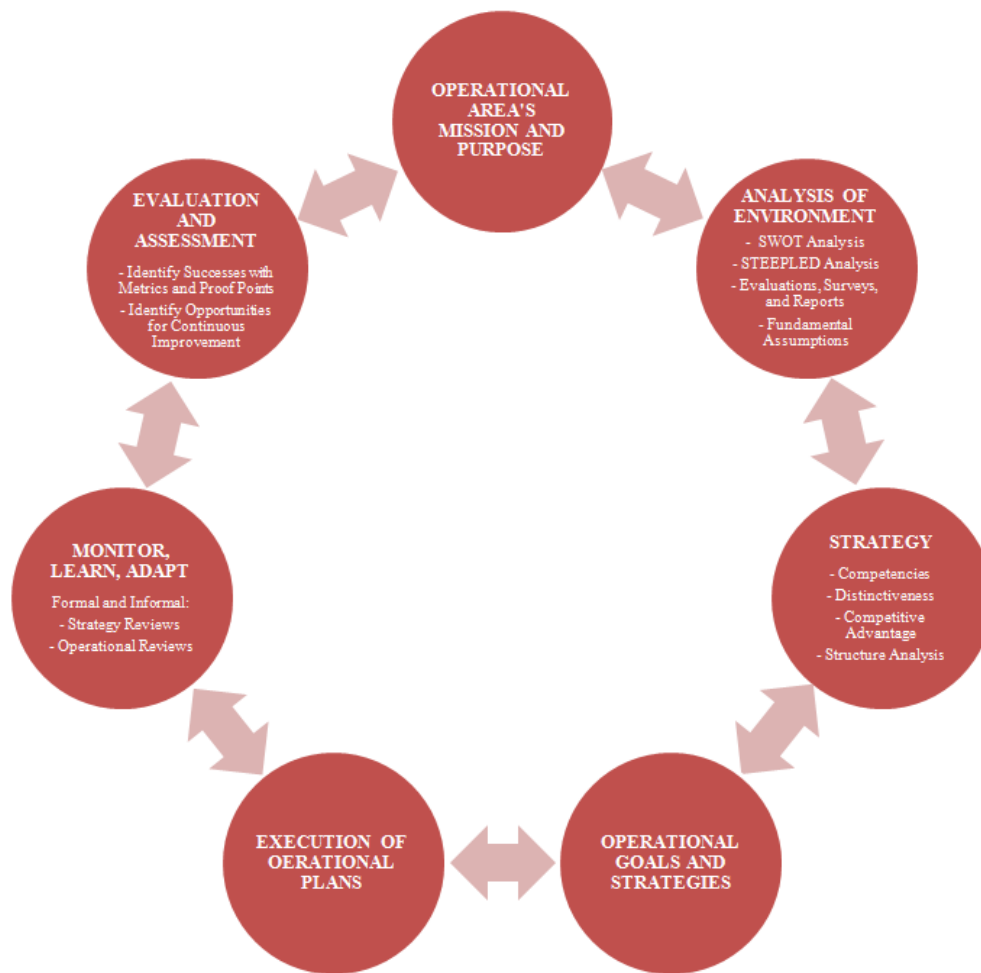
#### **IV. ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT CYCLE – MAJOR OPERATIONAL AREA AND SCHOOL LEVEL**

Each year, vice presidents and deans prepare annual operational plans for their major operational areas and schools. It is important to remember that all annual operational area plans are done in the context of the five year strategic plan's goals and initiatives, which are themselves done in the larger context of the institution's Mission and Values Statements:



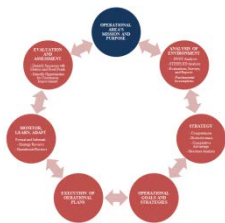
Annual operational plans are the building blocks of the five-year Strategic Plan, and combine strategic goals and initiatives with ongoing operations into one document that guides the work for each area of the College. Vice presidents of major operating areas (Office of Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Finance, Enrollment Management, Information Technology, and College Advancement), and Deans of the seven schools develop annual operational plans as a means of mapping out how their respective administrative and academic departments will implement the strategic initiatives for which they are responsible. Together, these plans provide the basis for integrating strategic planning with ongoing operations and campus budgeting by providing a context for annual budget requests by the vice presidents and benchmarks for evaluating the progress of yearly initiatives.

**Operational Planning and Assessment Cycle – Major Operational Area and School Level**



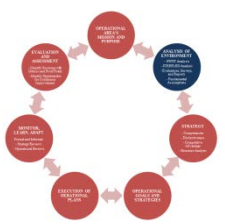
The timeline used by vice presidents to develop, implement, and assess operational plans is summarized in the following table and explained below in greater detail:

<b>Calendar for Planning &amp; Assessment Process</b>	
<b>Month(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>
June/July	Vice presidents draft plans for the coming academic year using prior year's end evaluations, survey results, benchmarks, progress reviews, staff meetings, and other inputs
August	Plans are reviewed at, and revised based on input from the Cabinet Planning Retreat and readied for implementation
January	A mid-year Cabinet Retreat is conducted to gauge the implementation of plans to date and identify any major issues and opportunities
May-June	Year-end reports are developed by vice presidents noting successes, progress, and areas needing further attention
June/July	Year-end evaluations are conducted, which feed into development of the next year's plans, beginning the cycle again



### A. Defining Operational Area's Mission and Purpose

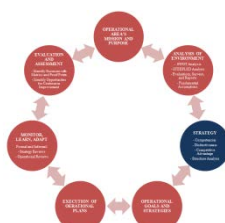
The annual planning and assessment process for each vice president and dean begins with a careful review of the area or school's mission and purpose. Each operational and academic area plays a unique role in helping the institution to carry out its mission and values, and this purpose should be clearly understood and articulated. Operational area and school mission statements should be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain relevant and up-to-date.



