FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

2025 MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fordham is pleased to present its 2025 Self-Study to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In the course of this work, key themes emerged and reemerged through discovery and reflection. One theme is especially apparent: Fordham remains at its core a profoundly student-centered institution of higher education. This flows from its mission and, as the chapters of this Self-Study demonstrate, it is lived every day by members of the Fordham community. The University is undergoing significant change, which creates some uncertainty, yet also opportunity and excitement that can catalyze Fordham to become an even stronger, more mission-driven institution. Finally, this process has reminded us that community is a core element of what makes Fordham so remarkable. That community takes many forms, evolving and changing as the institution changes, and is vital to Fordham's distinctive approach to teaching, research, and learning. Likewise, our community is crucial in our ability to nurture and prepare students to become global changemakers who will transform the world.

The Self-Study process has embodied the Jesuit practice of discernment. Hundreds of members of Fordham's community examined the University with openness, purpose, and curiosity. They partnered within and across their groups and teams to listen, discuss, and engage on the substance and spirit of analysis and assessment. Their commitment to a Self-Study that will inspire and guide the University into the future is reflected on the pages that follow.

Our Approach

Fordham selected the standards-based approach for its Self-Study, demonstrating compliance with Middle States Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation. This approach facilitated each of the institution's Self-Study intended outcomes: (1) achieving successful reaccreditation; (2) recognizing and strengthening Fordham's understanding of the importance of ongoing assessment and evidence-based decision-making to ensure continuous improvement that advances its mission and institutional priorities; (3) actively undertaking inclusive and transparent community-wide engagement and critical self-appraisal; and (4) engaging in a deep examination of current practices, opportunities, and challenges while producing a Self-Study that adds value to and inspires the University's current strategic planning processes.

The University's four Institutional Priorities, developed through a consultative dialogue with key stakeholder groups across the Fordham community at the outset of the Self-Study process, are integrated throughout the chapters. These priorities reinforce Fordham's strategic commitments, support our mission, and reflect all members of our community. Designed to represent the interdependent aspirations of our institution, including retrospective and prospective forms of self-examination and reflection, they call on us to do the following:

1. Position Fordham as a leader in the discovery of wisdom, creation of knowledge, and transmission of learning through distinctive research, teaching, and programs, including those that educate for justice and address the challenges of our time.
2. Enhance the holistic student experience, both inside and outside the classroom, in order to maximize the ability of all students to both succeed and flourish at Fordham and beyond.
3. Cultivate a diverse, equitable, inclusive, caring, and connected community that fosters institutional belonging among students, staff, and faculty.
4. Promote institutional vitality and continuous improvement in a rapidly changing landscape by supporting strategic resource stewardship and agile adaptation.

Our Structure and Process

Fordham's Self-Study process was led by two Steering Committee co-chairs—Dr. Greer Jason-DiBartolo, associate dean of strategic initiatives and executive director of operations, Gabelli School of Business, and Dr. Melissa Labonte, associate professor of political science and faculty affiliate, Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs—and a 17-member Steering Committee. The Steering Committee included administrators, staff, and faculty with a wide range of institutional knowledge and tenure, with representation from all schools and campuses. Common to all has been a passion to help advance Fordham's mission and a desire to learn more about the institution through the Self-Study process.

On the basis of self-identified preferences and area expertise, most Steering Committee members were selected to co-chair one of the seven Working Groups (each comprising 10 to 17 members) or one of three Teams established to provide key support and expertise to the Working Groups: Evidence Inventory; Communications; and Student Voice.

Each Working Group was assigned to one Middle States Standard and related Requirements of Affiliation. Guided by lines of inquiry developed through the Self-Study Design, they gathered and analyzed data from a broad range of sources. The Evidence Inventory Team prepared a repository of hundreds of documents for use by the Working Groups and served as a resource to the Steering Committee and Working Groups throughout the Self-Study process. The Communications Team developed strategic communications and raised awareness of Middle States accreditation and the community's role in it. The Student Voice Team represented undergraduate and graduate students across all schools and campuses. Its members participated in focus groups and engaged with select Working Groups on various aspects of the Self-Study. In addition, three Managing Members were identified to liaise across the Working Groups and ensure effective collaboration and communication.

Collectively, these bodies involved more than 150 individuals from all parts of the University. Most importantly, this structure has proven critical in advancing all four of its intended outcomes in the spirit of Institutional Priorities three and four, which speak to community and continuous improvement.

As the report and evidence inventory demonstrate, Working Groups reviewed internal and external documentation such as policies, handbooks, and web pages. They also conducted surveys, focus groups, and individual interviews when relevant. Stakeholders from all areas of the community were consulted to provide perspectives, and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) synthesized information and provided national data and benchmarks for comparison where appropriate. The Steering Committee worked to include a broad range of voices and allow for varied materials to accurately depict the complex processes and deep-rooted traditions that support our mission and drive our commitment to continuous improvement.

In carrying out the core work of the Self-Study, which has been guided in all phases by Fordham's Self-Study Design and timeline, the Steering Committee co-chairs met weekly with the University's accreditation liaison officer (also a Steering Committee member) and co-chairs of the Evidence Inventory Team. Self-Study co-chairs also participated in President's Advisory Council meetings throughout the process, ensuring the Self-Study's alignment with two other critical initiatives occurring on parallel tracks at Fordham: (1) development and launch of a new strategic plan; and (2) completion of its Jesuit Mission Priority Examen (MPE), a periodic reaffirmation of the University's Jesuit identity.

The Steering Committee met regularly throughout the 2023–24 academic year, with Working Groups and Teams engaging during the same time period to discuss and advance lines of inquiry, evidence gathering and assessment, and the drafting of chapter reports focusing on their respective Standards for Accreditation. During the 2024–25 academic year, the Self-Study draft was finalized and shared with the Chair of the External Review Team in advance of his preliminary site visit in early November 2024. Steering Committee co-chairs worked closely with the Communications Team co-chair to complete the final version of the Self-Study, which will be shared with Middle States in February 2025, in advance of the External Review Team site visit, scheduled for April 6–9.

As noted above, the larger Fordham community has been invited to participate regularly throughout the Self-Study process, yielding important insights and feedback. These have included updates to the Board of Trustees; multiple student groups across campuses; administrative councils; Faculty Senate; college, school, and deans' councils; and others. University-wide communications on Self-Study progress were issued regularly. In addition, the Self-Study website has served as a hub of information and news, and Fordham's student-run newspapers have carried stories about the Middle States reaccreditation. In January 2025, the Self-Study report was released to the broader University community, and town hall events were held to seek feedback and answer questions about the process and report. Additional communications and opportunities for feedback from the University community are planned through spring 2025.

Our Findings

Each of the Self-Study Report chapters concludes with key findings—gleaned through critical self-reflection and assessment—that have been vital in identifying opportunities for improvement, adaptation, and innovation. We briefly describe the main takeaways across each chapter and, to infuse deeper meaning into the Self-Study, we also have nested suggested areas of improvement across each of Fordham's four Institutional Priorities to create an assessment feedback loop highlighting the interconnectedness and inseparability of our University mission, Self-Study Institutional Priorities, and the Standards for Accreditation.

Standard I: Mission and Goals
Fordham's mission is its strongest asset. Its reaffirmation through processes such as the Jesuit Mission Priority Examen and the University's strategic planning offers the institution as a whole and each of its schools, divisions, and community members a vision that guides day-to-day practices, programmatic growth, and innovation. It also serves as a vital compass for navigating conflicts and challenges. A diverse, creative, and energetic community of students, faculty, and staff continuously advances initiatives designed to realize the University's mission. Still, there is room for growth: Fordham sometimes struggles to ensure that all of its strategic initiatives have sufficient resources, including the time and talent of the community, and to choose clearly among them when resources are limited.

Standard II: Ethics and Integrity
Fordham excels on many fronts consistent with its mission, the Jesuit values of academic excellence, and the promotion of justice and human rights in education, research, administration, and governance. It fosters a community that is growing in cultural and religious diversity, with

inclusion as a central value. Fordham guarantees freedom of inquiry and promotes responsibility and transparency in all aspects of the University's work. Fordham's mission and ethos are key strengths in attracting students, faculty, staff, and administrators to study and work in an institution with values and ethical practices that also extend to the neighboring communities.

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience
Fordham's approach to the design and delivery of the student learning experience reflects the University's mission to prepare students to be people for others, as well as its commitment to the discovery of wisdom and the transmission of learning through research and undergraduate, graduate, and professional education of the highest quality. The University leverages its New York City location to offer students distinctive experiential learning, research, and professional development experiences. Fordham also works to recruit, support, and retain highly qualified faculty dedicated to teaching, research, and service, and to deliver a general education (core) curriculum and wide array of academic programs that foster the intellectual, moral, and religious development of students to prepare them for leadership and service in a global society.

Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience
The University's Jesuit mission and the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm of "well-rounded growth" require supportive environments, necessary resources, and social structures to scaffold and facilitate the important transitions embedded in the college experience. The University invests significantly in supporting all students to enable retention and successful degree competition. To study and learn at Fordham is to know you are cared for as an individual and welcome in a community of peers, mentors, and supporters who are committed to your health, well-being, and future professional and personal success and flourishing.

Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment
Educational effectiveness assessment at Fordham is occurring in a regular and systematic fashion among programs accredited by specialized accrediting bodies. In some of those programs, as well as in programs not specially accredited, assessment is driven by a concern for student learning and program improvement rather than by mere compliance. Evidence gathered during the Self-Study process suggests that programs, especially in the Arts and Sciences, conduct assessments and use the findings to make program improvements but have not reported this via the annual report mechanisms. The absence of more complete documentation may lessen the long-term benefits of assessment, such as faculty being able to review progress over time and institutional leaders and other stakeholders having access to assessments and their results. There are opportunities for improvement in this area across the institution. It may be beneficial for the University to establish a centralized system or body empowered to facilitate meaningful dialogue about teaching, learning, and assessment; create assessment-related professional development opportunities and resources; increase reporting and transparency; and enable the University to more easily track assessment efforts and student learning outcomes.

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement
Continuous institutional planning in support of Fordham's mission centers on thorough, ongoing assessment and alignment between strategic planning and institutional priorities. This approach informs decision-making and elevates all areas of the University's operations. Over the past decade, Fordham has experimented with varied approaches to strategic planning at the University level in an effort to ensure the institution can react quickly to the rapidly shifting higher

education environment. This approach, complemented by a rigorous and transparent budget process, positions the institution to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges, and is vital to ensuring responsible and responsive stewardship of resources.

Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration
Fordham affirms the value of shared governance at every leadership level and works to build trust and transparency by listening to our community, communicating regularly and clearly to stakeholders, and partnering to fully meet identified challenges. Through this commitment, the University is able to operate effectively and with appropriate autonomy, forge a sense of belonging for all, and focus on lifting the institution as a whole and the communities that help sustain it.

Self-Study Recommendations Integrated Through Fordham's Institutional Priorities

Institutional Priority 1—Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning
Position Fordham as a leader in the discovery of wisdom, creation of knowledge, and transmission of learning through distinctive research, teaching, and programs, including those that educate for justice and address the challenges of our time.

- Provide full and robust levels of support for the creation of a Center for Educational Innovation, which would serve as a much-needed resource for pedagogical and professional development training and opportunities for all faculty. (Standard III)
- More deliberately integrate student-learning assessment into academic planning processes to ensure that student learning outcomes inform school and institutional goals and priorities. This includes setting strategic goals for educational improvement based on assessment findings and tracking progress over time. (Standard V)
- Utilize technology more effectively across all aspects of University life, especially teaching and learning. Given how the rapidly changing landscape of digital citizenship and information literacy have impacted learning for Gen Z students, the University must continue to recognize the ethics and importance of leveraging those innovations. The result would provide better educational services and opportunities without losing the student-faculty interpersonal qualities that have supported students' moral development and academic learning. (Standard III)
- Create and maintain a structure and mechanisms for incremental/periodic assessment of the core curriculum across all academic divisions. This will help ensure that the core curriculum remains a living, adaptable, and responsive educational anchor for all Fordham undergraduates, delivering on the institutional responsibility to educate students in the Jesuit tradition and allowing them to succeed and flourish in the workforce of the future. (Standard III)
- Recommit to provide distinctive opportunities for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) learning that draw on Fordham's strengths in educating the whole person, including the human impacts of science and technology on society. Efforts should be made to face the financial and curricular challenges this effort represents, as well as identify opportunities in this area that could also strengthen recruitment and retention. (Standards I, III, and VI)

Institutional Priority 2—Holistic Student Success and Flourishing
Enhance the holistic student experience, both inside and outside the classroom, in order to maximize the ability of all students to succeed and flourish at Fordham and beyond.

- While Fordham is poised to make gains in retention, the institution should continue to enhance and optimize student support by building on existing strengths and promoting interoffice coordination regarding retention and graduation rates, both generally and for special populations of students. (Standard IV)
- Provide more robust professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance their understanding of program-level assessment principles and practices. This could include workshops, seminars, and resources on designing effective assessments, analyzing data, and using assessment findings for program improvement. Within this context, facilitate collaboration and communication among units and across schools to share effective practices, lessons learned, and resources related to assessment. This could involve establishing communities of practice, cross-unit working groups, and regular meetings to discuss assessment initiatives and generate feedback on such efforts. (Standard V)
- Further ongoing efforts to support transfer students by streamlining processes to evaluate and award transfer credits and place increased focus on graduation rates, possibly modeled after the University's investment in increasing student retention rates. (Standard IV)
- Invest in online pedagogy; student-centered online instructional design and syllabus development; and effective, ongoing assessment of online learning as the University continues to bring support for online learning in house. (Standard III)

Institutional Priority 3—Community and Institutional Belonging
Cultivate a diverse, equitable, inclusive, caring, and connected community that fosters institutional belonging among students, staff, and faculty.

- Consider ways Fordham can more fully adopt and effectively integrate an approach to Catholic and Jesuit mission formation that is clearly articulated and communicated to every member of the University community from recruitment through orientation and throughout Fordhamites' lives. (Standard I)
- Remain committed to the important steps Fordham is taking to reduce tuition dependence and lighten the economic burden on students in order to increase admissions, strengthen retention, and alleviate economic inequalities in access to education. (Standard II)
- Continue building on gains in diversifying the University's student body, faculty, administration, and staff, especially in ways that further enrich student life and learning. (Standard II)
- Continue efforts to enhance internal communication and build higher levels of trust, particularly between administration and faculty. The work of the Shared Governance Committee and Statutes Task Force should be encouraged and modeled. (Standard VII)
- Formalize and share the results of assessment procedures of administrative units more widely. (Standard VII)

Institutional Priority 4—Institutional Vitality and Continuous Improvement
Promote institutional vitality and continuous improvement in a rapidly changing landscape by supporting strategic resource stewardship and agile adaptation.

- Establish a unified, centralized data collection process and storage strategy for all University-wide documents required for periodic assessment of policies and practices. Stronger oversight, integration, coordination, and transparency—meeting Fordham's standards of ethics and integrity—would help ensure the University is advancing its mission and would serve the Standards and the Institutional Priorities of this Self-Study. This recommendation complements narrative focusing on ethics, student learning, the student experience, and educational assessment effectiveness. In part because of Fordham's complex institutional structure and the often decentralized manner in which units operate, many Working Groups found it challenging to efficiently locate documents, reports, data, and other artifacts required for the Self-Study. (Standards II, III, IV, and V)
- Advance the commitment to move to a multiyear budget planning process to better support and further President Tania Tetlow's new strategic planning process, which aims to balance inclusiveness and flexibility, clarify goals, assign responsibility for achieving them, and implement metrics for measuring success. Such a system would enhance long-term planning and informed decision-making across the University. (Standard VI)
- Continue advancing Fordham's coordinated, multifaceted efforts to strengthen its financial position and enhance revenue, including through assessment of the impact such efforts may have on academic program development and student learning and satisfaction. (Standards I and VI)
- Consider organizing an annual "orientation" on shared governance to ensure new faculty and administrators are knowledgeable about our commitment to this principle. (Standard VII)

As Fordham prepares for its April site visit, our community looks forward to engaging closely with members of the External Review Team. Their expertise will help us continue to deliver on our mission and strengthen a culture of continuous assessment and improvement.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

When John Hughes, coadjutor bishop and later archbishop of New York, established Fordham as St. John's College on June 24, 1841, he considered it a "daring and dangerous undertaking," not least because he initially lacked the funds to purchase the land where he saw a great university taking root. But he persevered. He understood instinctively that education is the key to first-class citizenship for immigrants and success for all. And he was determined to establish the first Catholic institution of higher education in the northeastern United States. Thus, a small college in a farming village was transformed into the Jesuit University of New York. Inspired by this spirit, thousands upon thousands of students, faculty, and alumni have been transformed since its founding—all in the shared pursuit of wisdom and learning in the service of others.

Fordham's founding ethos of wisdom, learning, faith, and service has endured. New York state granted Fordham University a charter to operate as a postsecondary educational institution in 1846. It has been continuously accredited by the Middle States Commission since 1921 (Requirement of Affiliation 1). Fordham encompasses nine schools with residential campuses in the Bronx (Rose Hill) and Manhattan (Lincoln Center). It has an additional campus in Westchester County and administers the Louis Calder Biological Field Station in Armonk, New York, as well as the Fordham London site in the United Kingdom. The University is one of 468 doctoral or doctoral/professional institutions in the United States and one of 133 doctoral universities with "high research activity," according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

As of fall 2023, Fordham's faculty includes 722 full-time instructional staff, 538 of whom are tenured or tenure-track, and more than 1,039 part-time instructional staff. The undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio is 14 to 1, and the average class size is 23.
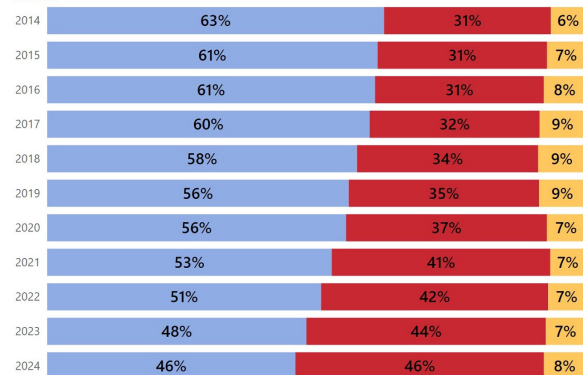
Student Population and Trends

Fordham serves undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who seek an education rooted in Jesuit values and infused with the culture, resources, and vibrancy of New York City. The University enrolled 16,019 credit-bearing students in fall 2024: 10,512 undergraduates and 5,507 graduate and professional students (Requirement of Affiliation 2). They pursue degrees and advanced certificates in nearly 200 academic programs. Approximately 90% of undergraduates receive some form of financial aid (fall 2023). The first-to-second-year retention rate is 87.6% (fall 2023, full-time first-year students), and the six-year graduation rate is 80.3% (2017 cohort). Graduates find success: 89% of the undergraduate Class of 2023 was employed, continuing their education, or engaged in public service or other meaningful endeavors within six months of graduation.

About a quarter of Fordham's undergraduate students come from New York City; the remaining students hail from all 50 states, many U.S. territories, and more than 90 countries. Over the past decade, about 47% of Fordham's graduate students have come from outside New York or beyond the United States. Between 2015 and 2023, students from low-income families represented about 20% of each incoming undergraduate class. In fall 2024, that percentage increased to 30%. Overall undergraduate enrollment has increased 6% from 2020 to 2024. The increase reflects greater numbers of students of color, who constitute approximately 50% of the fall 2024 incoming class (IO–Demographic Profile of Enrolled Students Fall 2024).