### B. Analyzing the Environment

Each vice president and dean then develops an annual operational plan for review by the President. The first part of this plan is a short, data-driven assessment of the area of responsibility. As an operational plan within the context of the College's Strategic Plan, it should identify internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats by:

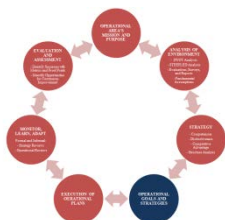
- Demonstrating careful consideration of the critical factors affecting the area
- Exhibiting awareness of and adherence to all professional standards that relate specifically to the area
- Employing a systematic approach to analyzing what can realistically be accomplished
- Being developed in consultation with all those who share responsibility for its implementation
- Being based on data that are accurate and results-oriented
- Reflecting the results of the student survey of services, assessments conducted by offices or administrative departments within the area of responsibility, external agency reports, year-end reviews, self-evaluations, and other evaluation instruments



### C. Developing Strategy

Next, strategies are developed to make the operational area or school more distinctive, and to give it a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

At this point, vice presidents and deans should reflect upon area and school-specific competencies, and also identify those competencies that are lacking, or which may require further development. This analysis should be factored into the planning process and addressed with specific operational goals and strategies. Areas and schools may also benefit from a structure analysis; in other words, *does the school or area’s organizational structure allow us to do what we say we want to do, or are there changes that need to be made?*



### D. Defining Operational Goals and Strategies

The second part of the plan is a statement of goals developed by respective vice presidents and deans for the major operating areas and schools. Working with their respective staffs, senior administrators establish goals consistent with, and in support of, Strategic Plan goals and, ultimately, the College’s Mission and Vision Statements. Area goals are a topic of extensive discussion with the Cabinet and/or between the vice presidents, deans, and the President, at which time they may be refined. Progress toward these goals is assessed at mid-year and at year-end, and operational effectiveness is a major part of annual performance evaluations.

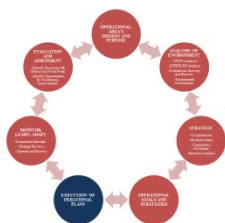
#### Goals should be:

- Limited in number
- Specific and verifiable
- Results-oriented
- Achievable, yet challenging
- Jointly developed and shared
- Aimed at improving program quality or service delivery

#### Goals should include:

- Metrics
- Benchmarks for success
- Deadlines
- Means for assessing success

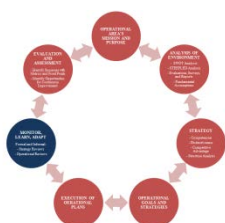
This process should also indicate how the area’s success in working toward its goals will be evaluated, when evaluations will be conducted, and who will participate.



### E. Execution of Operational Plans

Operational Plans should be developed from strategies established in the process above, and implemented with a clear understanding of what metrics will be used to assess their effectiveness. Implementation plans explain how goals will be achieved for each operational area. While goals express administrative “ends,” implementation plans detail the “means” of their execution – descriptions of *who* will do *what*, *when*, with *whose* help, and *how much* it will cost.

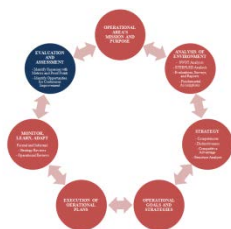
Implementation plans are especially necessary for complex goals or when accomplishment of a goal is dependent on the contributions of many people. Though it is not necessary to submit all area implementation plans to the President, they should be available for review.



### F. Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptation

Operational planning is monitored on a regular basis at Cabinet and Internal Operating Group (IOG) meetings. Vice presidents also provide regular updates to their respective Board of Trustees committees with regard to progress made toward operational goals. This part of the operational planning process provides the vital link between plans and performance. As plans are implemented, monitoring reveals if work is producing the intended results and, if not, what corrective action is necessary. The basic tools for monitoring progress toward goals are the benchmarks and deadlines built into action plans.

The President and Cabinet formally review the progress of operational plans during January mid-year reviews and, where appropriate, revise them to correct course or accommodate new initiatives. Then, in June, vice presidents conduct a year-end evaluation of their respective areas and then submit to the President a two-to-three-page summary describing their success in meeting goals for the year and identifying areas requiring added attention in the year ahead. This document then becomes the basis for each vice president’s year-end evaluation and is used as a reference-point for the coming year’s planning and assessment cycle. Finally, this document, together with confidential self-evaluations, serves as the basis for annual evaluations for the vice presidents.



## G. Using Evaluation and Assessment Results for Improvement

Marist carefully monitors indicators of institutional success to ensure that it is making satisfactory progress. Gaps between goals and outcomes are discussed at Cabinet and IOG meetings, and responsibility for addressing them in the near-term is assigned to the appropriate vice presidents. Additionally, these assessment data are fed back into the coming year's planning cycle by way of the Cabinet members and vice presidents, who use them to inform the preparation of their operational plans for the next year.

The College actively tracks quality indicators for consideration at all levels of planning as well as for institutional progress and assessment reviews. Examples of such indicators are listed below, and a more comprehensive list of operational area metrics and benchmarks by unit is housed in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

### Academic

Six-year graduation rate  
 Freshman retention rate  
 Upper-class retention rate  
 Alumni survey  
 Program accreditation and reviews

### Enrollment

Selectivity/acceptance rate  
 Diversity of student body  
 Geographic distribution of student body  
 Quality of students: SATs, Class standing  
 Enrollment growth  
 Tuition discount rate

### Finance

Improvement in net assets  
 Cash flow  
 Balance sheet  
 External credit rating

### Institutional Advancement

Private fund raising  
 Government grants  
 Alumni support  
 Capital campaign

### Campus Developments

Limited deferred maintenance  
 Implementation of Campus Master Plan  
 Funded capital budget plan

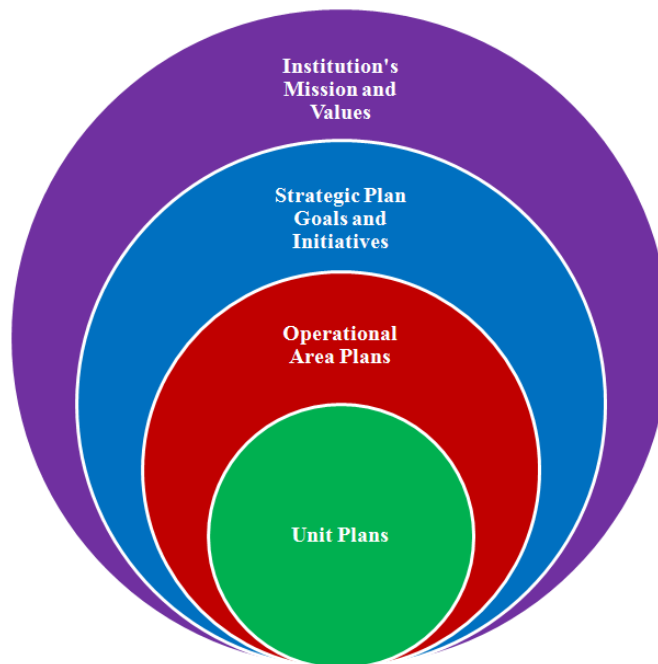
### External Recognition and Ratings

Princeton Review  
 U.S. News and World Report  
 Barron's Best Buys  
 National media attention  
 Graduate school admissions  
 Career placement

## V. ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT CYCLE – UNIT AND DEPARTMENT LEVEL

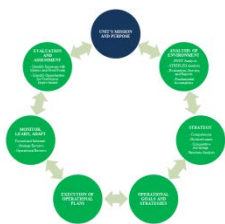
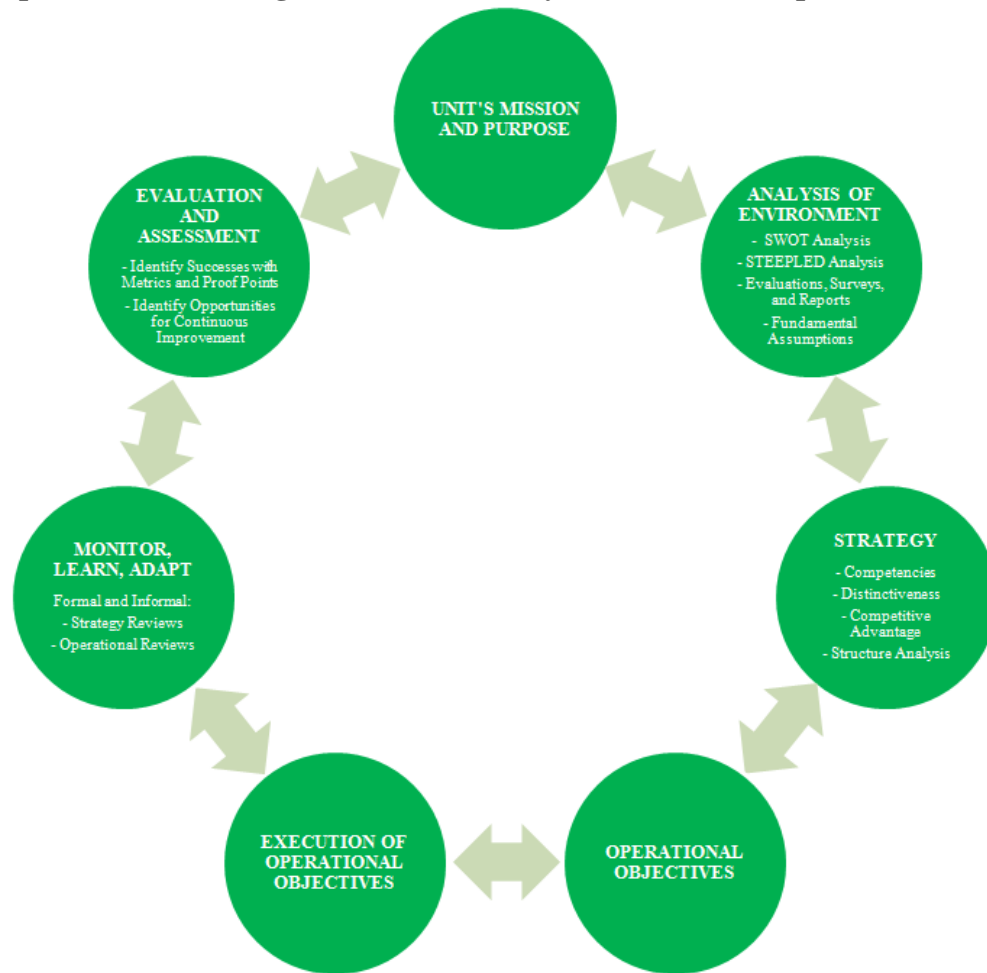
Each year, directors and department heads of certain administrative and academic units also prepare annual operational plans. For the purposes of this document, a “unit” is defined as any operational entity below the level of a sitting member of the Cabinet (e.g., Library Services, Health Services, Athletics, Security, Center for Career Services, Student Financial Services, Public Affairs, Academic Technology). A list of units by operational area can be found in Appendix B. Each area vice president and dean will determine the appropriate level of planning documentation considering the size and complexity of the unit or department, among other factors.

It is important to remember that all annual unit and department level plans are done in the context of the respective vice president or dean’s annual operational plan, which is done in the context of the five year strategic plan’s goals and initiatives, which are themselves done in the larger context of the institution’s Mission and Values Statements:



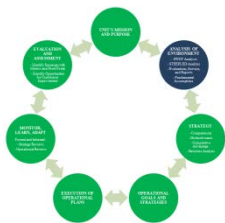
The unit and departmental-level operational plan is developed in collaboration with the unit’s vice president or dean and submitted by July 30 in time for the August Cabinet Retreat. Cabinet members report back to their units and department with resulting feedback and/or changes.

### Operational Planning and Assessment Cycle – Unit and Department Level



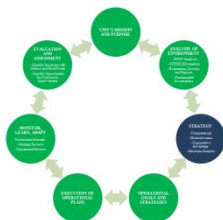
#### A. Defining Unit's Mission and Purpose

Just as planning and assessment at the institutional and operational levels begin with a review of mission, a unit or department's operational planning efforts should begin with a careful consideration of its own mission and purpose in relation to that of its operational area and the College. It is important to remember that while some schools at Marist contain a number of departments with very similar missions, others contain departments with different and unique missions.



### B. Analyzing the Environment

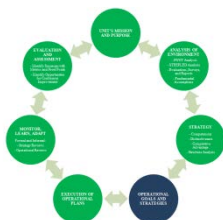
Unit and department level operational plans should be data-driven, concise, and developed in consultation with the unit vice president or dean and all those who will be responsible for its implementation. The plan should reflect the results of the Student Evaluation of Marist Services (SEMS) survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and other evaluation instruments, assessments conducted by offices or administrative departments within the unit, external agency reports, year-end reviews, and self-evaluations.



### C. Developing Strategy

Unit and department level operational plans should develop strategies to make the operational unit or department more distinctive, and to give it a competitive advantage in the marketplace. The plan should focus on critical success factors for the particular unit and should not include unrelated issues or standard operating procedures.

Planners should reflect upon unit and department-specific competencies, and also identify those competencies that are lacking, or which may require further development. This analysis should be factored into the planning process and addressed with specific operational goals and strategies. Individual units and departments may also benefit from a structure analysis; in other words, *does the unit or department's organizational structure allow us to do what we say we want to do, or are there changes that need to be made?*

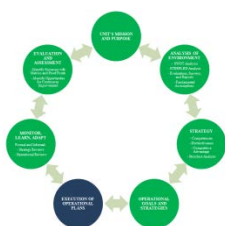


### D. Defining Operational Goals and Strategies

A unit and department-level goal or strategy should state a specific direction or intent for the unit. It is important to remember that a few key objectives will determine the success or failure of most operating units or departments, so planners should focus on what matters most.

Operational Goals should be:

- Limited in number
- Specific and verifiable
- Oriented toward results
- Achievable, yet challenging
- Jointly developed and shared
- Aimed at improving program quality or service delivery



### E. Execution of Operational Plans

Action plans should be developed for each operational unit or department. While goals express the unit or department’s “ends,” action plans detail the “means” to their accomplishment – descriptions of *who* will do *what*, *when*, with *whose* help, and *how much* it will cost. Goals may require many, complex steps to complete, or the path to their achievement may be self-explanatory. In either case, at least one action step is required for each objective. Not all objectives will be formally assessed every year, but all continuing objectives will be assessed at least once every five years.