Diversity by Academic Level
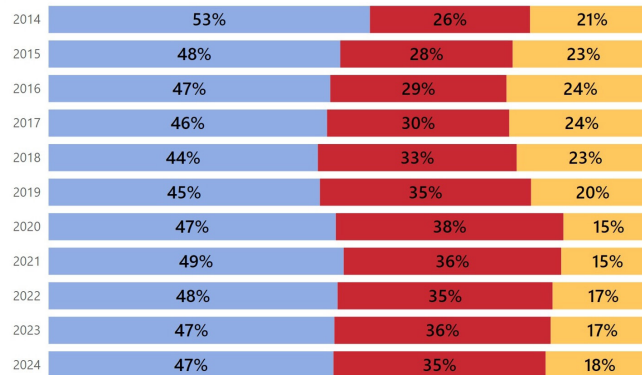
UNDERGRADUATE
FALL TERM

Year	White or unknown	Student of color	International
2014	63%	31%	6%
2015	61%	31%	7%
2016	61%	31%	8%
2017	60%	32%	9%
2018	58%	34%	9%
2019	56%	35%	9%
2020	56%	37%	7%
2021	53%	41%	7%
2022	51%	42%	7%
2023	48%	44%	7%
2024	46%	46%	8%

% OF CREDIT-BEARING STUDENTS AS OF CENSUS

● White or unknown ● Student of color ● International

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL
FALL TERM

Year	White or unknown	Student of color	International
2014	53%	26%	21%
2015	48%	28%	23%
2016	47%	29%	24%
2017	46%	30%	24%
2018	44%	33%	23%
2019	45%	35%	20%
2020	47%	38%	15%
2021	49%	36%	15%
2022	48%	35%	17%
2023	47%	36%	17%
2024	47%	35%	18%

% OF CREDIT-BEARING STUDENTS AS OF CENSUS

NOTE: FOR SOME YEARS, THE TOTAL PERCENTAGE IS SLIGHTLY GREATER OR LESS THAN 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

Mission Statement, Core Values, and Vision

Fordham University is committed to the discovery of wisdom and the transmission of learning through research and undergraduate, graduate, and professional education of the highest quality. Guided by its Catholic and Jesuit traditions, Fordham fosters the intellectual, moral, and religious development of its students and prepares them for leadership in a global society. Fordham's Board of Trustees unanimously approved this mission in 2005, along with an explanation of how Fordham describes its characteristics as a Catholic and Jesuit university in New York City. It informs goals that have been embedded within the University's strategic planning processes, influences decision-making at levels across the University, and addresses internal and external contexts and constituencies (S1–Mission Statement). The mission elaborates on key ideals that pertain to our work as a university, a Catholic and Jesuit university, and a university located in the heart of New York City.

The Academic Life

Fordham's academic life represents the Catholic and Jesuit commitment to the liberal arts, humanistic education, and the promotion of justice. Students are taught to make connections across programs of study and to pursue their work as scholars with diligence and humility.

Care of the Whole Person: *Cura Personalis*

St. Ignatius Loyola, the 16th-century founder of the Jesuits, wanted educators in his schools to be attentive to the personal needs and talents of each student. The care of the whole person—*cura personalis*—is a hallmark of Jesuit education at Fordham. We acknowledge the interconnected needs of people worldwide and encourage students to go beyond campus to learn with and from communities throughout New York City and around the globe.

Striving for Excellence: *Magis*

Ignatius urged his fellow Jesuits to seek the *magis* (or "more" in Latin). For him, that meant always striving to serve the "greater glory of God." Ignatius' commitment to excellence included never being content with easy answers or existing ways, always being ready to question assumptions, embrace change, and help students reach their full potential. Through *magis*, students become discerning citizens and community changemakers who see pursuing prosperity and doing good as compatible goals.

Transformation and Service

Fordham seeks to shape individuals who build up communities for and with others. Empowered by academic and professional training in their chosen field, students gain a deep sense of personal mission and work to address the world's most pressing problems.

Becoming 'Contemplatives in Action'

Ignatius believed that life is a constant interplay between action and reflection, work and prayer, doing and knowing. By reflecting on the surrounding world and the deepest movements of the heart, students develop, integrate, and apply skills for responsible leadership in service of social justice.

Institutional Goals

Fordham's institutional goals are featured in its 2020 strategic plan, *Educating for Justice Fordham University's Vision and Strategic Plan 2021–2026*, and its Anti-Racism Action Plan, *Addressing Racism, Educating for Justice*. They include the following:

- Educate and form students to be global citizens and leaders of conscience who are prepared to engage across lines of difference and contention to transform a world torn by inequality and polarization
- Excel across the natural and applied sciences and allied fields to promote social change and equity
- Cultivate a diverse, equitable, inclusive, caring, and connected community that promotes each member's development as a whole person
- Develop robust admissions strategies for the effective recruitment of students of color
- Recruit and retain a more diverse faculty, administration, and staff
- Develop curricular and co-curricular initiatives that support the imperative of confronting racism and educate for justice
- Create a more welcoming and affirming campus
- Build lasting relationships with campus neighbors
- Amplify the University's voice in educating for justice beyond the campus

Notable Changes and Accomplishments Since the 2016 Middle States Self-Study

Institutional Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Following its reaccreditation in 2016, Fordham advanced a continuous strategic planning process that led to six interconnected priorities: contemporary teaching and learning infused with ethics and justice; strategically focused research; a diverse and inclusive community; a global perspective; the inspiration and challenge of New York City; and a strategic and agile institution.

In 2019, Fordham completed Faith & Hope | The Campaign for Financial Aid, raising $175 million for scholarships. In fall 2024, the University announced the successful completion of its Cura Personalis campaign, raising more than $370 million to enhance the student experience in four mission-inspired areas: access and affordability; academic excellence; student wellness and success; and athletics.

Institutional initiatives have included the Reimagining Higher Education project; the Reimagining the Function and Structure of Arts and Sciences at Fordham project; the Core Curriculum revision process; and a faculty-focused Task Force on Interdisciplinary Cultures and Structures. Other efforts have led to a redesigned Center for Community Engaged Learning

(CCEL); the launch of online programs within select graduate and professional schools; establishment of a new undergraduate advising model; development of RamCentral (formerly Fordham Hub), a digital platform connecting students to academic advising, career services, student clubs, and more; a new academic rating system positively correlated with retention; and expanded faculty research tied to a new Office of Research led by an associate-provost-level chief research officer.

Academic Leadership and Senior-Level Governance

Fordham appointed its first lay president, Tania Tetlow, in 2022 and its provost, Dennis C. Jacobs, in 2019. Six new deans lead Fordham's nine undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools. Additionally, Fordham has appointed several new vice presidents and senior leaders in key areas such as Athletics, Equity and Inclusion, Finance, IT, Legal Counsel, Marketing and Communications, and Student Affairs in the past several years.

Student Experience and Support

Fordham opened the new Joseph M. McShane, S.J. Campus Center in 2022. It features a redesigned Marketplace dining area, a new fitness center, and expanded spaces for the Career Center for Cura Personalis and CCEL. Fordham has also strengthened belonging and inclusivity through the University Task Force on Retention, undergraduate Student Success Deans, and the FirstGen Network for students who are the first in their families to pursue college degrees.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

University-wide, the percentage of students of color increased from 29% in fall 2014 to 43% in fall 2024[1], primarily because of increases in the diversity of undergraduate students. At the graduate level, the percentage of students of color increased from 26% to 35% over the same period. Students' religious affiliation, if any, is collected during the application process and reported in the University Fact Book (S2-C6–Fordham Demographic Profile of Enrolled Students), which presents a list of the more than two dozen faiths reported by Fordham students.

Fordham has aimed for staff diversity that is more reflective of the surrounding area. As of fall 2023, 43% of Fordham's administration and staff identified as persons of color compared to 44% of adults in the region. Fordham has also increased the representation of persons of color in its full-time instructional staff—27% of both tenure-line and non-tenure-line faculty identify as persons of color. However, retention of faculty of color remains a challenge that Fordham is working to address. For example, between 2022 and 2024, the University supported the participation of seven faculty in the National Center for Faculty Development's Faculty Success Program (S2-C6–NYSED Faculty Diversity Survey).

Investment in Resources: Physical Plant and Technology

Fordham refurbished residence hall space, renovated athletics and gym facilities, and established a new psychology clinic serving the greater Bronx community. At its Lincoln Center campus, Fordham opened a new welcome space and undergraduate residence hall. It also created a new learning commons and expanded spaces at the Rose Hill campus for its Social Innovation Collaboratory and Fordham Foundry, the University's hub for innovation and entrepreneurship.

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[1] Fordham collects and reports demographic information about its students and faculty in accordance with standards developed by the U.S. Department of Education.

Several Fordham buildings achieved Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification; and electric car-charging stations were added to the Rose Hill campus parking garage. Fordham also opened a new, multistory London Center campus building in 2018. Across all campuses, Fordham continued to make significant investments in instructional and research technology. Some were necessitated by COVID-19; however, many others represent the University's commitment to continuous improvement in this area, including establishing a Learning and Innovation Technology Environment (LITE) space on both the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses; upgrading campus Wi-Fi and classroom instructional technology; increasing digital access to academic resources; completing renovations to science labs; and establishing new cybersecurity and data science research and learning facilities.

Labor Relations
Fordham employees live and work in a high-cost region of the country; balancing their economic needs with University fiscal health is a significant challenge. In fall 2017, Fordham's full-time and part-time non-tenure-line instructional staff in many of its schools voted to unionize. The first collective bargaining agreement (CBA) was signed in summer 2018 and updated in January 2023. In addition to increasing compensation and providing more job security for long-serving instructors, the agreement established a system for evaluating classroom performance and providing pathways to promotion for excellent teachers. In spring 2022, graduate student workers in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) voted to unionize, with stipend rates and benefits among the most significant issues. Undergraduate resident assistants also voted to unionize in spring 2023. The University reached agreements with both unions in spring 2024.

Challenges for the Institution

Undergraduate Admissions, Yield, and Retention
Tuition prices sit at historic highs while students and families grapple with high inflation, less disposable income, and a spike in borrowing rates (including for student loans). Attacks on the value of a college degree, alongside the emergence of lower-cost online educational alternatives, disrupt traditional program delivery, recruitment, and retention.

When comparing data for the class entering in 2015 to that of 2024, it is clear that undergraduate applications remained relatively stable (42,811 in 2015 compared to 43,364 in 2024). During the most recent admissions cycle, Fordham ranked in the 95th percentile among applications to private colleges and universities nationwide. The University accepts 59% of those applicants. However, it yields only approximately 10% of those offered admission, putting it in the 9th percentile nationwide, according to Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) yield data.

While there has been relative consistency in enrolled student quality, both student yield and retention rates are being studied carefully to identify areas for improvement. For example, students of color and international students have lower six-year graduation rates (80% and 75%, respectively, for the fall 2014 and 2016 cohorts) than white/unreported students (86%). In addition, 7% of students of color and 8% of international students graduate in their fifth or sixth year, compared to 3% of white/unreported students.

Demographic Pressure on Admissions
Nationally, the number of 18- to 24-year-olds is projected to decline significantly over the next

decade,[2] increasing competition for students, particularly in the tristate area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, where Fordham enrolls substantial proportions of students. Additionally, the high cost of living and operating in New York City can impede recruitment and retention. Fordham has implemented admission strategies to increase the geographic diversity of its students, including recruiting from the U.S. South and West. The University also has sought to make it easier for first-generation college students and students from low-income families to apply and enroll by offering fee waivers for low-income applicants and adopting a test-optional admissions policy.

Challenges to Graduate and Professional School Enrollment
Fordham has experienced fluctuations in graduate and professional school enrollment over the past decade. Some of the changes represent the traditional converse relationship between the health of the job market and graduate enrollment. In other instances, the challenges are geopolitical and reflect decreases in international student enrollment from countries such as China. And while Fordham's law, business, and doctoral programs draw applicants from across the country and internationally, they face increasing competition from online degree programs that often offer lower tuition costs. To maintain graduate enrollments, some programs have added online or hybrid options.

Proliferation of Online Learning Options
As noted above, the number of competitor institutions with online degree-granting undergraduate and graduate programs—many with lower costs and less stringent admission standards than in-person offerings at the same institutions—has increased. Some offer degrees that require fewer credits and less time as well as credit for work or life experiences. Some institutions have not only expanded online but also opened satellite programs in urban locations worldwide, including in New York City.

Advancing the Natural and Applied Sciences
In 2020, natural and applied sciences represented 34% of bachelor's degrees and 33% of master's degrees awarded nationwide. At Fordham, those numbers were 13% and 6%, respectively. Although Fordham has strong faculty in some STEM areas, most of its facilities are outdated. Fordham plans to capitalize on its Jesuit mission and New York City location to differentiate itself in the STEM arena, including through advancing signature academic programs; promoting research and leveraging partnerships; developing a stellar team of science faculty; enhancing facilities and infrastructure; building inclusive, integrated STEM communities; and launching a new science honors program.

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[2] Nathan Grawe, *Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education*, first ed. (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018).

STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

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.

Institutional Priorities most closely aligned with this Standard: Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning; Holistic Student Success and Flourishing; and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Guiding the University (Criteria 1c-d; 4, Requirement of Affiliation 7)

Fordham's Board of Trustees is the governing body responsible for determining the University's mission. The current mission was last reviewed and unanimously approved in April 2005 (S1–Mission Statement). While there are no current formal efforts to modify or update it, the Jesuit Mission Priority Examen (MPE) process described below and in other parts of the Self-Study has provided opportunities to reconsider and recommit to the mission and the vision it embodies.

A Fordham education at all levels is student-centered and attentive to *cura personalis*, the development and care of the whole person. It is based on close collaboration among students, faculty, and staff. As explored in more detail in Chapter 3, the University works to continuously deepen the alignment of the curriculum with its mission and goals. For example, it is currently revising the core curriculum required of all undergraduate students. With its foundation in the liberal arts and sciences, the core curriculum endeavors to provide students with distinctive opportunities for deep exploration of the human condition and to prepare them to forge a more just world.

In 2015, the University launched a first-of-its-kind, multiphase strategic planning process, Continuous University Strategic Planning (CUSP), which was led by more than 20 representatives of the faculty, administration, and staff. This committee, responsible for institutional development and improvement, was charged with preparing an architecture for a strategic framework comprising six themes that would individually and collectively embody Fordham's mission.

While engaged in the CUSP process (discussed further in Chapter 6), all schools and divisions undertook consultative processes to identify area-specific goals corresponding with a mission-driven strategic vision. These processes became the foundation for *Educating for Justice, Fordham University's Vision and Strategic Plan 2021–2026*. Approved by the Board of Trustees in 2020, it contains six priorities aligned with Fordham's mission as a Catholic and Jesuit university in New York City. *Educating for Justice* has provided a tangible framework for employees and divisions at Fordham to establish annual, plan-aligned goals. Assessing progress in meeting those goals became part of the annual performance review process, resulting in synergy between Fordham's mission and decision-making related to planning, resource allocation, and program and curriculum development.

Fordham University is—by tradition, ongoing choice, and commitment—a Catholic, Jesuit university. Its responsibilities tied to the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) are outlined in the 2012 Statement of Shared Purpose between the institution and the Jesuit community at Fordham University. That statement clarifies the relationship between the two and serves as a blueprint to "preserve and promote the Jesuit and Catholic character of the institution and ensure that it remains both an Ignatian and a Jesuit work" (S1-C1.d–Statement of Shared Purpose BoT).

In 2017, the University participated in its first MPE, a self-study and peer-review process connected to Fordham's sponsorship by the Society of Jesus and overseen by the Association

of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU). The MPE resembles an accreditation and serves as the Society's confirmation of an institution's Catholic and Jesuit identity. During the 2017 MPE, several priorities were identified in connection with Fordham's mission, including the development of a more comprehensive and strategic plan for enhancing faculty, staff, and trustee understandings of mission and strengthening of the University's service learning program (S1–2017 Fordham MPE Self-Study; S1–2017 Fordham MPE AJCU visiting Team Report). Significant progress has been made on both priorities, including the launch of the Arrupe Seminar, a professional development program for Fordham faculty and staff focusing on Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit higher education; and the Arrupe Seminar for Trustees, a multipart program drawing 11 participants in its first year (S1-C1.d–Arrupe Syllabus 23-24; S1-C1.d–Arrupe Seminar for Trustees). A recent survey of staff and administrators found that 92% describe themselves as at least moderately familiar with the University mission, and 76% report that it influences their work (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

In addition, and as further detailed in Chapter 7, Fordham's Board of Trustees has been actively engaged in promoting an understanding and appreciation of Fordham's mission. For example, the board's Mission and Social Justice Committee, established in 2020, addresses topics such as community engagement and racial justice. At each board meeting, this committee also meets jointly with one other committee in turn, reflecting an intentional effort to infuse mission into all aspects of University governance and operations (S1-C1.d–APR 2024 MSJ Boardbook). Board members also participate in biennial retreats dedicated to mission integration, covering topics such as Jesuit education, environmental impact, and strategic planning. Since 2022, Board members have been invited to participate in pilgrimages to Rome to pray, engage in reflection, visit sites of significance to the Society of Jesus, and meet with leaders of the Roman Catholic Church. To date, 17 trustees have embraced this opportunity, reflecting a lived mission in practice (S1-C1.d–Reflections on Rome from University Leadership).

Fordham connects its faculty to the mission in meaningful ways as well. New faculty members are introduced to the mission in action through an orientation program conducted by the Office of the Provost and the Division of Mission Integration and Planning. Since 2017, the University also has offered an Ignatian Faculty Development initiative for faculty and staff that organizes retreats, mission-aligned immersion trips, and forums (S1-C1.d–Ignatian Faculty and Staff Development).

In Community with New York City (Criterion 1b)

New York City provides Fordham with a special kind of classroom, and our mission makes clear that the University is privileged to share a history and a destiny with the city. Through the University's mission, faculty, students, and staff are afforded unique opportunities to enrich the city, the nation, and the world. For these reasons, the MPE led to the creation in 2018 of Fordham's Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), which fosters collaboration and active citizenship within the University and beyond. Particular emphasis is placed on Fordham's neighboring communities, including cultivating sustained partnerships with local nonprofit organizations in the Bronx.

Teaching and Learning

Dramatically expanding upon work previously undertaken by the Dorothy Day Center and Global Outreach (see below), CCEL supports community engaged teaching, learning, and research. It builds ongoing, sustainable, reciprocal partnerships with community organizations and policymakers to organize advocacy efforts in New York and other locations. These efforts address

internal and external contexts and constituencies, support scholarly inquiry for students and faculty, and advance Fordham's mission. Center initiatives are directly connected to advancing the Institutional Priorities of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning; Holistic Student Success and Flourishing; and Community and Institutional Belonging. The number of community engaged learning courses developed by faculty in partnership with CCEL, as well as enrollment, has surged since 2019. The number of such courses has increased from 26 in 2019 to 112 in 2024; enrollment has increased from 461 to 2,461 (S1-C1.b–CCEL Course Data 5-Year Overview).

One of the many programs that CCEL operates is Global Outreach (¡GO!), a service and cultural immersion program rooted in social justice awareness and community engagement (S1-C1.b–Global Outreach). ¡GO! projects reflect Fordham's Jesuit mission of cultivating diverse leaders in a global society, allowing students to directly connect with communities nationally and globally while learning about systems of inequality and focusing on anti-oppression and antiracism. Between 2020 and 2024, 534 students participated in ¡GO! projects. As one student put it, "¡GO! is the prototypical example of what makes Fordham unique. Beyond the verbal commitment to *cura personalis* and Ignatian virtues, Fordham walks the walk. Keeping students grounded in the everyday realities of life as college students while teaching them to strive for more, ¡GO! is a once-in-a-lifetime, quintessentially Fordham experience."

Other CCEL programs engage various segments of Fordham's student population, including the Engaged Leaders Fellowship Program and the Student Advocacy Fellowship. Across these initiatives, 92% of participants reported a positive impact on their sense of belonging at Fordham. CCEL's community collective, Fordham in Community, represents innovation in University collaboration with its neighbors and has partnered with more than 200 groups on topics such as environmental sustainability, migration justice, and educational access.