Action steps should include:

- Description of actions
- Deadlines
- Person responsible for completing step
- Relevant success measures/benchmarks
- Means for assessing success

Individual operating units and departments are allowed significant latitude in determining success measures and in assessing results. In addition to specific, direct measures developed by the operating unit, there are several institution-wide surveys that are administered regularly, which may provide indirect information about individual unit effectiveness. A description of the assessment instruments can be found in Appendix C.

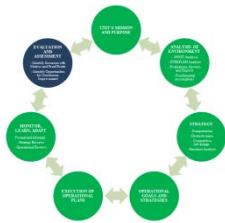
The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP) is the College’s central coordinating body for all administrative and academic support unit surveys. The OIRP is available to identify existing sources of information for benchmarking and assessment in operating units. If no appropriate data is available, the OIRP can advise and help with survey design, data collection, and data analysis.



### F. Monitoring, Learning, and Adaptation

This part of the operational planning process provides the vital link between plans and performance. As plans are implemented, monitoring reveals whether the unit or department’s work is producing the intended results and, if not, what corrective action is necessary. Directors and department heads are responsible for ensuring that this ongoing monitoring occurs. During January mid-year progress reviews, action steps are updated and available results compiled and shared with the vice president or dean for inclusion in their mid-year progress report. The basic devices for monitoring progress toward goals are the benchmarks and deadlines built into action plans, regularly scheduled meetings with the unit’s vice president, and unit staff meetings.

In June year-end reviews, administrators write self-evaluations, and supervisors conduct year-end evaluations of their areas and of their administrative staff, highlighting areas needing added attention in the coming year. Action steps are again reviewed and assessment results compiled for inclusion in the vice president’s year-end progress report, as well as in other planning efforts for the coming year.



### G. Using Evaluation and Assessment Results for Improvement

This part of the operational plan should describe the results of the SEMS survey and other evaluation instruments, assessments conducted by offices or administrative departments within the unit, external agency reports, year-end reviews, and self-evaluations. Because the process is cyclical, these assessment results are fed back into the coming year’s planning cycle as a part of the analysis of the environment, and may signal the need for changes in the next year’s operational plans in order to improve programs and services.

## **VI. FIVE-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Each major service or activity at the College (outside of academic departments, which are assessed through the Academic Program Review process described in the next section) is typically reviewed every five years by an internal review team and may involve an external consultant. This review may also be done at the major operational area level, depending on the process established by senior administrators. These reviews are customarily done according to accreditation cycles or as determined by the unit director and the respective vice president. The five-year review is typically more extensive than the annual planning and assessment done by these administrative and academic support units and includes a self-study addressing quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the service or activity.

Administrative and academic support units should use existing Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) standards for their self-assessment, when available. Though many units are not covered by existing CAS standards, separate standards to guide the self-assessment may be available through the appropriate professional organization. When possible, the unit should use that organization's review procedures, standards, and benchmarks. Absent other guidelines, the unit should perform a self-assessment every five years in which it reviews the following components:

- Mission
- Program
- Leadership
- Organization and management
- Human resources
- Financial resources
- Facilities, technology, and equipment
- Legal responsibilities
- Equity and access
- Campus and external relations
- Diversity
- Ethics
- Assessment and evaluation
- Major risk exposures
- Staff development needs

## **VII. PLANNING LINKS TO BUDGETING**

### **A. Operating Budget**

Budget development at Marist is closely integrated with the Strategic Plan, annual operational planning, and ongoing operations that support the College's mission. The budgeting process responds to the needs and requests of many constituencies (faculty, staff, students, trustees, parents, community, etc.) and has three main operating elements: a Budget Priorities Committee, which makes annual strategic recommendations to the President; the Administrative Budget Process; and the Program Budget Development process overseen by the Executive Vice President (EVP) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

#### **1. Budget Priorities Committee**

The College's Budget Priorities Committee is integrally involved in advising the President on the budget development process, particularly in terms of ensuring that it is aligned with the Strategic Plan. The Committee is made up of four senior faculty members and four senior administrators, including the EVP, who serves as chair, and the CFO, who serves as an ex-officio member. The President's charge to the Committee is twofold: 1) perform an annual assessment of the overall economic situation facing the College, and 2) advise the President on budget priorities for the coming year. The President carefully considers the Committee's recommendations in developing the annual operating budget.

#### **2. Administrative Budget Process**

The administrative budgeting process is comprehensive and mission-driven. Area budget requests flow from functional area operational plans in line with the College's Mission Statement and the goals and initiatives in the Strategic Plan. Budgets are built in a step-by-step procedure whereby various constituencies provide input regarding budget priorities and development. Allocation recommendations are made only after extensive discussion of alternatives and the building of consensus among the vice presidents.

At the executive level, budget planning considers the impact of any major budgetary decision on the institution as a whole. The development of the annual operating budget model for the following year begins in December/January with the IOG, and concludes in May with a presentation to the President, and then the Board of Trustees, of major initiatives and the recommended tuition and fee package. The IOG's budget recommendations, pricing structure comparison, and tuition increase analysis are carefully reviewed by the President and the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees before being presented to the full Board for approval.

<b>Calendar for Budget Process</b>	
<b>Month(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>
July	New fiscal year begins July 1. In the planning process, vice presidents prepare for the coming academic year using prior year's-end evaluations, survey results, benchmarks, progress reviews, staff meetings, and other inputs. Various aspects of the budget are monitored on a weekly, if not daily, basis. Monthly reviews are conducted with the President, and oftentimes the Board Finance Committee.
September-February	Budget Priorities Committee meets several times and presents recommendations to President.
January	Mid-year administrative evaluation of budget. In the planning cycle, a mid-year Cabinet Retreat is conducted to gauge the implementation of plans to date and identify any major issues and opportunities. Any budget issues are put forth to IOG.
April-May	Budgets for the following year developed in concert with the year-end reports developed by vice presidents noting successes, progress, and areas needing further attention. Administrative budgets finalized.
May	Review and approval of the budget by the Board of Trustees.

### **3. Program Budget Development**

The budget development process produces multi-year proforma budgets aligned with the Strategic Plan and annual operating plans for the areas in which programs (academic, administrative, or entrepreneurial partnerships) are to occur. These proformas include detailed expectations of revenues, expenses, net contribution, and any capitalization costs, as well as guidelines for successful continuation of programs. The program budgets are developed in consultation with all operational parties and the budget development is coordinated by the Business Office and overseen by the CFO and EVP before presentation to IOG for review and the President for approval.