Over the years, Fordham also has grown its partnerships with local high schools and community organizations, totaling more than 200 in 2023. Notable examples include Bronx Community Scholars and Beyond Rising. Bronx Community Scholars is a summer community engagement program led by Fordham instructors and undergraduate student mentors for high school students who live or attend school in the Bronx. The program enrolled 23 students in 2022. Beyond Rising is an inclusive summer internship program that places high school students in four-week internships in offices throughout Fordham's Rose Hill campus, where they experience professional training and gain access to college activities. The program enrolled 24 students in 2023 and 21 students in 2024.

Since 1986, Fordham has participated in the New York state-funded Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) (S1-C1.b–STEP at Fordham). An academic enrichment program, STEP prepares underrepresented minority and economically disadvantaged students in grades 7 through 12 for college and careers in STEM; health care; and licensed professions such as accounting, law, psychology, and social work. The STEP program takes place at Fordham's Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses, and at local school and partner sites. Since 2019, STEP has served 3,378 students. Complementing STEP, the Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) has been a Fordham mainstay since 1987 (S1-C1.b–CSTEP at Fordham). Explored further in Chapter 4, it focuses on creating community among and preparing minority and economically disadvantaged undergraduates for careers in more than 20 fields where they have been historically underrepresented. Fordham's participation since 1989 in the Liberty Partnership Program adds another distinctive layer to its commitment to the community. Operating out of the Graduate School of Education and in partnership with local Bronx schools, the program serves

as a comprehensive, pre-collegiate/ dropout prevention initiative offering academic, social-emotional, and enrichment services to more than 300 students enrolled in grades 6 through 12.

These efforts underscore Fordham's dedication to nurturing sustained and transformative relationships with the community. They serve as tangible examples of the ways Fordham navigates and addresses its internal and external contexts and constituencies in alignment with its mission and identity as a Catholic and Jesuit institution of higher education.

Faculty Research

Another vital way Fordham brings its mission to bear in New York City and the world is through faculty research and the means by which this work is supported, produced, and shared. Fordham is home to nationally and globally respected scholars, leaders, and innovators in a wide spectrum of disciplines and fields. They serve the mission and goals of the University—specifically, its commitment to the discovery of wisdom and the transmission of learning by pursuing research agendas that address some of the most pressing challenges of our time. These researchers are supported by a well-established infrastructure of centers, consortia, and collaborations, all consistent with the University's mission. Between 2019 and 2023, full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty across Fordham's nine schools authored or co-authored more than 120 books published by notable university and top-tier presses, including New York University Press, Oxford University Press, Princeton University Press, Routledge, and University of Toronto Press. Fordham's Law School is also home to six student-managed journals, including the *Fordham Urban Law Journal* and the *Fordham International Law Journal*, both of which have been identified as leading platforms for legal research.

Fordham University Press remains a valued disseminator of research both by Fordham and external scholars. The press publishes important works on a wide array of topics, including cinema and media studies, comparative theology, Islamic studies, LGBTQ+ studies, New York City, poetry and rhetoric, technology and engineering, and theater studies. Among the ways Fordham University Press advances the institution's mission is as a leader in developing work produced by scholars from underrepresented communities. For example, in the press' 2022–23 catalog, one in three books was produced by minority-identifying scholars, up from one in six books in 2012–13.

The University's Office of Research facilitates and supports sponsored research and internally supported research projects as well as an array of collaborative and interdisciplinary research programs. These efforts advance scholarly inquiry and creative activity. They also often focus on student learning and related outcomes by including support for undergraduate and graduate research assistance. Support from the Office of Research enhances Fordham's ability to recruit and retain top-notch faculty. Fiscal year 2024 was a record-breaking one for Fordham's research enterprise; the University earned more than $38 million in external grant awards, up 43% from the year before. Faculty grants totaled more than $22 million, a 24% year-over-year increase.

The Office of Research distributes internal grant funding and sponsors Fordham's internally funded Faculty Fellowship Program. This support enables a variety of research projects that explicitly connect to the University's mission of promoting justice and science. Among 87 research grants awarded by the office between 2021 and 2023, 70% of funded projects included an explicit examination of justice issues. Among the interdisciplinary grants awarded, 73% focused on issues of social justice or on science, with direct application to contemporary social problems.

The Faculty Fellowship Program supports research leaves of one semester or one year for tenured and tenure-track faculty. Among the Office of Research's most innovative interdisciplinary offerings are a series of collaborative fellowship programs with IBM, Columbia University, New York University, and Georgetown University; a Faculty Research Abroad Program, which supports research collaborations between Fordham scholars and colleagues at Jesuit universities in Asia, Europe, and Latin America; and four strategic research consortia, which promote interdisciplinary collaborations on digital scholarship, disability studies, global studies, and science and justice.

Fordham's 56 centers and institutes support research across an expansive spectrum of disciplines and fields, many of which serve to advance Fordham's mission, including the Center for Research in Humanistic Management, Center for Jewish Studies, Center for Ethics Education, Feerick Center for Social Justice, and the Center on National Security (S1-C1.b–Centers and Institutes). Together, these programs, centers, institutes, and opportunities demonstrate how effectively Fordham delivers on its mission and the Institutional Priorities of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning, and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Sharing Mission with the University (Criterion 1f)

Fordham leverages its communication channels—including newsletters, intranet portals, and social media platforms—to disseminate information about its mission and goals. Regular updates and features highlight initiatives, achievements, and events that reflect the University's commitment to its Jesuit and Catholic identity and mission. By sharing success stories and showcasing the impact of its work, Fordham University inspires and motivates its internal stakeholders to contribute to the realization of its mission and goals. As noted above, the vast majority of staff and administrators are at least moderately familiar with Fordham's mission and 67% are very or extremely familiar.

Further, Fordham's Division of Mission Integration and Ministry employs a multifaceted approach to ensure active integration of its mission and core values into its academic and administrative operations. This division works actively across divisions and schools to promote awareness of the University's mission and goals through workshops, trainings, seminars, and service experiences and by partnering with senior leadership on crucial decision-making.

As discussed in various chapters to come, Fordham's mission and goals have a demonstrated impact on decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program, and curricular development that includes support for scholarly inquiry and creative activity. In a 2024 survey of full-time faculty, respondents summed up the impact Fordham's mission has on their professional endeavors: the mission "shapes the way I develop and teach my courses" and "directly informs how I understand myself as a teacher, scholar, and community member." Among students, 66% of undergraduate and 45% of graduate students strongly or somewhat agree that Fordham's Jesuit mission is reflected in their coursework.

Evaluating Mission and Goals (Criteria 1g and 4)

As previously noted, Fordham has periodically evaluated its mission and set goals toward its advancement, and regularly works to ensure both are relatable and achievable. Examples of initiatives approved by the Board of Trustees include the strategic framework developed through the Continuous University Strategic Planning (CUSP) process, *A Strategic Framework for Fordham's Future: Bothered Excellence* (2016) (S1-C1.g–Bothered Excellence), *Educating for Justice* (2020), the University's participation in the 2017 and 2025 Mission Priority Examen (S1–2025 Fordham MPE Self-Study).

Setting Appropriate Goals (Criterion 2)

Fordham University sets institutional goals that are realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with its mission. The University's current strategic plan, discussed in greater detail in Chapters 6 and 7, outlines three goals: to educate students as global citizens and transformative leaders for justice in the innovation age; to excel across the natural and applied sciences and allied fields to promote social change and equity; and to cultivate a diverse, equitable, inclusive, caring, and connected community that promotes each member's development as a whole person. These goals, Ignatian in their foundation, reflect the University's commitment to *magis* and *cura personalis*, especially in standing with and serving those on the margins. Further, they are directly linked to the University's mission and the ways in which it is realized as a Catholic and Jesuit institution of higher education that operates principally in New York City.

Fordham's current strategic plan is set to conclude in 2026. In order to facilitate long-term, mission-aligned planning, Fordham University's president, Tania Tetlow, in February 2024 invited representatives of the faculty and administration to participate in a multiphase strategic planning process—building on the successes of *Educating for Justice* and surfacing new priorities linked to the University's mission, along with associated goals and actions—for review by the Board of Trustees in early 2025 (S6-C2–President's Email on Strategic Planning Feb 2024). Further, in early fall 2024, President Tetlow laid out a strategy with the MPE Self-Study chair, Middle States Self-Study co-chairs, and campus leaders engaged in ongoing strategic planning to delineate the unique goals and activities of each process and to explicitly foster communication, collaboration, and dialogue among the three processes.

A Focus on Student Learning Outcomes and Institutional Improvement (Criterion 3)

Educating for Justice established three goals related to student learning and institutional improvement: to educate leaders for justice, to excel across natural and applied sciences, and to cultivate an inclusive community that promotes each member's development as a whole person—each of which has been advanced by multiple administrative, educational, and student-support initiatives.

The plan also aligns with Fordham's mission to engage in research and deliver an education that assists in the promotion of justice. As further discussed in Chapter 3, it commits Fordham to the project of renewing and developing academic programs that prepare students to become ethical leaders and that support faculty in the work of delivering an education for justice. This manifests itself in undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate-granting institutes, centers, and programs that provide programming to support Fordham's commitment to justice and ethics in education. Examples include the Center for Ethics Education, Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs, International Political Economy and Development program, and the establishment of the Bronx Research Institute for Community Solutions.

In early 2023, the University formed a committee in anticipation of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on the constitutionality of race-conscious college admission programs. This committee—composed of representatives from across the University—met monthly in the time leading up to, and after, the Supreme Court's decision in *Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard and Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. University of North Carolina (UNC)*. The committee's charge was to assess Fordham University's recruitment and admission processes at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and to ensure the University's compliance with the law while simultaneously continuing to assemble a diverse student body of the best and brightest—a source of strength for the institution and a fundamental expression of its mission and identity as a Catholic and Jesuit university.

The committee continued, enhanced, and implemented a number of strategies to maximize the diversity of the incoming classes while complying with the law. Steps included involving senior leadership in Fordham's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council; providing undergraduate admission teamwide professional development on issues around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB); making submission of standardized test scores optional; increasing financial aid awards for students demonstrating need; committing more resources to transfer students, veterans, and other military-connected students; and increasing engagement in local markets, especially in the Bronx and Manhattan. In fall 2024, Fordham University enrolled the most diverse class in its 183-year history; notably, 27% of incoming first-year students were first-generation college students, and 50% were students of color—the highest percentage in Fordham history.

In 2017, Fordham appointed its first chief diversity officer (CDO); in 2024, the University elevated this role to vice president for equity and inclusion, and hired a successor to the original CDO. This role has served as the primary hub for mission and DEIB collaborations at Fordham, and is complemented by partnerships between the Office of Mission Integration and Ministry and the Division of Student Affairs' Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), and other collaborations.

In 2020, Fordham released an Anti-Racism Action Plan, *Addressing Racism, Educating for Justice*, that identified 33 specific actions designed to root out racism from the Fordham community and cultivate an institutional culture where people from all backgrounds could be part of a diverse community marked by care and belonging. Released in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, the plan identified specific aims for admissions, hiring, creating communities of affinity and belonging, and partnering with community organizations to advance the work of racial justice beyond campus. A notable example of work launched under this plan was Teaching Race Across the Curriculum (TRAC), an internal grant program that, between 2021 and 2023, supported 37 projects designed to integrate state-of-the-art multidisciplinary approaches to teaching about race and cultivating an inclusive community at Fordham.

Office of Campus Ministry programming is essential in carrying out Fordham's Jesuit and Catholic mission, playing a vital role in cultivating communities of welcome and belonging for people from a diverse range of backgrounds and religious affiliations. Campus Ministry has long sponsored a robust program to support the pastoral needs of Catholics. It also offers specialized programming to support and serve those who identify as Protestant, Orthodox Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh. In 2024, Campus Ministry hired a full-time rabbi and a full-time imam to serve Jewish and Muslim members of the Fordham community (S1-C3–New Directors of Muslim Life and Jewish Life).

Campus Ministry also has been an important resource for a specialized ministry to welcome and support LGBTQ+ students. The LGBTQ+ Student Wellness Fund was established in 2022 to support student programming and student success. In 2023, the fund's support helped Fordham host Ignatian Q, a national conference focused on creating community, developing spirituality, and affirming humanity for LGBTQ+ students at Jesuit colleges and universities (S1-C3–Ignatian Q Conference Advances LGBTQ Inclusion). Fordham also produces the student publication *Queer Prayer at Fordham*, a compendium of spiritual resources and reflections. About 10 years ago, Fordham also launched the LGBTQ+ Faculty-Led Initiatives, which support curricular innovation, research, and programming to uplift LGBTQ+ members of the Fordham community. Funded projects have engaged about 200 students and included youth-led participatory action research; policing queerness in U.S. television; an oral history collaboration with SAGE Center Bronx; promoting community-based, transfeminist thinking in Latin American and broader Latinx communities; and an exploration of how crisis hotlines can be improved through consent and connection.

Beyond *Educating for Justice*, other strategic planning initiatives examine and assess institutional mission and goals and identify specific actions to ensure mission alignment across University operations. For example, in 2023, Fordham launched a seven-year transformation process responding to the challenge of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Sí: On Care for our Common Home* and brought together multiple divisions—Academic Affairs, Finance, Human Resources, IT, Mission Integration, Student Affairs—to form a task force to develop *Laudato Sí: A Fordham Green Plan* (S1-C3–Laudato Sí - A Fordham Green Plan). The plan identified 42 specific goals for the University, including review of fossil fuel investments; campuswide building LEED certification; community-engaged learning courses on sustainability themes; and partnerships to advance a Bronx-wide community biodiversity and reforestation program in green spaces. In addition, CCEL, which coordinates Fordham's Green Plan implementation, received a $60 million grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to serve as a regional grantmaker under the Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Fordham will fund environmental justice projects through community-based organizations across New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and eight federally recognized Native American Nations.

These commitments animate Fordham's approach to *cura personalis*. In addition to advancing the intellectual development of undergraduate and graduate students and supporting their spiritual and mental well-being, *cura personalis* also creates for faculty, staff, and administrators an institutional environment where they are adequately supported, where they can find work that gives them a sense of meaning and purpose, and where all individuals are valued for their specific contributions to achieving Fordham's mission and goals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Educating for Justice established three goals related to student learning and institutional improvement: to educate leaders for justice, to excel across natural and applied sciences, and to cultivate an inclusive community that promotes each member's development as a whole person—each of which has been advanced by multiple administrative, educational, and student-support initiatives.

The reaffirmation of Fordham's strongest asset, its mission, through processes such as the MPE and University strategic planning offers the institution as a whole a vision that guides day-to-day practices and programmatic growth and innovation, as well as a compass by which to navigate conflicts and challenges. A diverse, creative, and energetic community of students, faculty, and staff continuously advances initiatives designed to realize the University's mission. This includes initiatives highlighted above that focus on support for community engaged learning and course development and building transformative community partnerships.

Still, there is room for growth: Fordham sometimes struggles to ensure that all of its strategic initiatives have sufficient resources, including the time and talent of the community, and to choose clearly among them when resources are limited. The following emerged as recommendations to deepen and advance alignment between the operations of the University and its mission:

1. Consider ways that Fordham can more fully adopt and effectively integrate an approach to Catholic and Jesuit mission formation that is clearly articulated and communicated to every member of the University community, from recruitment through orientation and throughout the lives of all Fordham community members.

2. In partnership with key stakeholders across the institution, explore innovative funding strategies and partnerships that align with Fordham's mission and values.

STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

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.

Institutional Priorities most closely aligned with this Standard: Holistic Student Success and Flourishing; and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Introduction

Ethics and integrity are integral to Fordham's mission, institutional culture, and practices. Policies and approaches reflect high standards and strengthen a culture of inclusion and belonging, helping students to succeed and flourish. University Statutes guarantee freedom of inquiry and expression. As a Jesuit University, Fordham is uniquely called to educate for justice through its core curriculum, which promotes moral reflection and development in teaching and learning, along with intellectual freedom that is free from prejudicial thought. Curricular and co-curricular initiatives foster compassion and orient students toward promoting social justice and advancing human rights. Championed at the highest levels of leadership, these pillar principles, especially when realized through Fordham's Catholic and Jesuit identities, distinguish the University as a community committed to upholding and promoting core freedoms and rights and adhering to equitable and fair treatment of all students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

Fostering a Commitment to Academic Freedom (Criterion 1)

Academic freedom is protected in University governance, in the University's policies and practices, and expressed in Fordham's mission, which guarantees the freedom of inquiry required by rigorous thinking and the quest for truth. Fordham affirms that, as a Catholic institution, it aims to be a place where religious traditions may interact with each other and with contemporary cultures.

As set forth in the University Statutes, Fordham encourages "full freedom of teaching, discussing, research and publication, and to protect any member of the instructional staff, whether tenured or nontenured, against pressures and influences from within and without the University, which would restrict the exercise of academic freedom." This policy underlies guidance provided in the Undergraduate Faculty Handbook that supports intellectual pluralism and academic freedom (S3-C2–Undergraduate Faculty Handbook; S2-C1–University Policies).

The Statutes support the 1940 Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Association of Colleges and Universities to ensure that academic freedom is upheld as part of the higher value of the common good that depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Consistent with AAUP guidelines, the University Statutes place limits on academic freedom in the form of "duties" or "obligations" of teachers not to introduce into teaching controversial matter that has no relation to the subject matter and when "extramural utterances" raise "grave doubts" about the "fitness" of a tenured professor. The University holds itself "fully responsible" and will aid any investigation by the AAUP (Appendix 1). Due process is ensured through an appeals committee if a faculty member believes the denial of reappointment, tenure, or promotion constitutes a violation of their academic freedom, ensuring that any disciplinary action against faculty for "conduct inconsistent with accepted professional standards" will not be "so interpreted as to constitute interference with academic freedom" (Article Four, Chapter 7 "Academic Due Process"). Collective Bargaining Agreements give similar protections to contingent/non-

tenure line faculty (e.g., lecturers, clinical, and select adjunct instructors) and graduate student workers. Other University documents also address the balance between academic freedom and its limitations (S2-C1–Academic Freedom Policies from Student Handbook).

Additionally, the University maintains Intellectual Property Policies for Inventions and Patents (S2-C1–Intellectual Property Policy, Inventions and Patents), and for Instructional Materials and Copyrights (S2-C1–Intellectual Property Policy, Instructional Materials and Copyrights). It encourages the development of new inventions and patents, for it is through discovering, communicating, and applying knowledge that Fordham furthers its mission as a research University. The University has an interest in managing intellectual property and promoting technology transfer in order to stimulate their development and to reward members of the University community who create such intellectual property ("Inventors").

Both individually and collectively, Fordham maintains robust and comprehensive policies and guidelines that appropriately inform community members of their rights and limitations when exercising discourse and research within their academic freedom. In so doing, it helps sustain the Institutional Priority of Community and Institutional Belonging.

Fostering a Climate of Respect (Criterion 2)

As expressed in its mission, principal among Fordham's values and aspirations is an environment that values excellence, a climate of mutual respect, care for the whole person, and the promotion of social justice. Through recommendations from a 2016 University Diversity Task Force, Fordham's current strategic plan, *Educating for Justice*, and its policies and practices, Fordham's commitment to DEI reflects a signature area of continuous improvement in the service of fostering respect for all Fordham community members and advancing the Institutional Priority of Promoting Community and Institutional Belonging. Additionally and as noted in Chapter 1, the initiatives detailed in the strategic plan represent an intentional approach to strengthening inclusivity and diversity not only across the institution, but also with Fordham's neighboring Bronx and Lincoln Square communities.

Resources for Students

Offices across the University are devoted to work that advances the Institutional Priority of Community and Institutional Belonging. Other areas have specific positions in their organizational structures dedicated to advancing institutional belonging. A growing number of schools and departments have established DEI committees and follow tailored DEI Strategic Plans. And, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4, Fordham offers abundant activities and information across campuses via student clubs and committees that are diverse and inclusive in nature.