#### **B. Capital Budget**

##### **1. Campus Master Planning**

A comprehensive update of the Campus Master Plan is made every five years, after the completion of the updated Strategic Plan. The Campus Master Plan lays out planning strategies to guide the overall development of the campus, as well as provide a rolling, five-year development plan of specific capital projects. The development of the Campus Master Plan is coordinated by the EVP working closely with the President, the Director of Physical Plant, the CFO, Associate Academic Vice President, and the Board's Building and Grounds Committee, as well as with numerous campus constituencies.

The initial draft and comprehensive updates of the plan are developed in consultation with an architectural firm that has extensive experience in campus planning. Like the Strategic Plan, initial drafts of the Campus Master Plan are developed with input from trustees, faculty, staff,

alumni, and students. This input is obtained through a series of Master Plan presentations made to all parts of the campus community.

The draft Campus Master Plan is reviewed by the EVP, CFO, and Director of Physical Plant with the objectives of 1) estimating reasonable costs for each project initiative recommended in the plan, and 2) developing a realistic schedule for carrying out the projects. The Campus Master Plan schedule and estimated costs are closely reviewed with the President and the Board's Finance and Buildings & Grounds committees. The final draft of the Campus Master Plan and a recommended capital budget are reviewed by the Board's Finance Committee and then presented by the Buildings & Grounds Committee for the approval of the full Board of Trustees.

## **2. Capital Budget Development**

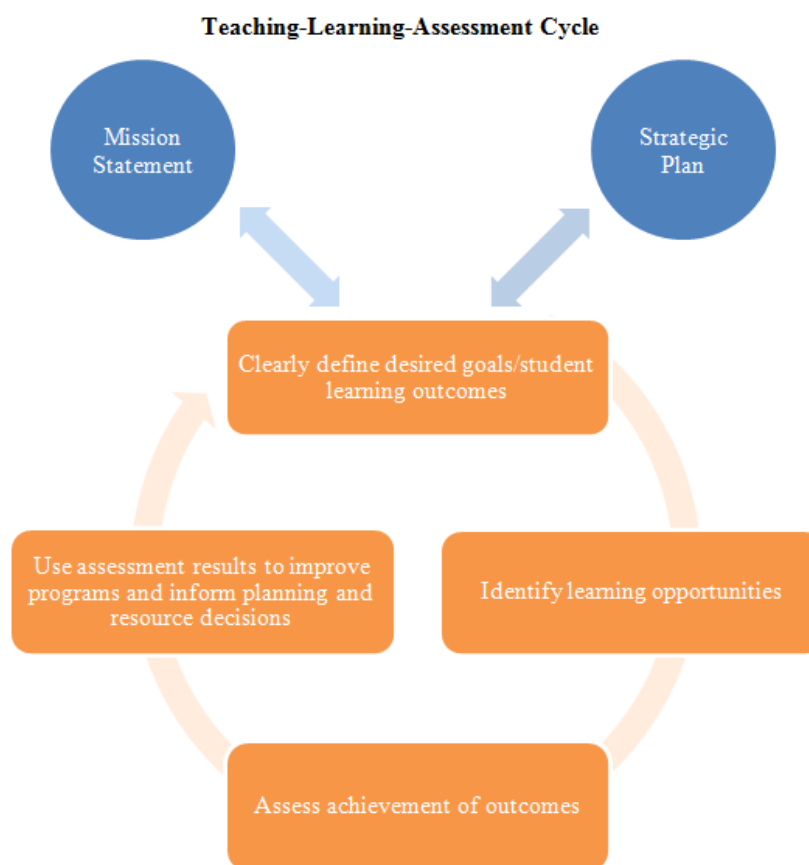
The College's Capital Budget covers a five-year period and is updated annually. The primary resource for updating the Capital Budget is the Campus Master Plan. The Capital Budget update is developed by the EVP, CFO, and Director of Physical Plant working closely with the President, the Finance Committee and the Buildings & Grounds Committee. Capital projects are listed by year with estimated costs for a five-year period. Criteria for starting any new capital projects are based on 1) the funding available, 2) the capability of the Internal Management Team to provide appropriate oversight of the project, 3) the extent of the project's disruption to the campus community, and 4) return on investment. Funding sources for each project, whether fund raising, earmark grants, the Plant Fund reserves, or tax-exempt financing, are also included in the Capital Budget.

In addition to identifying major capital projects to be undertaken, the Capital Budget includes funding to support major technology infrastructure initiatives (e.g., network system changeover, new enterprise resource planning system) and a base annual allocation of approximately \$2 million to support various smaller deferred maintenance, infrastructure improvement, and campus enhancement projects. This allocation, which increases about five percent per year, has enabled the College to minimize deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs.

## VIII. PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Planning activities and assessment of student learning provide the academic community at Marist the opportunity to reflect formally on areas of instruction, scholarship, service, advising, and mentoring, and to develop plans for the future in light of changes in internal and external conditions. By helping to both validate programmatic strengths and identify shortcomings to which effort and resources may be allocated in the future, planning and assessment processes are essential to monitoring quality and providing information that leads to improvement.

As part of the planning process, every course, academic department, and academic program at Marist is expected to have clearly defined goals that articulate the knowledge, skills, and values expected of participating students. Assessment processes are developed to: determine how well those goals are being met; identify learning opportunities; offer reasonable methods for collecting information; and use evaluation results for continuous improvement. In the area of student learning, the faculty establishes its own internal standards for assessment that are aligned with broader standards of the College, respective academic disciplines, and, if applicable, accrediting bodies. This is consistent with Marist’s planning and assessment cycle, referred to earlier:



Marist supports the planning and assessment of student learning in a number of ways. The College has appointed an ad-hoc committee comprised of faculty representatives from each school, representatives from the Academic Affairs Office, and a student representative. The

Assessment of Student Learning Ad-Hoc Committee examines planning and assessment processes at the general education, program/major, and course levels. The Academic Affairs Office serves as a repository for assessment materials and resources and utilizes the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) for technical support and workshops on assessment processes. All academic departments maintain copies of *Student Learning Assessment Options and Resources* by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education to use as a reference. Workshops are offered on assessment throughout the year, and resources are available to members of the faculty and administration to participate in national conferences on this topic. With special approval, faculty may also be paid to engage in special continuous improvement projects resulting from assessment.

In the area of student learning, Marist has developed and refined planning and assessment processes for multiple layers of academic programming to guide the use of assessment results to improve teaching and learning. To provide clear and useful direction to faculty and staff, these procedures are summarized in the following section. As planning and assessment are ongoing processes at Marist, it is expected that these guidelines will be regularly reviewed and updated. Below are general descriptions of the teaching-learning-assessment cycles for the Core/Liberal Studies program (general education); programs and majors; and individual courses.

#### **A. Core/Liberal Studies Program (General Education)**

In keeping with its enduring tradition of dedication to liberal arts education, Marist maintains a required Core/Liberal Studies Program that ensures students are introduced to a broad range of disciplines in the liberal arts and sciences.

Students are required to complete the Core curriculum, which is organized into required foundation courses, distribution areas, and the capping experience. Foundation courses include College Writing I and II, Introductory Philosophy, and Ethics. Distribution areas include fine and creative arts, history, literature, math, the natural and social sciences, and philosophy or religious studies. Students may choose from a list of eligible distribution courses, which underscore attention to values awareness and cover a range of approaches to knowledge and understanding. In addition, each program offers a Capstone course that is offered within the major and draws connections between the discipline and other educational experiences of the Core.

The present Core/Liberal Studies program was implemented in 1985, following three years of campus-wide discussion and review of the previous Core. It was approved by a faculty vote at a full-faculty plenary and has been reviewed by the entire campus community, including full reviews and recommendations, in 2003, 2005, and 2007. In 2003 and 2007, modifications were made in the areas of student learning goals and outcomes.

Current student learning outcomes are based on goals of the Core. After completing the Marist College Core, students should demonstrate:

- The critical skills of written expression
- Awareness of their own values, discipline-related values, and the value implications of the choices they face

- Familiarity with the ideas and methodologies of disciplines in the liberal arts and sciences, including math, the natural and social sciences, philosophy/religious studies, history, literature, and fine and creative arts
- The ability to synthesize the insights and methods from various disciplines
- Exposure to cultures other than their own on campus or abroad

Academic departments that oversee foundation or distribution areas can initiate the addition, removal, or alteration of courses. Any change must be approved by the Core/Liberal Studies Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, and finally, depending upon the nature and extent of the action, the full faculty acting in Plenary Session.

The Core Committee is led by a member of the Marist faculty who is appointed to a three-year renewable term by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with the Academic Affairs Committee. The Committee also includes the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts, the Writing Director, and five additional faculty members. The Core Director and additional faculty members represent the six traditional schools at Marist – Communication and the Arts, Computer Science and Mathematics, Liberal Arts, Management, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

### **Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle for Core**

The Core Committee is primarily responsible for planning and assessment in the Core curriculum. Every year, the Committee updates an assessment plan for the Core, which covers the following elements representing Marist's four-step teaching-learning-assessment cycle.

#### **1. Learning Outcomes**

Following several campus-wide workshops, the Core Committee established a set of goals for the College's general education requirement. These goals are linked to the Mission and Values Statements of the College. Every year, the Core Committee meets to discuss the knowledge and skills that students are expected to exhibit upon successful completion of the Core. Further, the Committee examines various ways to challenge students to become more aware of their own values, as well as discipline-related value issues. From this discussion, the Committee establishes a set of desired student learning outcomes, which flow from the goals of the Core. Student learning outcomes established for the Core are clearly articulated and broadly communicated throughout the campus community. Faculty members who teach foundation or distribution courses are required to incorporate these outcomes into their course syllabi.

#### **2. Learning Opportunities**

Faculty members who teach Core courses are expected to offer students meaningful opportunities to achieve desired student learning outcomes. Every year, school deans, academic department chairs, the Core Committee, and discipline-based faculty committees review syllabi to ensure appropriate learning opportunities are offered.

### **3. Assessment**

The Core Committee is responsible for identifying the methods and tools that will be used to measure how well students are achieving learning outcomes for the Core. Tools used to measure writing competency and values outcomes include the College Writing Proficiency Exam and a rubric-graded ethics assignment. In addition, a rubric-graded assignment targeting all desired student learning outcomes is used in all capping courses. The ethics and capping course assignments are graded by instructors, and a sample of student work is selected for review by the Core Committee. The sample includes a paper representing each level of proficiency (levels 1-4). The instructor also submits a rubric grade sheet for every student in the class and a composite tally sheet totaling how the class scored in each competency area. Student work is coded to provide an unbiased reading by additional readers. Scores from the instructor and additional readers are compared and averaged. Any major discrepancies and the implications of the discrepancies are discussed and remedied by further action, as appropriate, which may include rater training. An aggregate of all student scores is compiled on a tally sheet, which becomes the programmatic report card.

### **4. Data Analysis/Action**

Every year, the Core Committee reviews current and historical assessment results to answer the following questions:

- How well have students mastered Core competencies?
- Are there Core competencies that need attention?

Committee members use this analysis to recommend appropriate action. For example, if it is determined that students lack competency in writing skills, new learning opportunities will be implemented.

The Core Committee prepares an annual report for submission in September to the Academic Affairs Committee and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In the report, the Committee details the results of recent assessment activities, outlines how the results will be used for quality improvement purposes, describes any actions taken based on previous assessments, and includes a copy of the updated assessment plan.

## **B. Academic Programs/Majors**

The following assessment cycle refers to approximately 30 majors offered by the College.

### **Teaching-Learning-Assessment Cycle for Programs/Majors**

All academic programs are required to maintain planning and assessment processes that: articulate a set of clear learning goals and related student learning outcomes; identify processes for regularly assessing achievement of those outcomes; and describe how results will be used to

improve teaching and learning. Programs review their assessment plans annually, beginning with an examination of the currency of program goals and outcomes and their relevance to the mission and vision of the College. Annual reports are due to school deans, usually in September, and should cover the four steps below, which comprise Marist's teaching-learning-assessment cycle. Some programs – typically for reasons of accreditation – may submit annual plans at the beginning or mid-point of the academic year.

### **1. Learning Outcomes**

Every year, academic programs should convene their faculties to discuss the knowledge and skills that students are expected to exhibit upon successful completion of the program. In addition, academic programs define discipline-related values issues of which students should become aware. These faculties will refine a set of desired student learning outcomes that prioritize the most important goals of the program and are linked to the College's Mission and Values Statements. Student learning outcomes should reflect desired changes in knowledge, skills, or values, not on the provision of activities. Further, outcomes should focus on higher-order, rather than simple memorization skills. Higher-order thinking skills include, as examples, placing historical dates in a social and political context rather than simple memorization of those dates and, rather than simply being able to recite passages of Shakespeare's work, providing a causation analysis of why the playwright was preoccupied with questions of succession. Finally, student learning outcomes should be clearly articulated throughout the campus community. Faculty should refer to the Middle States publication entitled *Student Learning Assessment (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*, which has been widely distributed on campus and is available online at <http://www.msche.org/publications.asp>

### **2. Learning Opportunities**

Every year, faculties should examine their program curricula to ensure students have meaningful opportunities to achieve desired learning outcomes. Opportunities for student learning are listed as learning opportunities in the assessment plans and are broadly communicated to program faculty.