Reflecting the Institutional Priority of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing, Fordham has established curricular and co-curricular programs and projects designed to model a kind and inclusive community based in a climate of respect and empathy. The positive impact of these initiatives is reflected through student perception surveys and other feedback, such as the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Survey, highlighting that the majority of the students found Fordham to be an inclusive campus where members of different backgrounds feel they belong and are welcomed (S2-C2–Summary of Student Surveys Concerning Campus Climate and Belonging). For example, at the curricular level, support for ensuring that classrooms and courses welcome and support all students is available from several sources. Several schools have integrated offerings in their curriculum that strengthen the University's efforts to teach topics

relating to diversity, ethics and inclusivity, justice, and responsible leadership. Faculty have the opportunity to amend their curriculum and pedagogy to advance these topics in the classroom.

Fordham is advancing its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and the Institutional Priorities of Institutional and Community Belonging and Holistic Student Success and Flourishing based on data from the Belonging Survey, the Law School DEI/Climate Survey, HERI Senior Survey, Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, Your First College Year Survey, College Senior Survey, and Title IX Mandatory Survey. Yet the University also recognizes that improvement in these areas must be continuous.

Resources for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators
As discussed more fully in Chapter 1, Fordham offers mission-inspired initiatives and programs for faculty, staff, and administrators that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. These resources are both valued and helpful in their work (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data). Additionally, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) oversees mandatory annual online training for all employees about preventing and responding to bias incidents as well as sexual harassment training. The Office of Mission Integration sponsors an LGBTQ+ Faculty and Staff Affinity Group, and the Fordham Association hosts a range of inclusive and multicultural activities for faculty, staff, and administrators throughout the year. The provost's office also organized a Speech Act Series in 2021–22 that focused on exploring important and timely issues surrounding free speech, social media, truth claims, and misinformation (S2-C2–Speech Act Series).

Institutional Grievance Processes (Criterion 3)
Fordham's handling of complaints and grievances assigned to designated University areas is based on the nature of the complaint and the role of the respondent (e.g., student, employee, third party). The University has established policies and protocols to address complaints in a fair, equitable, consistent, and timely manner, whether because of its own due diligence or statutory requirements governing certain types of complaints. Adhering to these principles reflects Fordham's commitment to *cura personalis* and helps ensure support for the Institutional Priorities of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Students
Students' complaints and grievances against other students (e.g., sexual or general misconduct, bias incidents) are typically investigated by the Division of Student Affairs. Fordham's graduate and professional schools also may offer forums to raise a grievance as outlined in each school's bulletin. Student Affairs administers various assessments directly or in collaboration with other units with responsibilities in these areas, including the Gender Equity/Title IX Office, to gauge the effects and/or effectiveness of policies and procedures related to filing complaints or grievances by students against students.

This awareness-raising has yielded positive outcomes, including survey self-reporting that the overwhelming majority of students feel safe on campus and feel that staff and faculty at the University treat students fairly and would maintain privacy for filed complaints or grievances. In addition, undergraduate orientation session coverage of the complaint/grievance process also has demonstrated positive results, with pre- and post-surveys (2022–23) showing marked increases in those reporting knowledge of how to report a sexual assault and awareness of support resources related to sexual misconduct. Similarly, the First Year Fall "Core Programming" session on Civility and Community delivers education on other types of complaints such as bias

incidents. The vast majority of students say they understand how to locate resources on bias and harassment policy (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

The University's Sexual and Related Misconduct Policy guidelines indicate it generally takes 120 business days to process complaints and grievances, unless complainants and respondents are notified that more time is needed. However, complaints and grievances related to sexual misconduct, bias, crimes, or other serious incidents are addressed according to emergency response standards. In such cases, support is provided immediately to complainants and respondents, typically within one calendar day. Students have the opportunity to select an advisor for these processes, and the associate dean renders final case review and decision. For matters falling outside the Sexual and Related Misconduct Policy, Student Affairs works to keep the duration of cases from incident to sanction/resolution to less than two business weeks. The average duration of the process over the past five years is 13 days.

Students also have the right to appeal academic decisions they believe are unfair or are the result of unfair treatment (e.g., grade appeals or academic integrity claims that may be filed by instructors against students). At the undergraduate level, these policies are featured in the Academic Bulletin and the Undergraduate Faculty Handbook. At the graduate level, each school maintains its own specific policies that, like the undergraduate policy, are based on the principle of subsidiarity for discussion and resolution. They allow for a stepwise appeal process starting at the department/area/program level and ending at the dean's level. Survey data indicates more can be done to ensure students are familiar with these policies (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data; S2-C3–Grievance Process Awareness-Raising Efforts).

Faculty, Staff, and Administrators
The University follows federal, state, and local regulations concerning mandatory reporting of sexual misconduct or bias incidents involving faculty, staff, and/or administrators. Investigations occur promptly through the appropriate office depending on the nature of the complaint (e.g., OHR, Gender Equity/Title IX Office, Office of Public Safety). These efforts are designed to ensure fair and impartial hiring, promotion, evaluation, discipline, and separation of employees. A working group consisting of these offices as well as administrators from Student Affairs (including Athletics), Office of Legal Counsel, and the Office of the Provost meets regularly to review and update the University's policies in response to government directives and to ensure coordination in their implementation (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

Complaints and Grievances
The type of claim dictates how complaints and grievances against employees are addressed. OHR typically investigates claims of bias, harassment, and retaliation against a University employee, following the protocols in the University policy against Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation in Employment. Other relevant policy violations also may apply, such as the University Code of Conduct. OHR acknowledges complaints within 24 business hours. Investigations are addressed thoroughly and in a timely manner, and students (undergraduate and graduate) involved in such proceedings (as complainants or witnesses) are offered the option of an advisor, in the form of a "support person," through the Office of Residential Life (ORL). While there is no standard time frame to complete a workplace investigation, addressing them promptly is an OHR priority. Those involving extenuating factors or complex circumstances may take longer than others to complete. Grievances lodged by union members are handled in a

timely and effective manner through procedures set forth in the University's various collective bargaining agreements, which include specific deadlines for each step of the process.

The Office of Public Safety, often the first recipient of a complaint against an employee, ensures that any student or personnel matter is recorded as soon as a complainant visits that office. At times, when matters fall under another area (e.g., Student Affairs or OHR), Public Safety may forward the complaint to the relevant unit, generally within 24 hours. A grievance from a faculty member that falls within the scope of an academic complaint may be addressed through the University Statutes and appropriate Faculty Senate Committee(s), which in turn submit recommendations and/or decisions to the provost. The provost's office takes appropriate action(s) as needed. Grievances are addressed in a timely and thorough manner.

Satisfaction regarding the resolution of employees' grievances and complaints is measured by anonymous surveys administered by a third party (Retensa); employees receive surveys after six months of employment and when they separate from the University. Survey data indicates there are no systemic issues involving the grievance/complaint resolution process. While the University strives to review employees' grievances in a timely and ethical manner, its policies are designed to ensure that investigations and personnel actions are implemented to maintain employee dignity during the process, even when difficult situations may lead to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

Title IX and Gender Equity Complaints
The Office of Title IX and Gender Equity is transitioning to a new structure following a thorough analysis of this area. On the basis of those findings and while the work will continue across many University units, the leadership and accountability for the whole was shifted from OHR to Student Affairs because students file the majority of Title IX claims. Specific and detailed statutory requirements and University guidelines, as stated in the University's Sexual and Related Misconduct Policy, dictate the handling of Title IX issues and ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and thorough fashion. The length of investigations varies depending on the associated facts as well as procedural protections afforded to both complainants and respondents.

Complaints Against Third Parties
Complaints against third parties—such as a vendor, contractor, or guest visiting a Fordham campus—are promptly and fully investigated by Public Safety. A determination that the University's Code of Conduct and/or other policies were violated may lead to the individual(s) being banned from campus. Additionally, if the conduct is of a criminal nature, the complainant may choose to report the matter to local law enforcement.

Additional Venues to File a Complaint
Employees with information about behavior believed to be in violation of the law or University policies are encouraged to report suspected violations to their supervisor or the designated person or office responsible for investigating and responding to the specific situation. Should an individual who suspects unethical or illegal behavior wish to report their concerns anonymously, an Integrity Hotline operated by a third party is available. The University's Office of Legal Counsel and the University's internal auditor review and investigate such complaints. In addition, a Fordham Whistleblower Policy encourages and enables employees, without the fear of retaliation, to raise concerns regarding suspected unethical and/or illegal conduct or practices so the University can address and, when necessary, take corrective action(s).

Complaints that allege violations of the State's consumer protection laws, laws or rules relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions, and/or involving the quality of education or other State or accreditation requirements are, depending on the nature of complaint, handled by administrators in the relevant office (e.g., Office of the Provost, Admissions, Student Financial Services, Student Affairs).

Protocols and Policies to Honor and Monitor University Contracts (Including Third-Party)
Fordham honors and monitors its third-party agreements and arrangements through centralized contract management systems. These systems ensure that agreements comply with the University's Contract Policy and Procedures. According to the University Conflict of Interest Policy (see Criterion 4 below), the Board of Trustees has delegated authority to the Office of Internal Audit to investigate, manage, resolve, and report all conflicts of interests to the appropriate University officer(s) and to the Board's Audit and Risk Management Committee. The contract management systems ensure that the appropriate conflict of interest language is inserted into University contracts. The University also maintains clear guidelines for departments on how to select, award, or administer third-party contracts (S2-C3–Office of Finance Purchasing Manual). In addition, in 2021 Fordham implemented FINCON, a comprehensive contract management system that provides for a complete contract management life cycle. Encompassing an automated review and approval process as well as DocuSign-enabled collection of signatures, FINCON serves as the ultimate contract repository for all non-facility/capital project University contracts. Contracts are initiated between departments and prospective vendors.

Research Misconduct Policy
Under Fordham's policy for responding to all allegations of misconduct in research, the Office of Research and Faculty Senate review, investigate, and report allegations involving research carried out under institutional auspices. The policy protects the privacy of those who report misconduct in good faith and, to the maximum extent possible, provides detailed steps for the handling of allegations, investigatory inquiries, administrative actions, and appeals (S2-C3–Policy for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct).

Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (Criterion 4, Requirement of Affiliation 13)
Fordham is committed to maintaining the highest integrity in all its work. It has established clear and comprehensive policies concerning conflict of interest and/or the appearance of such conflicts in all activities and across all constituents. Policies exist for employees, individuals engaged in research, trustees, officers, and "key employees" who hold major decision-making authority within the institution.

Employees
The University requires all employees to avoid any conflict, or appearance of conflict, between their interests and those of the University, and to promptly disclose any actual or potential conflicts. The policy appears on the Office of Finance website (S2-C4–Conflict of Interest Policy for Employees) and in the Employee Handbook (S2-C5–Employee Handbook). It includes clear definitions of terms and articulates a general prohibition against any employee soliciting or accepting (directly or indirectly), any gift, gratuity, or favor with an economic value in excess of $50, or any gift, gratuity, or favor that may be reasonably perceived by an impartial observer to affect the employee's decision-making authority. It also covers conflict of interest disclosures, annual reporting requirements, and steps involved in managing and enforcing the policy.

Researchers

To ensure the highest levels of integrity in research, Fordham's Office of Sponsored Programs maintains a Policy on Financial Conflict of Interest in Externally-Funded Research (S2-C4–COI in Externally-Funded Research Policy). The policy requires that all investigators involved in externally funded research disclose financial interests—held by themselves, their spouse, and/or dependent children—that are significant, related to their research, and would reasonably appear to be affected by the research. The policy provides key contextual information concerning what information must be disclosed, when it must be shared, and how to submit a disclosure form. Researchers also are required to complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) "Conflict of Interest in Human Subjects Research" training module prior to expending any grant funding.

Board of Trustees, Officers, and 'Key Employees'

Under Chapter 2 of its bylaws, members of Fordham's Board of Trustees must disclose any potential conflicts of interest prior to a vote on policy or transactional matters of the University and comply with the University's Conflict of Interest Policy (S2-C4–Chapter 2, Fordham Board of Trustees By-Laws). Trustees sign a conflict of interest statement annually. This is covered in Chapter 7.

Ensuring Fair Employment Practices (Criterion 5)

Fordham University uses the mission-driven principle of *cura personalis* to guide its handling of employee matters in a dignified and caring way. This approach also reinforces the Institutional Principle of Community and Institutional Belonging. Fordham fosters equal employment opportunity for applicants and current employees regardless of their background or personal traits (race, color, religion, national origin, sex, and other relevant protected classes under the law). The University maintains policies, guidelines, and tools to help offices, departments, and managers establish a fair and inclusive work environment. (S2-C5–Equal Employment Opportunity; S2-C5–Employee Handbook).

Additionally, since creation of the vice president for human resources role in 2017, Fordham has undergone a substantial transformation to elevate and professionalize the human resources function into a strategic, sophisticated, and skilled unit providing leadership and support across the University. The OHR function includes creating new and expanded policies and guidelines fundamental to ensuring fair and impartial hiring processes, implementing new tools that enhance employee evaluation and promotion, and instituting fair practices for employee discipline/separation. For example, the online Manager's Toolkit (S2-C5–Manager's Toolkit) contains guidelines for filling vacant positions, candidate search and selection, information about the Applicant Tracking System, and new employee welcome guidance.

To improve DEI efforts in workplace hiring, in 2020 the University developed a range of new and complementary protocols, systems, and guidelines in key areas such as applicant tracking, open advertising for diversity, faculty search committee training and guidance, and best practices in inclusive interviewing. Data are collected from faculty and staff on the effectiveness of these resources and training. Additionally, Fordham follows state and local laws (e.g., New York City Fair Chance Act) when conducting background checks of applicants and current employees.

Reflecting Fordham's commitment to the fair treatment of employees, the University also has revamped its annual performance review process for staff and administrators, providing employees the opportunity to submit a formal self-evaluation (S2-C5–Performance Management). Supervisors are trained annually to ensure fair and consistent assessments. And OHR is automating its

introductory period evaluation form to streamline the evaluation process and facilitate analysis and identification of concerning patterns that require prompt action and remediation.

In the spirit of Fordham's mission and Institutional Priority of Community and Institutional Belonging, the University recognizes employees for their contributions and encourages them to pursue career progression and promotions. For example, current employees are welcomed to apply for all job openings, which are posted on the University Career Opportunities web page (S2-C5–Career Opportunities). To ensure fair opportunities for leadership openings, such as vice president or dean positions, the University often initiates a national search conducted by a search firm and hiring committee. Members of unions such as Clerical Local 153 (S2-C5–Local 153 CBA) or the Non-Tenure Track Faculty FFU union (S2-C5–Local 200 PT CBA; S2-C5–Local 200 FT CBA) follow a structured process that provides guidance for promotions. Additionally, Clerical Local 153 and Maintenance Local 810 members have historically been given initial preferential access to job openings, as delineated in their respective CBAs (S2-C5–Local 810 CBA 2021–2026 fully executed).

At times, employees who present serious performance issues or violate University policies may be subject to disciplinary actions and/or be separated from the University. Before implementing disciplinary actions, OHR assists departments and managers in determining the best course of action with a focus on performance improvement, just cause, and progressive discipline applied to most unionized employees as described in their respective CBAs. Discipline or separation from employees at-will is considered based on the totality of the circumstances and a focus on employee dignity and respect. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are subject to University Statutes' disciplinary guidelines. Decisions to separate from an employee are carefully reviewed by the area vice president or the dean, in concert with OHR and the Office of Legal Counsel. These reviews ensure that the University takes all reasonable and fair steps before separating from an employee in compliance with University policies, relevant Collective Bargaining Agreements, and statutory requirements.

Finally, since 2019 OHR has acquired an anonymous automated voluntary exit survey administered by a third party following each separation. Employees who separate may provide anonymous comments on their experience at Fordham. The University is able to run reports and recognize "red flags" by identifying key words such as "harassment," "bullying," etc. Reports are analyzed and appropriate actions may be identified to improve Fordham's work environment and address inappropriate conduct by employees and management.

Maintaining the Honesty and Truthfulness of Communications (Criterion 6)
Fordham's core values of *cura personalis*, transformation, and service are natural attractions for many of its majors and degree programs aimed at making the world a better place. At Fordham, integrity begins with ensuring that marketing and communications reflect an honest and accurate accounting of the University experience. University Marketing and Communications (UMC) serves as the primary unit responsible for front-facing outreach, producing and disseminating the bulk of advertisements and recruitment materials for prospective undergraduates. It also spearheads University-wide branding initiatives, which are led by a new vice president who reports directly to the University president. Fordham's decentralized graduate and professional schools also do significant outreach independently, often in collaboration with UMC. In addition to these efforts, the University president recently established an External Relations Working Group, which meets monthly and includes staff from Government Relations, Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), the provost's office, and other units. It also recently hired a new vice president of external affairs.

To ensure representations are accurate and aligned with University mission, Fordham's marketing materials, admissions messaging, advertisements, and many of its internal communications are managed centrally, through a workflow that includes review by editorial staff, particularly for high-profile pieces and communications with large distributions (S2-C6–Basecamp Workflow; S2-C6–Messaging; S2-C6–Brand Guidelines; S2-C6–Editorial Style Guide). UMC uses the Fordham Fact Book as its primary source for data definitions, University facts, longitudinal trends, and demographic information (S2-C6–Fordham Fact Book; S2-C6–Fordham Demographic Profile of Enrolled Students). UMC also ensures that relevant offices and staff review other data elements (e.g., financial information related to students or admissions information) before distribution. The communications and information platforms these processes feed are used widely, especially by administrators overseeing marketing and admissions for Fordham's graduate and professional schools. This includes the University website, Slate/Banner software, and other sources. Administrators also use formal or semi-formal processes to verify information used in school-focused marketing, admissions, and other communications.

The University's ability to demonstrate integrity and truthfulness in its promotions, advertising, and recruitment is essential in telling a compelling and inspiring institutional narrative. For many, their first interaction with Fordham's schools and degree programs are through ads, emails, and website content (S2-C6–Web Governance Guideline). Undergraduate and graduate students who ultimately choose to enroll in a Fordham program indicate these efforts are effective. In a Spring 2024 survey of undergraduate sophomores and juniors, and graduate students, 70% of respondents said Fordham offers the opportunities they believed would be made available when deciding to enroll. In addition, 71% of undergraduates and 83% of graduate students said the University provides accurate information regarding their expected course of study (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

### *Communicating Affordability and Accessibility (Criterion 7)*

Though Fordham is a selective, private, nonprofit University, it has—from its inception—sought to serve students of modest means and social capital. That ethical commitment poses challenges for an institution operating in New York City, one of the most expensive cities in the United States. For example, Fordham's undergraduate cost of attendance (COA) in the 2023–24 academic year was estimated to be almost $80,000 for students living at home with family and approximately $89,000 for students living on campus. Both the Board of Trustees and the University president embrace the goal of increasing affordability through diligent stewardship of student financial aid and University resources (S4-C4-President's Annual Report to Board of Trustees September 2023).

To further ease the financial challenge for students, Fordham offers substantial financial aid based on need and merit. Need-based aid depends on the student and their family's demonstrated ability to pay for college based on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the College Board College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile. In 2022–23, the average net cost for Fordham undergraduates receiving need-based aid was $45,368. In that year, almost 100% of full-time undergraduate students who demonstrated need received some aid. On average, Fordham met 71% of the demonstrated need of first-year students and 68% of all undergraduates' demonstrated need. The average total indebtedness of the 2023 graduating class was $33,400; 50% of the 2023 graduating class had some type of loan. It is also important to note that while Fordham undergraduates use loans to cover some of their costs, the University uses grant and scholarship aid to reduce the costs for which students and their families are responsible. For example, since 2013, Fordham's discount rate for incoming students has exceeded 40%, reaching 50% since 2020.

Alongside the challenges of operating in New York City, Fordham's dependence on tuition poses an added obligation for the University to contain costs. For example, on average over the last decade, 77% of the University's annual revenues have been derived from tuition and student fees. During that same period, U.S. private doctoral institutions relied on tuition and fees for only 66% of their revenues, with other monies obtained from grants, contracts, endowment returns, and other non-tuition sources. Through careful planning and resource allocation, Fordham's expenditures on instruction, research, public service, student services, and other core functions have been lower than that of our New York City neighbors. While this illustrates to some degree the Institutional Priority of Institutional Vitality and Continuous Improvement, it proves ever more challenging each year.