### **3. Assessment**

Programs are expected to identify methods for measuring attainment of student learning outcomes. Some data will be collected on an annual basis, and others will be collected in multi-year cycles. Methods should include multiple direct measures and indirect measures. Direct methods demonstrate that actual learning has occurred, and indirect methods imply learning has occurred.

At the programmatic level, direct measures can include:

- Capstone projects, senior theses, exhibits, or performances
- Comprehensive final exams
- Pass rates or scores on licensure, certification, or subject area tests
- Scores on standardized tests, such as LSAT, MCAT, and GRE
- Student publications or conference presentations
- Employer and internship supervisor ratings of students' performance

Indirect measures at the programmatic level can include:

- Focus group interviews with students, faculty members, or employers
- Registration or course enrollment information
- Academic department or program review data
- Job placement
- Employer or alumni surveys
- Student perception surveys
- Proportion of upper-level courses compared to the same program at other institutions
- Graduate school placement rates

Faculty are directed to Chapter 3: Evaluating Student Learning in *Student Learning Assessment* for further assistance in identifying assessment methods.

#### **4. Data Analysis/Action**

Every year, academic department chairs and program directors summarize assessment results in an annual report, which is due with the revised assessment plan to the school dean annually, usually in September. Some programs, due to accreditation standards, may submit annual reports and assessment plans during other times of the year. Annual reports detail the results of recent assessment activities, outline how results will be used for quality improvement purposes, and describe any actions taken based on previous assessments. School deans and academic department chairs/program directors track internal and external results over time to develop benchmarks for the purpose of future analysis.

#### **5. Academic Program Reviews**

All academic programs undergo a formal review every five years or follow a different cycle if dictated by an accrediting body. Academic programs include approximately 30 majors offered by the College and, for the purposes of planning and assessment, include minors, Women's Studies, Jewish Studies, and other academic programs that benefit from systematic and periodic review. Marist voluntarily began this extra level of review in 1999.

All academic program reviews begin with an examination of the College's Mission and Values Statements and discussion of how the program reflects, enhances, and implements these.

Next, the program's mission and course content are reconsidered to ensure units offer opportunities for students to achieve desired learning outcomes.

Following an examination of goals and course content, a program review consists of the following four steps:

*1. Materials and data* – Materials and data are collected throughout the year. Types of material and data to be collected depend on the program's specific goals and objectives and, if applicable, accrediting bodies.

*2. Self-study narrative* – A program review also includes the preparation of a self-study narrative that reflects on all aspects of the program over the past five years. The narrative offers an analysis of collected assessment materials and data, and an examination of the five-year plan and action statements generated at the last assessment cycle. The self-study should include the following narrative elements: 1) mission and goals; 2) description of program; 3) curricular structure; 4) faculty profile; 5) resources; and 6) external relationships. Copies of the narrative and assessment materials and data are sent to the dean of the school, and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

*3. Report of external consultants* – Faculty members from the appropriate school or academic department, the dean of the school, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs appoint a team of two or three external consultants to offer objective evaluation and advice to the College. The team's ultimate recommendations and suggestions will be carefully considered but are not binding.

A two-day site visit for the consultants is scheduled. At least one month prior to the visit, the review team should receive a copy of the self-study narrative and assessment materials and data. Site visits typically include facility tours; interviews with students, faculty, staff, and administrators; and the drafting of a preliminary report. The visit concludes with an exit interview, at which time the preliminary report is delivered to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. A full written report from the chair of the external team will be submitted within one month of the site visit to the dean of the school, who will make the report available to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the academic department chair or program director.

*4. Action plan* – The academic department chair or program director is expected to correct factual errors or misconceptions in the external consultants' report. In consultation with his or her faculty, the chair/director then develops a comprehensive plan that includes a statement of goals and a timetable for actions for the next five years. As one component of this plan, the chair/director will address the relevant suggestions and recommendations of the consultants and explain why other elements of the consultant's report were rejected, if applicable. This plan must take into account the resources available to the program, and thus may require consultation with the school dean. The response and accompanying plan will be submitted to the dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs within one month after receiving the written report of the external evaluators.

## **6. Additional Curricular Review**

Marist employs other assessment methods, in addition to academic program reviews, to ensure its academic programs conform to high standards of currency, relevancy, and rigor. Advisory boards are established in many academic disciplines that help review and assess curricula. Advisory boards comprise educational, professional, and corporate leaders and are focused on improving the delivery of educational experiences and institutionalizing new opportunities and resources for students.

Alumni are surveyed several times on how well their Marist education prepared them for their lives and careers. In the months preceding commencement, graduating students are asked about their experience at the College, as well as their plans immediately following graduation (job and/or further education). Approximately six months after graduation, graduates are asked about their jobs and attendance at graduate or professional schools. Five years after graduation, alumni are again surveyed to collect information about their careers, additional education, and selected outcomes related to their Marist experiences. Academic departments are given the opportunity to design department-specific questions for these surveys. Departments and advisory councils track these assessment results and take appropriate action if the results do not meet expectations.

### **C. Course Level**

Every course offered at Marist is expected to have a syllabus that includes expected student learning outcomes that are linked to objectives of the program, school, College, and if appropriate, the Core. Syllabi are kept on file and are examined annually during the process of faculty review. Syllabi are also expected to describe clear and specific methods that the instructor will use to evaluate whether or not, and to what extent, learning has occurred. Multiple measures should be used that yield direct and indirect evidence of student learning. Direct evidence demonstrates that actual learning has taken place, and indirect evidence suggests or implies learning has taken place.

The following is a list of direct measures Marist faculty may employ at the course level to evaluate student learning:

- Course and homework assignments
- Examinations and quizzes
- Standardized tests
- Term papers and reports
- Observations of field work, internship performance, or clinical experiences
- Research projects
- Participation in class discussion
- Case study analysis
- Rubric scores for written products, oral presentations, or artistic performances
- Grades based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals

The following lists some indirect measures Marist faculty may employ at the course level to evaluate student learning:

- Course evaluations or student surveys
- Test “blueprints” (outlines of concepts and skills covered on tests)
- Percent of time spent in active learning
- Number of student hours spent on service learning
- Number of student hours spent on homework
- Number of student hours spent at intellectual or cultural activities related to the course
- Grades not based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals

The Center for Teaching Excellence offers at least one workshop per semester for faculty on assessment of student learning outcomes.