Discount Rate, First-Time Undergraduates*

■ Fordham   ■ NACUBO Study (Includes 325 private, nonprofit colleges and universities)
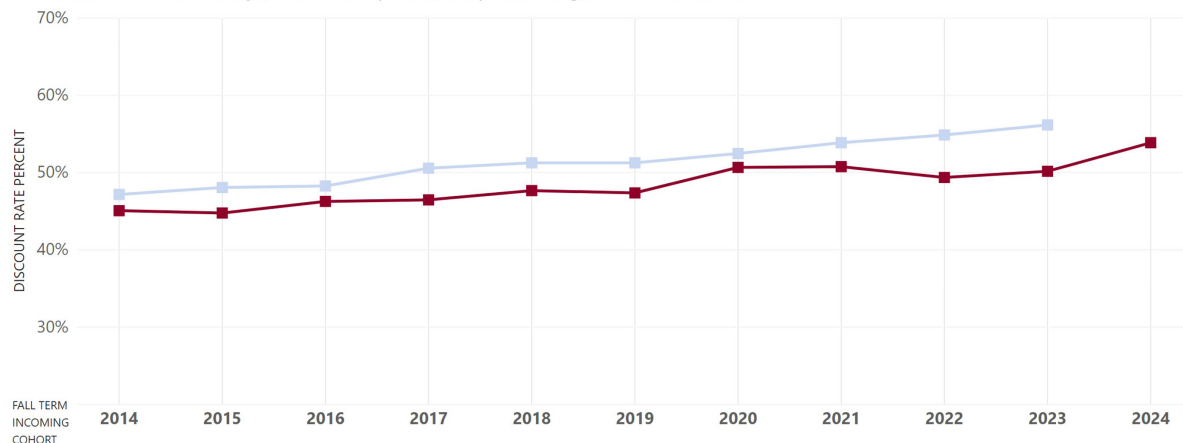
* DATA EXCLUDES THE SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL AND CONTINUING STUDIES.

Despite sector-wide inflationary pressures, Fordham has succeeded in keeping increases in the COA to a minimum while maintaining its commitment to providing quality education, in the spirit of its mission and the Institutional Priority of Wisdom, Learning, and Knowledge. Over the past decade and adjusting for inflation using the Higher Education Price Index of Inflation, Fordham's COA has increased slightly more than the national average. Since 2015–16, Fordham's undergraduate published cost of attendance has increased an average of 3.1% each year, comparable to the 2.9% increase of other New York City doctoral universities.

Increase in Published Undergraduate Cost of Attendance

■ Fordham   ■ NYC Doctoral Institutions
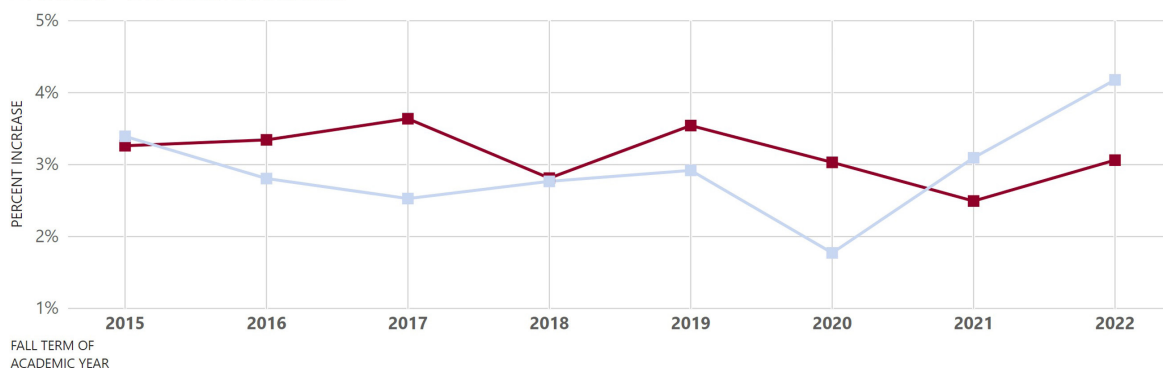
The University makes it a priority to maintain accurate cost and financial aid information on its website. To support families considering Fordham, it makes financial aid counselors available

to inform and advise prospective and current students and their families. The University holds frequent outreach and information events (e.g., in-person, online, one-on-one) to assist families with the process of financing a Fordham education. Prospective students also are able to employ a federally mandated Net Price Calculator (NPC) through the Fordham website. Fordham maintains a graduate/professional school web page that provides comprehensive information on various aspects of COA. This transparency helps prospective and newly admitted students more confidently and effectively plan for their programs of study (S2-C8–Consumer Information, especially costs, refunds, and financial aid).

Finally, and as a means of advancing the University's goal to reduce both overall financial challenges and COA, Fordham's fundraising campaigns have focused on increasing student scholarship funds. In 2018, for example, Fordham completed the Faith and Hope Campaign for Financial Aid, which raised $175 million for student scholarships, created a Presidential Scholars Program, and reduced overall debt upon graduation. Cura Personalis, a second fundraising campaign designed, in part, to increase student financial aid, concluded in 2024 having raised $371 million, $21 million over goal.

Compliance with Reporting Policies and Regulations (Criterion 8, Requirements of Affiliation 5, 6, and 14)

Fordham complies with federal, state, and local regulations and Middle States' policies and requirements for affiliation standards (Requirements of Affiliation 5 and 6) as shown in the Verification of Compliance documentation accompanying this Self-Study. The University regularly communicates to the commission regarding accrediting, regulatory actions, and operational information (Requirement of Affiliation 14). It also disseminates information about all applicable government laws and regulations as well as commission policies and procedures for students and the public through its Consumer Information (Public Disclosures) web page (S2-C8–Consumer Information). For convenient access, this page centrally locates links to the student bulletins, federally mandated "Right to Know" information, cost of attendance estimates, and refund policies, accreditation, certification, and licensure as well as within the web pages representing each of the graduate and professional schools, ensuring that information can be found easily.

Assessment of Ethics and Integrity (Criterion 9)

Fordham engages in regular processes that assess its strategic goals and operations through the lenses of ethics and integrity. Examples include the institution's ongoing work in the areas of its Anti-Racism Action Plan, Research Ethics, and Internal Audit.

Anti-Racism Action Plan

Fordham made a strategic commitment to recruit and enroll a more diverse student body and takes seriously its obligation to provide the support students need to succeed and flourish. In line with the University's Anti-Racism Action Plan, *Addressing Racism, Educating for Justice*, the administration and individual schools and departments have supported and advanced DEI and anti-racist initiatives. While diversity-related data on student admissions, retention, and faculty hiring exist, Fordham has yet to establish a formal policy for evaluating the effectiveness of programmatic efforts in various areas and departments. However—and importantly—the added authority of the new vice president for equity and inclusion and its revised positioning reflect this commitment and goal, setting up this area to be more effective overall.

Research Ethics and Compliance

To ensure the highest levels of responsible and ethical conduct in research, Fordham's Office of Research oversees University policy implementation and review regarding export controls, information technology privacy, and research integrity (S2-C9–Office of Research). It also maintains an Institutional Biosafety Committee, Institutional Review Board, University Research Compliance Council, and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. The work of each of these bodies is led by faculty from across the University and representation through the Office of Research. Their work focuses on reviewing protocols and procedures to determine compliance with ethics and integrity standards as well as periodic assessment of the institution's overall compliance with federal regulations, policies, and guidelines.

Internal Audit

Fordham also utilizes its Office of Internal Audit as a University-wide resource for management staff and the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees. Its purpose is to provide assurance that the internal control systems operating throughout the University are adequate and effective. It subscribes to the code of professional conduct set forth by the Institute of Internal Audit; provides independent appraisals for management; and may furnish analyses, recommendations, counsel, and information concerning reviewed activities. The Office of Internal Audit reviews internal controls; establishes rules and regulations; provides transaction testing to ensure compliance with established policies; and conducts operational audits to improve efficiency and generate cost savings (S2-C9–Office of Internal Audit).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Fordham succeeds on many fronts consistent with its mission, the Jesuit values of academic excellence, and the promotion of justice and human rights in education, research, administration, and governance. It fosters a community that is growing in cultural and religious diversity, with inclusion as a central value. Fordham guarantees freedom of inquiry and promotes responsibility and transparency in all aspects of the University's work. Fordham's mission and ethos are key strengths in attracting students, faculty, staff, and administrators to study and work in an institution with values and ethical practices that also extend to the neighboring communities. A strong majority of students confirm that Fordham provided the opportunities they believed would be made available to them when they decided to enroll. And the University's fundraising focus to expand financial aid resources is notable.

1. The University should remain committed to the important steps it is taking toward reducing tuition dependence and the economic burden on students with the goal of increasing admissions and retention in ways that alleviate economic inequalities in access to education.

2. Fordham should continue building on gains it has made in diversifying its student body, faculty, administrators, and staff, especially in ways that will further enrich student life and learning.

STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

An 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.

Institutional Priorities most closely aligned with this Standard: Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning; Holistic Student Success and Flourishing; and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Introduction

The design and delivery of the student learning experience at Fordham reflect the University's mission and commitment to the discovery of wisdom and the transmission of learning through research and undergraduate, graduate, and professional education of the highest quality. Fordham advances these goals by leveraging its New York City location to offer students distinctive learning, research, and professional experiences; recruiting and retaining highly qualified faculty dedicated to teaching, research, and service; and delivering a general education (core) curriculum and wide array of academic programs that foster the intellectual, moral, and religious development of students to prepare them for leadership and service in a global society.

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, the University invests meaningfully in its Jesuit commitment to preparing students to be people for others, striving for academic excellence and co-curricular enrichment, and fostering community and institutional belonging through *cura personalis*. Assessment of learning takes place at the course level (described below) and program levels (see Chapter 5); assessment of learning also forms part of the departmental and undergraduate college annual reporting process, and takes place through annual reporting and external assessment across select graduate and professional schools.

Programs Designed for Student Experiences (Criteria 1a-b)

Fordham takes great pride in its range of academic programs. The University offers nearly 200 undergraduate, graduate, professional, and certificate programs (S3-C1–Degrees and Programs) across its two undergraduate colleges and seven graduate and professional schools, leading to degree or other recognized higher-education credentials. This includes 23 fully online degree programs across six graduate schools (S3-C1.a-b–Online Programs).

University Statutes delegate primary responsibility for the curriculum to the faculty, who work in partnership with their respective school deans and the provost's office staff in proposing, establishing, and revising academic programs. Degree/program completion requirements and information regarding course planning and pathways for the undergraduate colleges are included in an annually updated and widely publicized Academic Bulletin. At the graduate- and professional-school level, all school information is available in the bulletin as well as via school, department, and/or program websites; policies, procedures and guidelines; and in graduate program handbooks. Each school sets its own procedures for overseeing academic program development, assessment, and revision; especially in the case of graduate and professional schools, this process is guided by analysis of student needs, faculty expertise and interests, alignment with mission, and market/sector demand.

Course and Academic Program Development

Across schools, the University maintains well-established and effective policies, procedures, and

practices to ensure that curricular revision and development applications have positive outcomes. All follow a similar process but are differentiated by the needs of each school.

Proposals to develop new courses are originated by faculty in consultation with department/program/school leadership, and in accordance with student demand, curricular goals, and guidelines established by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar. Faculty utilize CourseLeaf (discussed further below) to advance the process and to secure final administrative approvals and cross-listings with other majors/minors. As noted below, this process feeds into the Academic Bulletin and student academic planning tools such as Degree Works.

Proposals to develop new or revise current academic programs also are faculty-initiated and originate at the department or program level. They advance through a collaborative development and governance process involving curriculum committees (S3-C1–Curriculum Committee Charges) and the relevant dean's office staff. School-based proposal guidelines are utilized to ensure consistency of approach and content. Support is available through the Office of the Provost, whose staff helps ensure alignment with the University's strategic goals.

New program proposals and required curricular revisions undergo thorough review at the provost level and with the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Following NYSED approval, an array of University offices (e.g., Academic Affairs, Registrar, Office of Enrollment Services) partner with the school/college to prepare the new program for launch. When curricular revisions do not require NYSED approval, they are implemented in a timely manner through the same internal processes.

All of Fordham's schools have submitted proposals to NYSED during the Self-Study review period (S3-C1–NYSED Related Reporting Activity; S3-C1–NYSED Academic Program Proposal or Revision Form Templates). The breadth of curriculum revision and development activity reflects the University's commitment to innovative and dynamic learning that is responsive to student and market demand as well as faculty expertise. It also reflects the Institutional Priorities of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning and Holistic Student Success and Flourishing.

Core Curriculum Committee: Arts and Sciences and Gabelli School of Business Undergraduate
The undergraduate Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) is a standing committee of the Arts and Sciences Council (S3-C1–Core Curriculum Committee Arts and Sciences and Gabelli School of Business Undergraduate). Its membership is balanced across campuses and divisional representation (natural sciences, social sciences, and arts/humanities). The CCC evaluates course submissions proposing to fulfill core requirements or seeking a core attribute designation. Supported proposals are presented to the Arts and Sciences Council for final vote and adoption.

Undergraduate School-Based Curriculum Committees
Within Arts and Sciences, each department or interdisciplinary program has a committee or group responsible for curriculum. Departments and interdisciplinary programs present proposals for new or revised programs of study to the College Council at their respective campus/es. Successful proposals are then considered by the Majors and Curriculum Committee of the Arts and Sciences Council. Finally, proposals are voted on by the Arts and Sciences Council. Within Gabelli, interdisciplinary course revisions are reviewed by an interdisciplinary committee, area chairs, the undergraduate or graduate Curriculum Committee, and the Gabelli School Council. Discipline-specific courses follow a similar review process, starting with the relevant area and

moving to the area chairs, the relevant Curriculum Committee, and the Gabelli School Council. These councils also are discussed in Chapter 7 in relation to Criteria 1 and 5—Participation in Governance/Faculty, Staff, and Students.

Graduate/Professional School-Based Curriculum Committees
Each graduate or professional school has its own Curriculum Committee, with a charge set by its dean, that institutes specific processes for considering curriculum development proposals (S3-C1–Curriculum Committee Charges; S3-C1.a-b–Graduate and Professional Schools Curricular Development - Representative Examples).

Appropriately Designed Programs (Criteria 1a-b)

Through the provost's office, Fordham works closely with NYSED in all areas of program development and curricular revision requiring the agency's approval. For example, in compliance with NYSED requirements, bachelor's degrees comprise a minimum of 120 credits; master's degrees comprise a minimum of 30 credits; doctoral degrees comprise a minimum of 36 credits; and advanced certificates comprise a minimum of 15 credits (S3-C1.b–Credit Assignment Policy; S3-C1–Degrees and Programs). Fordham also meets NYSED requirements that all proposals establishing new academic programs include curricular roadmaps that demonstrate degree completion pathways aligned with degree type and justifications for credit-hour design (S3-C1–NYSED Academic Program Proposal or Revision Form Templates).

In addition to meeting NYSED requirements, a number of Fordham's academic programs also undergo specialized accreditation, including degree programs offered in the Law School, Gabelli School of Business, Graduate School of Social Service, Graduate School of Education, and Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education. A few graduate Arts and Sciences or inter-school graduate programs (e.g., Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology and M.S. in Health Administration) also fall into this category (S3-C1.a–Accredited Programs). The M.S. degree in Cybersecurity has been designated by the U.S. National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education.

The Core Curriculum / General Education (Criteria 5a-b)

At the heart of Fordham's undergraduate student learning experience is the core curriculum, comprising 12 to 21 courses depending on school and degree (S3-C5–Core Curriculum). Whereas students' majors and electives allow specialization and individualization in their studies, the core curriculum assures that student learning at Fordham College at Rose Hill, Fordham College at Lincoln Center, the School of Professional and Continuing Studies, and the Gabelli School of Business is anchored, as a whole, in the liberal arts and sciences. The core reflects Fordham's mission to inspire lifelong learning and habits of careful observation, critical thinking, creativity, moral reflection, appreciation for diverse perspectives, and articulate expression. Students report overall satisfaction with many of its goals (S3-C5–Spring 2024 Student Survey Select Responses Core Curriculum).

Fordham's core curriculum offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field. It also is designed to enable students to curate and cultivate essential skills and fluencies in critical thinking and analysis, oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning,

technological competency, and information literacy. Consistent with the University's mission, the general education program also includes the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives.

Its design is overseen by the Arts and Sciences Council and the CCC, and is based on distributional learning requirements students complete over a typical four-year program of study. Core courses taken during the first two years of study also facilitate learning within a student's major or minor. Undergraduate students also can make progress on the core while participating in study abroad if courses are taken at Fordham's programs in London or Granada, or in a Fordham-run summer program (e.g., Summer Session).

Fordham's core curriculum is periodically reviewed and revised to ensure continuous improvement in the University's execution of its educational mission. The most recent faculty-led assessment, in 2021, analyzed the core's learning goals and quality in light of the University's strategic plan, *Educating for Justice*, and the guidelines for "fundamental learning values" of the American Association of Colleges and Universities (S3-C5–Core Curriculum Assessment). It offered prescriptive recommendations for further assessment and formed the springboard for the process currently underway to reimagine this foundational pillar of a Fordham education.

The general objective has been to ensure new core curriculum alignment with the University mission, recreate a common set of values and sense of mission for all Fordham students, improve the relevance of the education that the University provides for both business and liberal arts students, and distinguish Fordham as a leader in mission-driven education. More specifically, the revised core curriculum will teach students to think and learn so they can thrive in a world where they are likely to change jobs routinely, confront global challenges, and need to master tools for ethical citizenship. It also will prompt faculty and administrators to be mindful of the University's Jesuit heritage and the opportunities that Fordham's location in New York City provides, and it will encourage all academic units to reimagine programs through the lens of justice. Finally, with the revised core, the University joins other Jesuit universities on a project of social transformation. Collectively, this undertaking reinforces the Institutional Priorities of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning; Holistic Student Success and Flourishing; and Community and Institutional Belonging.

The revision process involves three distinct stages. Phase One (Visioning and Learning Objectives) has been completed. Phase Two (Develop a Comprehensive Framework for the University Core) is in progress and is expected to be completed in spring 2025. Phase Three (Develop a Plan for Implementation, Administration, Assessment, and Amendment of the New University Core) will commence immediately thereafter. To ensure transparency and community awareness, the Office of the Provost launched a University Core Revision website (S3-C5–Core Curriculum Revision Provost Web Page), which features regular updates as the process moves through each phase. The commitment of faculty and administrative resources to these efforts reflects the importance of a successful core revision process to the overall University mission.

A Dedicated Faculty (Criterion 2a-c, Requirement of Affiliation 15)

The backbone of Fordham's academic strength is its dedicated and learned faculty. Fordham faculty are skilled pedagogues, active researchers, and committed to service across their departments/areas/schools, the University, and the profession. They strive to respect students as individuals and to challenge them to aim for personal excellence in all aspects of their academic journeys, including intellectual, emotional, moral, and physical. The Faculty Senate-led Faculty Handbook Committee (S3-C2–Faculty Senate Faculty Handbook Committee) is charged with

reviewing and considering changes to current and proposed faculty and administrative policies and procedures in light of the University Statutes. Academic policies and procedures guidelines help facilitate faculty responsibilities; these are maintained in the Undergraduate Faculty Handbook (S3-C2–Undergraduate Faculty Handbook) and the Academic Bulletin.

Fordham's faculty are learned experts in their respective fields (S3-C2.b–Fordham University FT Faculty F2013 to F2023). The vast majority of full-time faculty hold a Ph.D. or other terminal degree in their field (S3-C2.b–Faculty Credentials by School Fall 2014-2023). While not codified in collective bargaining agreements, non-tenure-line faculty (part-time and full-time) are typically required to hold a master's degree or its credential equivalent. In addition, some graduate/professional school accrediting bodies, such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), require faculty to have earned a master's degree or equivalent.

Full-time, tenure-line and tenured faculty are normally contracted to teach a 3-2 annual course load. Many teach both undergraduate and graduate students in line with department/program/school needs and requirements. Full-time, non-tenure-line faculty may be contracted to teach up to four courses per semester (e.g., lecturers) or as few as one course per semester or year (e.g., adjunct instructors).

Fordham ensures that its student-faculty ratio and class sizes are small enough to promote student learning (S3-C2.c–IPEDS Faculty-Student Ratios of Not-for-Profit Doctoral Universities F13-F22). Fordham's student-faculty ratio falls around the median for not-for-profit doctoral universities, suggesting that it is within norms for faculty being "sufficient in number." Specifically, Fordham had an undergraduate student-faculty ratio of 14 to 1 in 2022. That places the University in the third quartile in comparison to other not-for-profit doctoral universities, where the median was 12 to 1.

Half of Fordham's undergraduate courses have fewer than 20 students, and the vast majority (97%) have fewer than 40 students, as noted in data from fall 2023, which is consistent with data from the prior five-year period (S3-C2.c–CDS Section I—Class sizes—2018-2022; S3-C2–Course sections by faculty type AY1920 to AY2324). Undergraduate courses of 100 or more students generally are STEM courses, such as the introductory General Chemistry, Physics, and General Biology sequences. Given classroom capacity, enrollment in each course section is not more than 150 students. Such large lecture classes are generally accompanied by smaller recitation sections that have a lower student-faculty ratio, ensuring students can receive more individual attention. Undergraduate students are generally satisfied with class size, with students who took honors courses reporting significantly higher levels of satisfaction with class size (S3-C2 and C8–Select HERI CSS Items–2018 2019 2022; S3-C2.c–Student Satisfaction Class Size).

Fordham faculty are committed to ensuring teaching effectiveness and learning across colleges and graduate/professional schools. One aspect of this commitment is reflected in the fact that 80% of syllabi in fall 2023 integrated learning objectives, as instructed by the Undergraduate Faculty Handbook. Student evaluation of faculty instruction is another way the University assesses this and, by extension, student learning. Fordham faculty (e.g., full-time, part-time, tenured/tenure-line, and non-tenure-line) receive feedback from students through course evaluations and, across most schools, teaching observations carried out by peer faculty.

Arts and Sciences undergraduate and graduate students voluntarily submit Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) (S3-C2.a–Course Evaluations SEEQs) for each course taken, regardless of modality. These evaluations help faculty gather input on the strengths of their courses and possible areas of improvement. They also help departments and programs identify

courses and areas of teaching in need of improvement, including the course's learning/academic value, clarity of instruction, assignments, and assessments (S3-C2.a–SEEQ Areas of Coverage; S3-C2.c–Arts and Sciences SEEQ Questions). Spring 2024 survey data affirm that student expectations about learning and assessment are being met effectively by faculty instructors: 70% of undergraduate and 78% of graduate students agree or strongly agree that when they enroll in a course, they know what knowledge and skills they will learn. Additionally, 78% of undergraduate and 82% of graduate students indicate that early in their courses each semester, instructors provide clear information about how learning will be assessed (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

As an example of continuous improvement in this area, and in response to concerns expressed by Arts and Sciences faculty regarding the potential for bias in the SEEQ instrument and its effectiveness overall, the Arts and Sciences Council Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) recently completed a multi-year review and evaluation. That resulted in a new instrument being developed to evaluate the student learning experience and teaching effectiveness (S3-C2.a–FEC Report and Recommendations [Dec 6, 2023]). The goals for this process were to help academic units in Arts and Sciences adopt more effective and equitable practices in the evaluation of teaching, to provide instructors with valuable feedback to improve their teaching, and to provide students with information they can use to choose courses as well as to reflect on their own learning. The Student Experience Survey (SES) (S3-C2.c–Arts and Sciences SES Pilot Questions) was piloted in spring 2024, further reviewed, and deployed across Arts and Sciences courses in academic year 2024–25.

Faculty in other schools utilize different student evaluation instruments tailored to their needs to assess teaching and learning. For example, in the Graduate School of Education faculty are collaborating on a five-year cycle of assessment and review that includes professional development and faculty training to support program assessment, rubric construction, and instrument validation (S3-C2.a–GSE AAQEP Assessment Plan 2023 Response to Question #30_ 5-Year Cycle Assessment Plan (PREC)). In the Gabelli School of Business, at the end of the semester, students can optionally complete a numerical survey and also may provide qualitative feedback on their learning (S3-C2.a–GSB Questions Evaluations). These evaluations are available for review after the semester by the evaluated professor, the area chair, and the dean's office. Gabelli also recently established a faculty committee to review the effectiveness of its course evaluation procedures (S3-C2.a–GSB F20 F21 Area Comparison By Term, Level and Faculty Status).

Support for Faculty Professional Development and Innovation (Criterion 2d)
Faculty development in the area of teaching takes place at several levels. At the University level, support includes programming sponsored through the provost's office, its special advisor to the provost for teaching and learning, and other areas across the institution. School-level opportunities also are available for faculty to advance teaching skills and improve student learning experiences and outcomes. For example, the Graduate School of Social Service has a Director of Academic Excellence and Teaching Innovation who serves both the full-time and non-tenure faculty throughout the year through trainings, workshops, and conferences (S3-C2.d–Support for Faculty Professional Development and Teaching).

The Office of the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion also offers inclusive pedagogy resources for faculty to assist in course design and improvement (S3-C2.d–Inclusive Pedagogy Resources). As mentioned in Chapter 1, faculty who design CCEL courses also are offered intensive, semester-long training resources and support.

Fordham ensures that all non-tenure-line faculty (e.g., adjunct instructors and lecturers) are provided the same institutional resources and support for teaching assigned courses as tenured or tenure-track faculty. These include computer equipment, necessary instructional software and file storage, teaching materials and supplies, course enrichment, teaching and pedagogical training opportunities, and access to office space, library resources, IT resources, and e-learning platforms (S2-C5–Local 200 PT CBA; S2-C5–Local 200 FT CBA).

Fordham does not yet have the equivalent of a Center for Teaching; however, the University recently announced its support for teaching excellence across the institution through the establishment of a Center for Educational Innovation (S3-C2.d–CEI Announcement). Prior to the CEI, a tenured faculty member serving as special advisor to the provost for teaching and learning has been offering workshops, panel discussions, and confidential consultations for instructors interested in enhancing how students engage and learn in their classes. The advisor also moderates a University-wide online discussion forum/listserv—teaching@fordham.edu— where faculty share ideas, concerns, questions, and tips about teaching. The listserv currently has approximately 550 members.

Procedures for Faculty Review (Criterion 2e)

The provost's office and the associate provost for faculty affairs—in conjunction with department and program faculty, the Office of Human Resources, the vice president for equity and inclusion, the Office of the Arts and Sciences Dean of the Faculty, and academic/school deans—oversee faculty recruitment, reappointment, tenure, and promotion.

In addition to the University Statutes, the provost's office maintains all policies and procedures related to faculty (tenure-line and non-tenure-line), which also is available via the Office of Faculty Affairs website (S3-C2–Faculty Affairs Policies). Alongside these resources, and as noted in Chapter 2, in 2018 the chief diversity officer developed comprehensive Guidance for Faculty Search Committees (S3-C2–Guidance for Faculty Search Committees) to help ensure that the University maintains a uniform and nondiscriminatory faculty recruitment and hiring process and that all applicants are treated with fairness, dignity, and consistency. As a complementary resource to the University Statutes, it also is intended to highlight that excellence and diversity are goals that may be pursued simultaneously, thereby helping support the Institutional Priority of Community and Belonging.

Faculty review for reappointment, tenure, and promotion is governed by University Statutes and department norms. It is carried out by department-level personnel committees composed of tenured faculty members. At the beginning of each academic year, departments review, renew, and adopt their norms through the departmental/school governance process.

Review of designated groups of full-time and part-time non-tenure-line faculty (e.g., lecturers and adjunct instructors) is guided by the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) provisions for each unit (S2-C5–Local 200 PT CBA; S2-C5–Local 200 FT CBA). Department-level personnel committees are responsible for non-tenure-line faculty review. Each CBA includes clearly delineated evaluation criteria and procedures, such as self-assessment, student evaluation, review of syllabi and exams, and peer teaching observations (S3-C2.e–Arts and Sciences FTNTL Reappointment and Promotion Forms; S3-C2.e–Arts and Sciences FAS Part-time Instructor Evaluation Checklist). Gabelli faculty regularly carry out teaching observations of clinical and adjunct faculty (S3-C2.e–GSB Clinical Faculty In-Class Observation Instrument).

Academic Program Information (Criterion 3)

Fordham ensures academic programs are clearly and accurately described in official publications through a careful annual process and marketing coordination. An annual review process that culminates each June, led by administrators from Fordham's Office of Academic Records, ensures that each element of the Academic Bulletin is updated and checked by faculty, deans, and other administrators. This includes policies, course offerings, and requirements. Spring 2024 survey response data from approximately 600 undergraduate and 950 graduate students indicate that the bulletin provides accurate information about course requirements for undergraduate academic majors and graduate degree programs. Among undergraduate and graduate students alike, 71% strongly agreed or agreed that the bulletin was accurate in this regard (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

CourseLeaf, Degree Works, and RamCentral

To enhance the delivery of the student learning experience and support student success, Fordham utilizes CourseLeaf curricular management software. This software aids in the implementation of Fordham's curricular development, as its workflow touches all areas of support for academic affairs, including the Registrar, Academic Records, Student Records, Banner, student pages on Fordham's intranet (my.fordham.edu), the Course Bulletin, and Degree Works.

The shift to a technology solution for curriculum management emerged from a provost's office assessment and review of how courses are developed and approved internally (see Criterion 1a above for more details). The new workflow is significantly more efficient than the previous time-consuming, paper-based approach and complements other student academic planning tools such as the undergraduate Core Curriculum Checklist (S3-C3–Core Curriculum Checklist).

Data in CourseLeaf and Degree Works (for all schools except the Law School) are fully integrated, resulting in seamless updating of course and academic program revisions and requirements (S3-C3–Degree Works). These, in turn, are linked and shared with students via department and program publications, school web pages, and the RamCentral portal (formerly Fordham Hub), which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 (S3-C3–RamCentral). The Law School has found similar value in LawNET for these purposes. The intranet-based planning and information system is effective for curriculum planning, class schedules and syllabi, academic calendar, student apps, and evaluations (S3-C3–LawNET).

Degree Works permits students to create a range of planning "what-ifs" and to carry out their own degree audits. Academic advisors also use this tool when meeting with advisees and in working with students to identify additional programs of study (e.g., a second major, a minor) that reflect their interests and align with courses planned/taken. Fordham also has invested in paperless workflows for common procedures students undertake, such as signing up for an internship tutorial, adding or dropping a major/minor, adding/dropping courses, etc. These are now all completed via the student portal on Banner.

Learning Experiences to Support Academic Progress (Criterion 4)

Fordham offers more than 7,000 standard course sections every academic year as well as enriching learning opportunities such as independent study, internships, and mentored research projects. Full-time students are able to meet the requirements of their programs within the expected time with only rare adjustments to program requirements. An Office of Institutional Research and Assessment analysis of course requirement waivers showed that among

undergraduates who graduated between summer 2020 and spring 2024, about 99% of first-time, full-time students and 97% of transfer students completed their programs without waivers for a required course. Students who required waivers substituted, on average, one required course for an alternative. The one outlier to this trend was the class of 2022. Necessitated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, 11% of its graduates received waivers. Those students averaged 3.6 course requirement waivers.

Fordham's long history of approaching education in ways that are distinctly Catholic and Jesuit assures that learning occurs both inside and outside the classroom, developing in students authentic conscience, character, and intellect. Sufficient learning opportunities and resources are ensured to support both the institution's programs of study and students' academic progress (S3-C4–Academic Resources). Moreover, Fordham imbues these resources with a Jesuit philosophy of creating a fulfilling and enlightening educational approach that cares for the whole person. The University also has increasingly recognized the importance of cultivating teaching and learning practices that provide evidence-based educational benefits and enhance student academic retention, success, and completion. Though Fordham undergraduates have had access to a growing number of these kinds of opportunities, some remain unevenly available, and approaches to assessing them can always be improved. Overall, student assessment of select aspects of academic support and learning opportunities has been very positive (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data; S3-C4-Student Satisfaction with Academic Support and Learning Opportunities). The range of supports and learning opportunities (S3-C4–Compilation of Student Academic Supports and Learning Opportunities) includes the following:

Living and Learning: Integrated Learning Communities and First-Year Experiences
Fordham undergraduates residing at the Rose Hill campus can choose to participate in a variety of Integrated Learning Communities (ILCs) that combine strong intellectual tradition with experience-based learning. In Gabelli, all first-year students are required to enroll in the school's Ground Floor course (CBBU 1001), which introduces them to key business concepts and the major business disciplines, and strengthens the critical thinking, business writing, and teamwork skills essential for success in today's global business environment.

Study Abroad
Fordham University offers more than 100 undergraduate study abroad programs in 50-plus countries on six continents. In keeping with Jesuit education traditions, such programs promote a global perspective that helps students address complex problems in an international context. In addition to offering its own programs, Fordham University works with third-party providers to make additional study abroad programs available to undergraduates.

Fordham London
The University's flagship study abroad program is based at its London campus, where hundreds of students from Fordham and other colleges and universities study each year. Fordham London course offerings are coordinated with Fordham's New York-based campus programs so students in London generally take the same or nearly equivalent classes. In addition, many of the extracurricular programs offered in London—such as cross-cultural awareness training, internships, and single and multiday trips—are specifically geared to Fordham students.

Center for Community Engaged Learning
As mentioned in Chapter 1 and above (Criterion S3–C2.d), Fordham's CCEL offers undergraduate and graduate students opportunities to take courses focusing on engagement and community partnership.

Undergraduate Student Research
Undergraduates across the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses may apply for competitive, internally funded research grants—offered every semester and during the summer—to advance independent research on projects of their choosing while receiving support from a faculty mentor. External research opportunities through scholarships and fellowships also are available through the Office of Prestigious Fellowships, the Manresa Program, and FCRH and FCLC deans' offices. Summer research grants in the natural sciences are available through Fordham's Calder Center field station Undergraduate Research Program.

Libraries
Fordham University's libraries (Walsh Library at Rose Hill, Quinn Library at Lincoln Center, Maloney Library of Fordham's School of Law, and Fordham Westchester Library) play a crucial role in supporting and broadening the University's curricula and programs of study as well as the academic development and success of students. The collection includes almost 3 million print and ebooks, 325 electronic databases, 118,000 journal subscriptions, 40,000 streaming videos, microforms, maps, government documents, manuscripts, rare books, and University archival materials.

Academic Coaching
Fordham College at Rose Hill introduced no cost academic coaching in fall 2022 to FCRH undergraduates in response to concerns about student well-being and ability to manage coursework. The coaches are graduate students or recent graduates from Graduate School of Education programs in counseling psychology and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences programs in psychology. They are overseen by a trained psychologist. Fordham College at Lincoln Center and Gabelli students have access to similar resources such as the FCLC assistant dean for student support and success and an academic support specialist.

Knack Tutoring Platform
Since 2021, Fordham has partnered with Knack, a tutoring platform that allows undergraduate students to sign up for free tutoring sessions with peer tutors. Knack's platform allows students to book one-on-one and/or group tutoring sessions with students from Fordham who have previously excelled in specific courses. The tutors offer assistance in person or online, are trained through Knack, and are paid the New York City minimum wage.

Instructional Technology
Fordham University has invested in technology to support online learning through enhancements to digital infrastructure, improvements in classroom technologies, and efforts to ensure digital accessibility and equity. This includes upgrading the Learning Management System, retrofitting classrooms with advanced AV equipment for hybrid teaching, and implementing initiatives to provide students with necessary technological resources (S3-C4–One Button Studio). These strategic investments facilitate a seamless online learning experience, reflecting Fordham's commitment to accessible and inclusive education.

The Office of Disability Services
Housed in the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Disability Services (ODS) oversees accommodations and support for students registered with their office in undergraduate and graduate schools and colleges and Fordham's London Center (S3-C4–Office of Disability Services), while Law School students needing accommodations work directly with the Law School's disability services office. The work of ODS is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

LITE Center
Through Fordham's new Learning Commons: Learning, Innovation, Technology Environment (LITE), students, faculty, and staff have access to technology support and workshops as well as innovative tools such as podcasting booths, virtual reality, equipment rentals, a maker space with 3D printers, and more. LITE Centers are located at both the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses.

Other Academic Support Resources
Complementing support from faculty, academic resources provided by administrators also assist students throughout their academic journeys. The creation of a new academic advising structure across FCRH and FCLC (discussed in detail in Chapter 4, S3-C4–Fordham Undergraduate Advising Center FAQs September 2023) reflects the responsibility to educate students in alignment with Jesuit values. Whether helping students improve their writing through personalized instruction in the Writing Center (S3-C4–Writing Center; S3-C4–Writing Program External Review Synopsis) or supporting international students through the Office for International Services (S3-C4–OIS) and the Institute of American Language and Culture (IALC) (S3-C4–IALC), Fordham strives to deliver on the Jesuit principle of *cura personalis* (care of the whole person) through these resources.

Graduate Student Professional Development (Criterion 6)

In its graduate and professional programs, Fordham offers opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, and independent thinking through faculty and/or other professionals with credentials appropriate to graduate-level curricula. Each graduate or professional school has established graduate-level student learning outcomes related to standards appropriate to the level of degree(s) offered and professional sector standards for that school and/or graduate program area. In addition, all policies related to independent research, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, internships, fieldwork, practicums, teaching assistantships, and other graduate professional preparation are detailed in school handbooks. The information in these handbooks often is supplemented by program-specific handbooks at the area or department level.

Fordham's graduate and professional schools have a longstanding commitment to experiential learning and professional development, often in the service of communities locally, nationally, and globally. These mission-aligned opportunities are integrated into the advanced training graduate students receive, and they also illustrate the Institutional Priorities of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning, and Holistic Student Success and Flourishing. Select examples include the following:

- Graduate School of Social Service (GSS) inaugural Master of Social Work (MSW) Practicums offer a student-to-employee pipeline at local nonprofits and agencies (S3-C6– GSS Field Education).
- The Graduate School of Education (GSE) launched an innovative, immersive partnership program with the Catholic University of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) that allows

Fordham student-teachers to gain language and cultural competency through classroom experience in Dominican schools and home stays with Dominican families (S3-C6–GSE Unique Short-Term Summer 2023 Study Abroad Opportunity in the Dominican Republic).

- Graduate School of Arts and Sciences' Futures Program is a student-led, student-run initiative that coordinates year-round programs and professional development opportunities to prepare graduate students for diverse career pathways (S3-C6–GSAS Futures). Each component of the program is assessed through post-participation surveys that feed program improvement.

- Gabelli graduate student research and professional development opportunities are designed to strengthen professional networking and allow students to apply the research skills they learn in the classroom. These include the Responsible Business Leadership Certificate, March Data Crunch Madness Competition, Fordham Women in Business Conference, and the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Challenge (S3-C6–GSB Selection of Graduate Student Research and Professional Development Opportunities).

In a spring 2024 survey, Fordham's graduate students reported high levels of satisfaction with the opportunities their schools offer to help them achieve excellence and mastery in their field of study; develop leadership skills; excel in their research, scholarship, and independent thinking; and prepare for multiple career pathways (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data; S2-C6–Graduate Student Professional Development Satisfaction).

Review of Third-Party Providers (Criterion 7)

Fordham's atmosphere of strong support and encouragement for student success extends to services provided through third-party providers as well. The University has established partnerships with outside agencies to develop new programs, enhance Fordham's degree offerings, and attract and support a diverse group of students, especially at the graduate and professional levels. With the exception of select study abroad programs administered by third-party providers (discussed in detail above under Criterion 4), Fordham faculty design, deliver, and assess the student learning experience for all undergraduate, graduate, and professional school programs, regardless of modality. This includes courses students take at Fordham London and academic programs that involve or have involved collaboration with third-party providers. Across such programs, the University provides institutional review and approval.