## APPENDIX A

---

### MARIST INSTITUTIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS (KPMs) 2011-2016

\* will be reviewed with the Board of Trustees

#### I. Academic (VP and AVP Academic Affairs)

##### A. Faculty

- \* Number and quality of faculty publications/presentations: especially those recognized nationally or internationally
- \* Number of faculty engaged in research/presentations with students
- \* Traditional undergraduate student to full-time equivalent faculty ratio
- Number of nationally-recognized faculty members
- Number of faculty engaged in collaborative projects or research with students
- Number of faculty grants and awards

##### B. Student

- \* Percentage of students studying abroad
- \* Percentage of graduates attending top-tier professional/graduate schools
- \* Retention and graduation rates (freshman-sophomore retention and 6yr graduation)
- \* Percentage of students hired into nationally-recognized corporations
- Student awards/recognition (Fulbright, Gilman, Goldwater, etc.)
- Number of students engaged in collaborative projects or research with faculty
- Number and percentage of students with internships at top-tier organizations

#### II. Campus Development (Executive Vice President)

- \* Progress on Master Plan toward recognition of campus in the top 50 in the nation
- \* Quality of facilities against benchmarks
- \* Deferred maintenance
- \* Campus utilization
- Integration of campus with surrounding community

#### III. Enrollment (VP Enrollment Management)

- \* Enrollment by headcount and credit hour for each segment of the student population
- \* Gross tuition revenue for each segment of the student population
- \* Net tuition revenue and discount rate for each segment of the student population
- Selectivity of institution (# of applications, acceptance rate, and yield)
- Quality of enrolled student body by key indicators (test scores, GPA, etc.) for each segment of the student population
- Diversity of incoming student body: ethnic, geographic, gender, international, and by academic discipline for each segment of the student population

#### IV. Diversity (AVP Human Resources and VP Enrollment Management)

- \* Percentage of entering students from underrepresented groups

## APPENDIX A

---

- \* Percentage of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups by department and job classification
- Number of faculty hired from traditionally underrepresented groups
- Number of staff hired from traditionally underrepresented groups
- Percentage of faculty from traditionally underrepresented groups
- Percentage of staff from traditionally underrepresented groups

### V. Institutional Advancement (VP Advancement)

- \* Total new gifts and pledges
- \* Annual giving totals and participation
- \* Number and level of major gifts
- \* Number and level of planned gifts
- Number and level of corporate and foundation grants
- Number and level of government grants
- Quality/frequency of outreach and engagement with alumni, parents, and friends
- Outcomes of strategic advancement events

### VI. Finance (VP Business Affairs/CFO)

- \* Increase/decrease of net assets
- \* Composite Financial Index (“CFI”)
- \* Net operating income ratio and margin
- \* Endowment growth and return
- \* Debt burden ratio
- \* Leverage ratio

### VII. Student Life (VP/Dean Student Affairs)

- \* Housing occupancy
- \* Student athlete graduation rate
- \* Transfer student retention rate
- \* Commuter student retention rate
- Participation of students in service activities
- Number and percentage of students involved in College clubs

### VIII. Technology (VP Information Technology/CIO)

- \* User satisfaction
- \* Leadership in professional associations
- \* Awards and recognition
- \* Partnerships and research including Joint Study activities
- \* Articles published related to technology at Marist
- \* Servers per Kilowatt
- \* Users per Kilowatt
- \* Kilowatt per square foot
- Number and amount of funded research or grants
- Number of grants

## APPENDIX B

---

### LIST OF UNITS BY MAJOR OPERATIONAL AREA

#### I. Office of Academic Affairs

##### A. Academic Programs

1. Academic Grants
2. Center for Career Services
3. Library
4. Student Academic Affairs
  - a. Academic Learning Center
  - b. Center for Advising and Academic Services
  - c. Center for Multicultural Affairs/HEOP
  - d. Student Athlete Enhancement
  - e. Office of the Registrar

##### B. International Programs

##### C. Schools

#### II. Office of the Executive Vice President

##### A. Human Resources

##### B. Information Technology

1. Academic Technology and eLearning
2. Enterprise Solutions
3. Systems/Technology
4. Telecommunications and Network

##### C. Institutional Research and Planning

##### D. Physical Plant

##### E. Security

##### F. Student Affairs

1. Athletics
2. Campus Ministry
3. College Activities
4. Counseling Center
5. Dining Services

## APPENDIX B

---

6. First-Year Programs
7. Health Services
8. Housing and Residential Life
9. Judicial Affairs
10. Liberty Partnership
11. Special Services
12. Upward Bound

### **III. Office of Enrollment Management**

- A. Enrollment Marketing and Communications
- B. Enrollment Services
- C. Graduate and Adult Enrollment
- D. Student Financial Services
- E. Undergraduate Admissions

### **IV. Office of Business Affairs**

- A. Budget/Finance
- B. Business Controller's Office
  1. Accounting
  2. Accounts Payable
  3. Payroll
- C. Purchasing

### **V. Office of College Advancement**

- A. Advancement Services
- B. Alumni Relations
- C. Annual Giving
- D. Corporate and Foundation Relations
- E. Major and Planned Giving
- F. MIPO
- G. Public Affairs
- H. Special Events

## APPENDIX C

---

### LIST OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

The following are examples of the types of assessment instruments that Marist uses. These examples have been used in the past and are expected to be used in the future. However, the specific applications may vary over time, depending on the needs of the institution and the individual units.

#### **I. Nationally Normed Surveys**

- A. Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)
- B. Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)
  - 1. Your First Year College Survey
  - 2. Freshman Survey
- C. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

#### **II. Proprietary Surveys**

- A. Student Engagement of Marist Students (SEMS)
- B. Marist conducts numerous unit-specific surveys that gather detailed, actionable feedback. Many of these are conducted annually, while others are conducted as needed:
  - 1. Non-returning student survey
  - 2. Employee Benefits survey
  - 3. Orientation Evaluations

#### **III. Student Evaluations of Courses**

At the end of every semester, students are given the opportunity to complete and submit an evaluation on each one of their courses. The results are not seen by the Administration, but rather go directly to the Department Chairs and the faculty themselves to use as one piece of information in development and continuous improvement plans.

## APPENDIX C

---

### **IV. Comparison to Industry Standards and Consortiums**

- A. Financial Performance/Bond Rating
- B. College Library Consortium

### **V. Benchmarking and Best Practices/Using Comparator Groups**

- A. American Association of University Professors (AAUP)
- B. College and University Professors Association (CUPA)
- C. Integrated Postsecondary Education Statistics (IPEDS)
- D. Guidebook surveys, such as:
  - 1. U.S. News & World Report
  - 2. Peterson's
  - 3. Princeton Review

### **VI. Internal Data Tracking and Analysis**

- A. Common Data Set (CDS)
- B. Fact Book
- C. Longitudinal admissions, enrollment and housing data about students
- D. Current and historical data about instructional activity

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Also, not all surveys are conducted every year. This is provided for reference as a representative list of the types of surveys and analysis that Marist conducts on an ongoing basis.