In 2017–18, and in alignment with Fordham's broader online education strategies, the University partnered with 2U to administer select graduate and professional programs (S3-C7–2U Programs). As a third-party provider, 2U committed to delivering high-quality online learning through enhanced course design and delivery, comprehensive faculty training, and robust student support services. During the course of these partnerships, Fordham faculty designed and taught all classes using 2U's learning management system, technology platform, and content delivery methods that leveraged digital media and learning tools to produce a rich, interactive learning environment. The partnership also offers students 24-hour tech support alongside Fordham's student advising resources.

Specifically for Fordham's 2U partnership on the GSS Master of Social Work program, accreditation standards require demonstration that the program has the same syllabus and competency-based evaluation standards as an in-person program. Fordham's 2U partnership therefore includes the provision of comprehensive student services and an interactive learning environment, ensuring online students receive the same level of support and engagement as

their in-person counterparts. 2U provides a case approach to student advising, and also offers an online guidance and counseling service called Uwill. 2U also has worked with the school field placement office to identify locations for student fieldwork and to evaluate field placements.

Assessment of Student Learning Experiences (Criterion 8, Requirement of Affiliation 8)

Fordham assesses the effectiveness of student learning experiences for all student populations at the program and course levels. Program-level assessment is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. Course-level assessment (introduced above under Criterion 2) includes data demonstrating student satisfaction with their academic learning experiences.

Annual Assessment of Student Learning

At the undergraduate level in the Arts and Sciences, departments and programs carry out assessment of student learning based on learning objectives identified in course syllabi as well as through stated department/program learning goals. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) has collaborated with faculty across Arts and Sciences departments and programs to guide and support the adoption of authentic assessment instruments without prescribing specific tools or approaches. For example, the Political Science Department uses an analytic rubric measuring three learning goals to assess senior seminar capstone research papers by a representative sample of all graduating seniors.

As discussed (Criterion 2), academic units and faculty use various measures to evaluate student learning and, based on these assessments, revise courses and programs accordingly. For example, in the Gabelli School of Business, this assessment process, driven mainly by faculty, takes several forms and follows the cycle of assessment development and implementation, review, and course or program revision. Typically, faculty use course-based instruments such as case discussions, individual or team presentations, questions embedded in exams, or term papers to assess student learning outcomes. Supplemental information can include surveys of students, recruiters, and other relevant external stakeholders. After implementing proposed interventions, the process is repeated in subsequent semesters to provide continuous assessment of student learning outcomes.

Strong reading and writing skills are foundational to Fordham's undergraduate curricula and feature prominently among course- and program-level learning goals. These are assessed in varying ways. For example, at the request of the English Department, the writing program underwent review by the CWPA-CE national service in 2019. The review report recommended revising the process by which students were placed in their first composition course (S3-C8–Writing Program External Review). In 2021, the English Department replaced the use of SAT/ACT scores with a Directed Self-Placement system endorsed by much research as a measure of engagement, retention, and antiracist educational change. In 2022, the Writing Center led a multipronged effort to assess the efficiency of the new placement framework and the impact of composition courses on student outcomes. This provided valuable information about academic achievement and student standing, which enabled faculty to help students stay on course and achieve their goals.

Student Satisfaction with the Fordham Learning Experience

Among the instruments Fordham uses to gauge student satisfaction with their learning experience is the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) survey. At present, the information it yields is not shared as widely as it could be, especially in the undergraduate academic areas. HERI data are gathered annually and offer insights into the rigor and effectiveness of the University's

undergraduate educational programs. Overall, Fordham students report they are satisfied with their coursework, academic assistance, academic advising, amount of contact with faculty, class size, relevance of coursework, and overall college experience (S3-C2 and C8–Select HERI CSS Items–2018 2019 2022). Respondents who reported taking an honors course (14% of those surveyed) are significantly more likely to report a higher level of satisfaction in several areas.

HERI data also indicate that Fordham students are challenging themselves academically through written work and oral presentations. Based on 2019 survey responses, since enrolling in college 13% of students had taken an honors course, 46% had frequently taken classes that required one or more papers of 10-plus pages, 68% had frequently taken classes that required multiple short papers, 47% had completed a culminating experience for their degree (e.g., capstone course/ project, thesis, or comprehensive exam), and 19% had participated in an undergraduate research program (S3-C2 and C8–Select HERI CSS Items–2018 2019 2022). Although complete data are not available for subsequent years, the available figures are even higher for 2022, when 18% of students reported having taken an honors course, 53% had completed a culminating experience for their degree, and 25% had participated in an undergraduate research program. In addition, 71% of students reported frequently making class presentations in 2018 (the latest year for which that data point is available). With the exception of feedback regarding class presentations, honors students reported significantly higher percentages for the relevant periods.

According to the spring 2024 survey of undergraduate sophomores and juniors, 86% of 123 respondents were satisfied with tutoring services, and 92% were satisfied with the Writing Center (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data). These measures also provide benchmarks for students to assess their own progress and to receive support with their academic challenges. Survey data also confirm student satisfaction with important elements of the academic experience at Fordham. For example, 74% of undergraduates rate the quality of their core curriculum courses as very good or good, and 63% rate the quality of the courses in their major as being very good or outstanding. Additionally, 65% agree or strongly agree that the courses they have taken constitute a coherent, interconnected program of study. Among graduate students, 70% rated the quality of their graduate curriculum as very good or outstanding; 84% agree or strongly agree that the courses they have taken constitute a coherent, interconnected program of study; and 66% rate the overall quality of their academic program as very good or outstanding. In 2024, the undergraduate business program at Gabelli ranked 11th for student satisfaction with their academic experience by *Poets&Quants* based on questions answered by the class of 2021. It also ranked 16th in career outcomes based on employment, internship, and compensation rates. The school ranked 21st overall that year (S4-C1.c–Gabelli Poets&Quants Overall Ranking 2024).

Another measure reflecting the rigor and career preparation a Fordham education delivers: According to the most recent College Scorecard, five years after graduation, 89% of the University's undergraduate alumni earn more than New York state high school graduates. That percentage matches the average of other national research universities in New York state. A review of job titles collected from the graduating classes of 2018 through 2023 suggests that 96% of those employed after graduation took jobs that very likely required a four-year college degree, and an additional 1% took jobs associated with Fordham's creative arts programs (e.g., dance, theater). The most common job titles were analyst, investment banking analyst, financial analyst, paralegal, account coordinator, research assistant, software engineer, and audit associate.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The evidence analyzed in this chapter demonstrates that Fordham provides students with learning experiences characterized by rigor and coherence across program, certificate, and degree levels as well as across instructional modalities. The data also demonstrates that the University ensures student learning experiences, academic program pathways, pace, level, and class structure (e.g., lecture, seminar, lab, studio, or tutorial) are consistent with course- and program-level learning objectives tied to undergraduate and graduate/professional education expectations (Requirement of Affiliation 9).

This institutional academic pillar is led by world-class faculty who are supported in their professional development and commitment to the student learning experience. It is also complemented by a diverse and extensive array of undergraduate and graduate student learning and professional development initiatives to prepare graduates for rewarding careers. To continue providing a rigorous, coherent learning experience consistent with higher education expectations and Fordham's Jesuit mission, the University should do the following:

1. Provide full and robust levels of support for the creation of a Center for Educational Innovation, which would serve as a much-needed resource for pedagogical and professional development training and opportunities for all faculty. As Fordham continues to shift from external partnerships to in-house support for online learning, appropriate investments and support will be needed in areas such as online pedagogy; student-centered online instructional design and syllabus development; and effective, ongoing assessment of online learning.

2. Create and maintain a structure and mechanisms for incremental/periodic assessment of the core curriculum across all academic divisions. This will help ensure that the core curriculum remains a living, adaptable, and responsive educational anchor for all Fordham undergraduates, delivering on the institutional responsibility to educate students in the Jesuit tradition and allowing them to succeed and flourish in the workforce of the future.

3. Continue taking steps to utilize technology more effectively across all aspects of University life, especially teaching and learning. It is important to recognize how the rapidly changing landscape of digital citizenship and information literacy have impacted learning for Gen Z students. The University's continued recognition of the ethics and importance of leveraging those innovations will provide better educational services and opportunities, complementing the interpersonal relationships between students and faculty that have supported students' moral development and academic learning.

STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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.

Institutional Priorities most closely aligned with this Standard: Holistic Student Success and Flourishing; and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Introduction

The University's Jesuit mission and the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm of "well-rounded growth" require supportive environments. These provide essential academic and social experiences, and encourage the important transitions empowered in the college journey, reflecting the institutional priorities of community and belonging. In the spirit of the Institutional Priorities devoted to Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging, Fordham is committed to efforts that enable the retention and successful completion of all students.

Processes to Admit Students (Criterion 1)

Fordham University is a selective institution serving students with strong secondary academic backgrounds who demonstrate character and drive. The process guiding undergraduate admission decisions is based on a holistic evaluation of a student's application materials. In 2020, the University adopted a "test-optional" policy under which students could apply without submitting standardized test scores. Curricular rigor, high school GPA, application essays, and recommendations remain highly important factors in prospective students' acceptance. Non-academic factors also feature here, including extracurricular activities, talent/ability, character or personal qualities, volunteer work, and work experience (S4-C1–Undergraduate Admissions; S4-Common Data Set 2023–24).

Undergraduate admissions to Fordham College at Rose Hill, Fordham College at Lincoln Center, and the Gabelli School of Business are handled centrally through the Office of Enrollment Services (OES) and the Office of Undergraduate Admission. Graduate and professional programs and the School of Professional and Continuing Studies manage admissions themselves based on program-level admission criteria. Representatives from each of these schools serve on the Graduate and Adult Admission Council (GAAC), which meets regularly to share best practices and encourage consistency across admission operations. GAAC also hosts an annual retreat to discuss trends, strategies, and resources in graduate admissions (S4-C1–GAAC Career Center Presentation; S4-C1-GAAC University Marketing and Communications Presentation). To ensure institutional alignment, schools coordinate with OES and University Marketing and Communications as well.

Providing Comprehensive Financial Information to Students (Criterion 1a)

Understanding that affordability is a critical consideration for students and their families, Fordham provides accurate and comprehensive information relating to expected expenses and financial aid through various channels. As noted in Chapter 2, this begins with clear information on the University website, which OES updates annually. OES monitors the compliance and

accuracy of undergraduate marketing and admission information and collaborates on such materials maintained by the graduate schools. In addition to these oversight efforts, the recent implementation of RamCentral (discussed in greater detail below) provides timely, clear information to students regarding student financial services matters. And, as described in Chapter 2, the University provides financial aid counselors to inform and advise prospective and current students and their families.

Helping All Students Succeed (Criterion 1b)

Fordham's mission inspires faculty, staff, and administrators to collaborate in advancing students' full moral and intellectual development. These efforts help advance the Institutional Priority of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing. The University fulfills this commitment in a number of ways. For example, Fordham participates in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), a state-run initiative that offers a broad range of services to New York state residents who, because of educational and economic circumstances, would otherwise be unable to attend a specific postsecondary educational institution based on its admissions criteria. The undergraduate admissions team refers prospective HEOP applicants for consideration for one of the limited spots the state allots to Fordham. Admission of these students requires review of financial and academic eligibility as well as evaluation of application materials and applicant interviews.

Once enrolled, Fordham HEOP students are supported through a variety of resources, including a summer program mandated by the New York State Education Department (NYSED), tailored guidance on course registration, academic tutoring, and ongoing financial, educational, and career counseling. Prior to their first term, HEOP students are required to complete an intensive, six-week summer session of credit-bearing developmental classes designed to introduce them to college-level materials in analytical writing, math, and critical reading. The classes also acquaint students with Fordham's campuses, HEOP staff, and available support services. HEOP staff monitor student progress and design needed outreach and assistance to ensure student success.

The results of this student-centered support have been notable. Fordham's HEOP students maintain consistent, and oftentimes higher, retention rates among the entire undergraduate population. For first-time, full-time first-year students entering Fordham during the fall terms of 2018 through 2023, second-year retention was higher for HEOP students (92%) than for non-HEOP students (88%), despite somewhat weaker high school preparation (3.3 GPA compared to 3.69 GPA).

Alongside HEOP, Fordham also has participated for more than 35 years in the Federal TRIO Program, specifically through the Academic Talent Search (ATS) initiative (S4-C1.b–TRIO and ATS Programs). Designed to identify and provide services for high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the ATS program at Fordham annually serves approximately 790 students from six City of Yonkers public schools. The University provides students with academic, career, and financial counseling to mentor them through high school graduation and matriculation to a postsecondary higher education program. The ATS program at Fordham is currently in its 2021–26 funding cycle.

Enhancing Student Retention (Criterion 1c)

Fordham provides a range of orientation, advising, counseling services, and other programs to students across multiple settings, reflecting the spirit of the University's Institutional Priorities of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging.

These center on orienting students to the University and opportunities to form community and belonging; student advising that generates awareness of academic, co-curricular, and professional opportunities; and counseling that ensures student mental health and well-being. Specialized resources that help differently abled learners succeed and flourish complement these resources.

Orientation

Central to Fordham's mission is meeting all students where they are and ensuring they have the tools for success. In addition to mandatory orientation events, supplementary programs introduce campus services and foster community. Undergraduate offerings include an optional summer orientation for students and families; commuter and transfer student programming; a pre-orientation program providing support with visas and cultural transitions to international students; study abroad orientations; and Urban Plunge, an application-based social justice and advocacy program that involved 231 students in 2024.

Graduate orientations cater to program- and population-specific academic and co-curricular needs. For example, Gabelli provides comprehensive in-person and virtual orientations for its MBA and master's students depending on program modality. The full-time MBA includes a monthlong Launch program focusing on leadership, teamwork, technical skills (MBA QuantCamp), a global experience in London devoted to sustainability and purpose-driven business, and career preparation sessions paired with the two-year Launch2Landing career course (S4-C1.c–Gabelli Full-Time MBA Onboarding).

Feedback from students helps assess most undergraduate and graduate orientation sessions. Undergraduate Orientation program data are reported in the Division of Student Affairs Quarterly Report and Annual Assessment Presentation. In the most recent feedback, based on a scale of 100, with 100 being the highest, student ratings of orientation were strong (92). Staff availability (94) and knowledge (96) were also both highly rated (S4–Student Affairs Assessment Presentation 2023).

Evaluation data are used by Student Affairs, schools, and other offices to consider ways to enhance these programs. For example, past orientation assessment data indicated commuter students were having difficulty attending late-evening orientation events. In response, the Office for Student Involvement (OSI) instituted an evening shuttle to and from the subway to help commuter students feel more comfortable staying on campus and participating in this vital program that builds social connections. Gabelli used feedback from the fall 2023 graduate student orientation to improve the fall 2024 program, instituting new community engagement initiatives, streamlined surveys, and improved food options for Hindu students.

Academic Advising

To provide holistic support to address students' challenges both within and beyond the college setting, the Lincoln Center and Rose Hill campus deans initiated a transformation of undergraduate Arts and Sciences academic advising. They convened a faculty-led task force to assess advising models that would best serve the increased volume of students and their changing needs (S4-C1.c–Undergraduate Advising Task Force-Complete Report-Appendices). The group identified existing challenges, reviewed best practices, and sought extensive feedback from students, faculty, and other stakeholders. The deans launched the new Fordham College Advising Center in fall 2022, first for incoming students and this year to all undergraduates (S4-C1.c–Advising for Classes of 2026 2027 2028 Fordham College). Under the new model, professional

academic advisors work with department and program faculty to ensure students have well-rounded academic experiences. Using tools such as Degree Works, they create curricular maps and track student interactions to provide continuity in advising.

Gabelli undergraduates also benefit from an advising program where "class deans" help students identify goals, choose courses, and select majors and concentrations. This is accomplished through individual meetings and group workshops designed to ensure students achieve appropriate academic milestones during their degree program (S4-C1.c–Advising for Classes of 2026 2027 2028 Gabelli). Graduate business students have access to similar supports. Reflecting the Institutional Priority of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing, class deans approach advising with a philosophy of helping students pursue *meaningful work* that aligns with their talents and interests, while preparing them to be globally responsible citizens. As explored below (Criterion 1d), data suggest students place importance on advancing the greater good as part of their career goal values.

In addition, the Office of Student Athletic Advising provides academic counseling and career preparation to more than 550 Division I athletes. It works closely with deans' office staff and individual faculty to ensure athletes stay on track academically.

As noted in Chapter 3, Fordham IT collaborated in 2022 with units across the University to launch an online student community called the Fordham Hub, recently renamed RamCentral (S4-C1.c–The Fordham Hub; S3-C3–RamCentral). The portal provides a centralized profile for undergraduate students that staff and faculty can access to support students' success. Undergraduates can schedule academic and career advising meetings, engage with campus service providers, and track involvement in activities. Administrators use RamCentral to monitor progress, keep notes on student interactions, and share information. As described in Chapter 3, RamCentral also connects with advising structures and academic tools such as CourseLeaf and Degree Works. The University is currently working to give graduate students access to the portal.

Fordham's graduate and professional schools offer robust academic advising and well-being programs that help advance Institutional Priorities of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging. Many exist at the program level, while others are more centralized across schools. For example, the School of Law has a new system in which first-year law students are placed into a "house" led by a faculty member, an upper-level student professionalism fellow, and administrators from offices such as the Career Planning Center and Alumni Relations. The House System is designed to build a close-knit community during and beyond the program; coordinate all co-curricular programming; and deliver a robust professionalism and wellness curriculum focusing on professional etiquette, self-care, and a growth mindset (S4-C1.c–Law School House System).

Overall, students report positive experiences with academic guidance and advising resources as well as faculty-student mentoring. On average, graduate students rated (based on a high score of five) the quality of academic guidance and advising "good" to "very good" (3.38), as did Gabelli sophomores and juniors (3.43) and School of Professional and Continuing Studies students (3.51). Ratings were significantly lower among respondents from Fordham College at Rose Hill (2.76: "fair" to "good") and Fordham College at Lincoln Center (2.59: also "fair" to "good"). The same five-point scale yielded similar results for the quality of faculty-student mentoring, though the differences among colleges were not statistically significant. However, among Lincoln Center

campus respondents, sophomores rated the quality of faculty-student mentoring significantly higher than did juniors. As the revised advising system rolls out more fully, the University will continue to assess its effectiveness and adjust for improvement as needed (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

Counseling and Support Services

Many offices across the University provide students with vital, specialized resources and support that advance Fordham's Institutional Priorities of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging. Their efforts are regularly assessed. For example, Campus Ministry, Career Center, Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS), Office of Disability Services (ODS), OSI, and University Health Services (UHS) all administer student experience surveys to assess the overall effectiveness of their initiatives and capacity to serve students effectively and in line with the Jesuit principle of *cura personalis*. The Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), Office of Residence Life (ORL) and Gabelli's Personal and Professional Development Center (PPD) all analyze outcome data for their programs.

For example, CPS offices at Rose Hill, Lincoln Center, and the Fordham London Center deliver an array of mental health counseling resources to students. In CPS Client Experience Surveys conducted in 2021–22 and 2022–23, 95% of respondents said their counseling experience was positive overall. In an ODS survey administered in 2022–23, 79% of respondents found the services it provided to be above average or exceptional. And in its 2023 Patient Satisfaction Survey, 92% of students utilizing UHS would recommend them to a friend. Some 92% of respondents expressed feeling comfortable discussing sexual orientation health care needs with UHS providers. Students also recognized UHS contributions as reflecting the "open and inclusive" nature of Fordham and its "strong sense of community" (S4–Student Affairs Assessment Presentation 2023; S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

A number of offices offer career-focused advising and counseling, including the University's Career Center for Cura Personalis, Gabelli's Personal and Professional Development Center (supplemental to Career Center resources), the Law School's Career Planning Center and its Public Research Interest Center. In the Graduate Schools of Education and Social Service, faculty advisors supervise student fieldwork experiences.

Other areas provide spiritual forms of support. For example, within the Division of Mission Integration and Ministry, both Campus Ministry and CCEL provide pastoral counseling, mentorship, and advising on spiritual direction, academic development, and life skills. Similarly, some schools and offices supplement internal assessment with data from outside sources.

Some counseling services meet the needs of specific student populations. For example, OSI advises Fordham's undergraduate student clubs, programs, and leaders, including commuter first-year mentors/commuter assistants and orientation leaders (S4-C1.d–Commuter Assistant Training 2023). ORL advises its resident assistants and offers substance-use-related counseling to undergraduate students. The Office for International Services (OIS) advises and counsels international students and recent alumni on work authorization, travel, immigration, study, research, teaching, and visa-related matters. In 2022–23, OIS supported approximately 2,400 international students/scholars from more than 100 countries. The office recently upgraded technology to better manage and organize student requests; developed guidelines to assist students in submitting online applications to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; and launched additional webinars on F-1 visas, status, and employment (S3-C4–OIS).

Enhancing the Success of Students' Education Goals (Criterion 1d)

Fordham's commitment to *cura personalis* means helping students get what they need to be successful on every level. As discussed earlier, the University regards retention and graduation as part of its ethical commitment to students. Since 2020, Fordham's retention of first-time, full-time undergraduates has hovered around 88%, placing the institution in the top 20% of U.S. colleges and universities. Nationally, the four-year rate for postsecondary institutions is 75.5% (S4-C1.d–Fact Book Retention Rates; S4-C1.d–IPEDS National Retention Rates). Nonetheless, recent retention rates represent a slight decline from a high of 91% in 2015. In response, and in light of its commitment to the success of all students, Fordham has been working continuously to improve student retention and graduation rates.

Acting on recommendations from a 2018 retention working group, the provost's office committed to several measures to encourage the support and retention of students, including establishing a standing retention working group in 2019 (S4-C1.d–Retention Working Group Membership 2023–24). In 2023, Fordham launched a University-wide survey to collect data from departing undergraduate students and hired additional student support staff at the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses and in Gabelli School of Business. It also developed the tool that became RamCentral. The University's internal audit team is now performing an audit of Fordham's retention strategy and initiatives. The aim is to identify potential steps to integrate academic support, student engagement, personalized support services, faculty/staff development, and a welcoming, supportive campus environment to improve student outcomes.

Recognizing another area for improvement, Fordham established an Accessibility Committee in 2019 to develop an institution-wide approach to accessibility issues. Co-chaired by representatives of University Marketing and Communications and Fordham IT, membership includes administrators and faculty from Facilities Management, Office of Disability Services, Office of Legal Counsel, and University Libraries. Its work has resulted in the establishment of a website and creation of subcommittees to identify accessibility priorities. The committee has partnered with the Office of Human Resources on faculty and administrator workshops on such topics as reaching all students through inclusive, universal instructional design, and workplace support for individuals with disabilities (S4-C1.d–Accessibility at Fordham).

Helping to Ensure Academic Success
Units across the University have measures for identifying students who may need additional academic or personal development support for issues such as time management, homesickness, mental health, substance use, GPA concerns, and extended absences. Differences exist across schools and offices, which impacts how Fordham as a whole supports students via prevention, identification, and intervention efforts.

Incoming students are supported by University-wide initiatives that help ensure their academic and developmental success, including an orientation to University policies and expectations, processes, and procedures. The Student Handbook (or its equivalent) is provided to every student (S4-C1.d–Student Handbook University Regulations). Some areas conduct supplemental programs. For example, the Division of Student Affairs requires undergraduates to complete extensive online and in-person trainings and assessments, such as the Alcohol EDU program and Sexual Assault Prevention meetings, and Academic Affairs requires undergraduates to complete an Academic Integrity Tutorial.

Fordham also is committed to improving social mobility among higher education's underrepresented populations. For example, the First Gen Network, founded in 2020, is a cross-college collaboration to create community and support among Fordham's more than 700 first-generation college students. As noted, the University is an active partner in the Academic Talent Search initiative. In addition, beyond Fordham's overall advising model, the University provides specialized guidance for undergraduates pursuing admission to health professions and law schools after graduation as well as accelerated entry into its own business, law, social work, teaching, and other graduate programs.

As described in Chapter 3, graduate student support is largely focused on academic and career pathway preparation and success. However, programs such as Gabelli's Responsible Business Leadership Certificate, which allows all master's students to hone leadership skills in sustainable business practices, and the new cohort approach within the Law School, provide holistic student support (S4-C1.d–Gabelli Graduate Orientation Overview). Also, graduate student associations, such as the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences' Graduate Student Council and Gabelli's Student Advisory Council, enable students to advocate for their peers.

Identification

Fordham uses a range of standard academic measures to assess students' academic risk, including low GPAs, absences, incompletes, and course withdrawals. To keep pace with steady growth in the undergraduate colleges, new processes and updated procedures have ensured more timely identification and support, including mid-term reports for first-year students in the undergraduate colleges, regular faculty attendance reporting, registration and major discernment advising support, and specialized athletic advising.

Additional measures include referrals, self-disclosure, and collaborative systems such as the Student Concern Conference (SCC). Monthly SCC gatherings include administrators from the schools, dean of students, Campus Ministry, Counseling and Psychological Services, Disability Services, Health Services, Public Safety, and Residential Life to consult regarding students with potential concerns. Information is recorded in a "Notes" document (S4-C1.d–Student Concern Conference Notes Redacted) in the Symplicity Advocate system. This forms part of the student involvement tracking and early warning system as well as a weekly Student Affairs tracker for concerns requiring immediate response (S4-C1.d–Student Tracker). Advising checkpoints, including required semester appointments, also monitor student progress, social adaptation, and well-being. Campus Ministry, Counseling and Psychological Services, and Health Services also receive referrals through conversations and student self-referrals.

Student-facing University staff and faculty are often the first to recognize and refer students needing support. Members of the Fordham community who interact routinely with students— deans, faculty, administrators, student leaders, coaches, nurse practitioners, and others—all contribute to identification and care of students in need. Some positions require a certain level of education and expertise for employment, while others are provided training through onboarding and professional development workshops (S4-C1.d–Student Affairs Divisional Staff Training, Fall 2023; S4-C1.d–Student Affairs Divisional Staff Training, Spring 2024).

Communication and information dissemination plays a key role. An annual email is sent to all Fordham faculty with links to multiple resources and guides to assist students with mental health emergencies and concerns (S4-C1.d–Cura Personalis Faculty Guide to Student Behavior;

S4-C1.d–Public Safety Emergency Information; S4-C1.d–Gender Equity and Title IX). Faculty report concerns to Public Safety, college and school deans, and the deans of students. The Public Safety website features an emergency management plan as well as procedures for multiple emergency situations. A spring 2024 survey found 87% of undergraduate and 90% of graduate student respondents were satisfied with services provided by Public Safety (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

The University also provides staff, administrators, and faculty with guidance and resources to report gender equity and Title IX concerns as well as Campus Assault and Relationship Education (CARE) resources (S4-C1.d–Campus Assault and Relationship Education). Campus staff—including resident assistants, commuter assistants, and resident directors—engage in comprehensive training to learn how to appropriately identify, support, and report students who are struggling (S4-C1.d–Student Affairs Staff Training Schedule; S4-C1.d–Resident Director Training Schedule 2023; S4-C1.d–OL Training Schedule 2022–23). And, as noted in Chapter 2, through the Civility Core Program, undergraduates explore DEI-related concepts and terms as well as antiracist and implicit bias material and guidance. According to survey responses, 90% of incoming students agreed or strongly agreed that they know how to locate resources about bias and harassment policies on the Fordham website (S4–Student Affairs Assessment Presentation 2023, p. 241).

Intervention
Building on the foundation of prevention and identification, various offices at the University have established protocols to support students and mitigate obstacles to achievement through a remediation plan. For example, students who experience academic difficulty are notified by email and in a formal letter about the nature of the risk, required steps for its remediation, and instructions to meet with their advisor to develop and execute a plan. Students may be placed on a probationary status during the remediation period or are given a contract stating remedial steps, which is signed and returned. Remediation plans and achievement contracts are customized to meet the specific needs of each student and best support their efforts to return to normal academic standing (S4-C1.d–Gabelli Remediation Plan and Achievement Contract Sample). University staff may follow up to monitor compliance.

To support growing needs at the undergraduate level, academic advising structures of the undergraduate advising programs were modified. At the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses, in addition to the transformation of the overall advising structure (mentioned earlier in this chapter in response to Criterion 1c), part-time roles were added to provide academic counseling and coaching to students in need of additional support. Gabelli added support to supplement the undergraduate advising offered by the advising class dean. Two part-time roles, one for students of concern and the other for transfer student support, were added (the former after a successful pilot program). Prior to this role at Rose Hill, the business school had 10 of 22 first-year students on academic probation who were subsequently suspended, dismissed, or withdrew from the University anticipating an academic sanction (fall 2017 to spring 2019). After this role was hired, only one of 28 was suspended, dismissed, or withdrew from the University anticipating an academic sanction (fall 2019 to spring 2024). Still, some students continue to be on academic probation after working with the support person, who also works with students voluntarily seeking assistance.

In addition, the University's Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP), Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), and Institute of American Language and Culture (IALC) provide proactive and reactive support to students in need. For example, CSTEP leadership conducted academic enrichment activities for all gateway courses for students pursuing STEM and pre-health required coursework, and facilitated alumni and peer mentoring programs. For first-time, full-time undergraduates, retention of CSTEP students in STEM majors exceeds that of non-participants each year through graduation (S4-C1.d–CSTEP Retention and Graduation Report, Fall 2006 to Fall 2016). This pattern remains when retention and graduation rates are disaggregated by gender and race/ethnicity, with more favorable outcomes for men and women, students of color, and underrepresented minorities.

Gabelli School of Business class deans have instituted a number of initiatives aimed at improving retention rates and identifying reasons for student withdrawal. The Special Ad-hoc Gabelli Experiences (SAGE) Program was created in spring 2019 to improve undergraduate retention rates among Lincoln Center business students, connecting New York City-based alumni to first- and second-year students identified as potential retention risks. Retention rates for participants were 86% and 92% in the program's first two semesters compared to 69% and 89% among eligible students not participating in SAGE. The graduate and professional schools also have increased support for student success. For example, the Graduate School of Education hired a student success counselor and as mentioned above, the Law School instituted a "house system" to enhance the first-year student experience.

Fordham prepares its students not only for career success but also for meaningful work that promotes the greater good. Spring 2024 student surveys suggest the University is delivering on its mission and the future pathways our students seek. For example, the majority of respondents report valuing moral reflection (78% undergraduate; 87% graduate) and promoting the protection of human rights (82% undergraduate; 86% graduate) as essential or very important characteristics of their professional fields of choice. Importantly, a majority of these students also report that their Fordham education prepared them moderately or extremely well for working in a setting that values moral reflection (84% undergraduate; 85% graduate) and promotes the protection of human rights (74% undergraduate; 81% graduate) (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

In support of this, the Career Center for Cura Personalis embraces a holistic approach to undergraduate student support. This encompasses career education and professional development and also emphasizes mental, emotional, and physical wellness and the values of inclusion and belonging. Staff organize networking events, workshops, and one-to-one counseling with a concentration on aligning students' values, interests, needs, and concerns with a range of career options. The office surveys undergraduate graduating classes to assess employment rates and to offer further support. Of the 91% of graduates from the undergraduate class of 2023 for whom the University knows outcomes, 89% were employed, continuing their education, or engaged in public or military service. During their studies, 84% of Arts and Sciences and 98% of Gabelli School undergraduates completed at least one internship (S4-C1.d–Gabelli Internships). Among employed graduates, the average salary was $68,375 (S4-C1.d–Undergraduate Postgraduate Outcomes Class of 2023). According to the Spring 2024 survey, 80% of respondents expressed satisfaction with Career Center resources (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

Fordham University's graduate and professional schools also strive to prepare students for successful and meaningful careers and to support them both during their enrollment and beyond

graduation. In addition to the examples of career advising provided in response to Criterion 1c earlier in this chapter, within the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Office of Academic Programs and Support monitors student academic performance and works closely with directors of graduate study to offer students additional professional development assistance. In 2018, it established the role of assistant dean for student professional development to complement department efforts and prepare students for careers within and outside academia. Gabelli launched a Student Success Center, which features an Alumni in Residence program and facilitates an integrated academic advising, career development, and student engagement experience for graduate students (S4-C1.c–Gabelli Graduate Career Development Services). Fordham Law's Career Planning Center engages first-semester students and offers career assessment and planning after graduation. Among members of the class of 2023, 95% of J.D. graduates reported they were employed within 10 months of graduation.

Policies for Alternative Credits (Criterion 2)

Policies and procedures related to the evaluation and transfer of credits for previous academic achievement, experiential, and non-academic learning are documented in the University Catalog and on the Fordham website. In 2018, a presidential task force identified the main obstacles to transfer student enrollment and made a series of recommendations for policy changes to make the University more "transfer friendly." It highlighted evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits as the most important factor in promoting transfer enrollment and addressed issues ranging from financial aid to orientation and housing (S4-C2–Transfer Student Task Force Action Plan).

Subsequently, the University created an online Transfer Equivalency Self-Service tool designed to help prospective transfer students determine how their transfer credits may be accepted at Fordham and applied toward an intended degree. Approved transfer credit equivalencies are added into a database, which has hundreds of courses from the University's main feeder schools. Undergraduate Admission partners with the undergraduate deans' offices to ensure timely review of transfer credits. Fordham also appointed new staff to oversee transfer and articulation service and to onboard and advise new transfer students once enrolled. Finally, a cross-divisional Transfer Student Working Group meets regularly to promote additional changes that facilitate transfer student enrollment and success. In the past decade, an average of 315 transfer students annually have enrolled in Fordham's undergraduate and graduate programs.

Fordham's undergraduate colleges also award credit to transfer students through proficiency exams. In Gabelli, for example, transfer students who complete external courses and receive a passing score on accounting and marketing proficiency exams receive credit for core business courses. In addition, for both undergraduate transfer and first-year students, AP scores, A-Level, and International Baccalaureate scores allow students to place out of specific core courses and some major/minor requirements and electives.

In fall 2022, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU) surveyed Fordham undergraduate transfer students. Respondents who indicated all of their credits transferred reported a more favorable overall experience (78% very good or good) than did those for whom only some credits transferred (56% very good or good). Though the number of respondents was small, one notable difference that emerged was that when asked "[d]id you feel welcomed by the campus community when you entered your current four-year institution?" 93% of respondents who transferred from two-year institutions (n=14) indicated "Yes." In contrast,

only 65% of those who transferred from four-year institutions (n=55) did so (S4-C2–CICU Transfer Student Survey 2022 Report).

Fordham encourages experiential learning via credit-bearing opportunities available across the University, which have grown in quantity and quality over the past five years. These often include courses with global learning/travel or community engagement components. Examples include one-credit symposia helping first-generation college students develop social and educational capital, as well as integrated learning community offerings examining justice and community development. One-credit tutorials may augment existing courses in which students explore innovation and responsible community engagement through a business lens. Internships are wide-ranging, often stemming from the University's relationships with corporate, nonprofit, and governmental partners. Students with for-credit internships are eligible for free Ram Van transportation between campuses. In addition to resources for the broader student community, such as career fairs, on-campus recruiting, and career development workshops, the Career Center for Cura Personalis offers services dedicated to military and veteran students as well as tailored resources for students from historically underrepresented groups, such as the Global Diversity and Inclusion Networking Banquet and the Pop-Up Career Closet. At the graduate level, many programs include credited internships and externships as requirements toward degree completion.

Student Records (Criterion 3)

Fordham is firmly committed to the security, confidentiality, and integrity of information collected from students. It releases information with strict adherence to principles of data protection and only to parties capable of maintaining data security, confidentiality, and integrity. Respect for the privacy of student information is realized through established policies and protocols across schools, student services offices, and all areas of the University. This ensures confidentiality, security, and reasonable disclosure of student information when warranted. In addition, Fordham is compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Official procedures and policies for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records are posted on the appropriate Fordham websites (S4-C1.d–Family Education Rights Privacy Act Disclosure).

All undergraduate and graduate/professional schools provide guidance on their websites about student privacy rights under FERPA. According to a spring 2024 survey, 30% of undergraduate and 40% of graduate student respondents reported knowing their basic rights under FERPA, and 51% of undergraduate and 65% of graduate student respondents were aware of their basic rights under HIPAA (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data). Athletics also provides information and guidance on HIPAA to athletes. In 2023, the Office of Enrollment Services launched its Delegate Portal to enable students to invite and designate individuals (e.g., parents/guardians, spouses) to become delegates with access to their academic records and to verify their identity when contacting that office.

Within the Division of Student Affairs, student records are maintained with the University's Ellucian Banner database system. Other offices maintain supplemental student records with information pertaining to their specific needs and functions. Several Student Affairs offices use customized commercial products designed for their specific needs, including Accessible Information Management (Office of Disability Services); PyraMED (University Health

Services); Handshake (Career Center); and Star Rez (Office of Residential Life). Responsibility for maintaining the security of these databases is determined by the storage location. Data stored on-site at Fordham are maintained by the IT office. Data stored off-site receives supplemental security maintenance from the appropriate warehouse, with IT coordinating the highest measures for data security.

Finally, undergraduate and graduate/professional schools—as well as offices such as Athletics, Counseling and Psychological Services, Disability Services, and University Health Services—maintain formal, written policies on the protection of student data. Other offices have internal procedures to ensure data is protected from inappropriate disclosure. Fordham maintains and regularly reviews record-retention policies and guidelines, including a records retention and disposal schedule (S4-C3–Record Retention and Disposal Policy). Policies and procedures protecting data privacy often are reviewed at staff meetings and training sessions.

Regulation of Extracurricular Activities (Criterion 4)

Fordham offers its students a wide range of extracurricular opportunities that complement their academic experiences and directly embody the University's mission and the Institutional Priorities of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging.

Athletics

While varsity and club sports at Fordham are offered solely at the Rose Hill campus (given the full use of available space at the Lincoln Center campus), by all accounts its student-athletes are high academic achievers and exceptionally talented in their respective sports. Student-athletes who matriculated between 2008 and 2017 achieved six-year graduation rates that exceeded those of the general student body in all but two of those 10 years, typically with similar average GPAs (S4-C4–President's Annual Report to Board of Trustees September 2023, p. 31).

The administration of athletics is guided by the University's Operating Policies and is complemented by an annually revised supplemental athletics manual that assists athletic office employees with their duties. A separate handbook exists for club and intramural sports policies. To understand and assess the effectiveness of varsity athletics support services and athlete/team experiences, staff conduct anonymous team surveys at the end of each sport's competition season. Staff also are available to meet with athletes to address specific concerns. In addition, student-athletes receive monthly, automated text messages and emails reminding them they can share feedback on their experiences anonymously. Alongside gathering direct feedback, a Student Athlete Advisory Committee comprising student-athlete representatives from each team meets monthly to plan community service projects and other events. It also provides feedback from teammates to the athletics administration.

In terms of planning, the Athletics Office follows the University budget process guidelines. This requires office administrators and head coaches to submit budget requests related to operating increases, capital equipment, staffing, and renovations with their annual reports. Each summer, the reports are consolidated by the deputy director of athletics and reviewed with the athletics director. A prioritized list is included in Athletics' annual report, which serves as the foundation for the office's submission during the University's annual budget preparation process for the following fiscal year. It is important to note that every varsity sport's budget also relies on fundraising to meet operating expenses. At the end of the fiscal year, the deputy athletics

director transfers funds from the sport-specific and/or general athletics gift account to cover approved extrabudgetary expenditures. Fordham also allocates funds for club sports, which are supplemented through fundraising, team dues, and/or the generosity of donors.

Extracurricular Activities
The University offers a robust array of extracurricular activities managed by various divisions, offices, and colleges. OSI supports campus events and activities for undergraduate clubs, which also are sponsored by United Student Government (USG) on each campus. Various graduate and professional schools also sponsor clubs, and additional activities and student organizations are facilitated by offices such as Admissions, the Career Center, Multicultural Affairs, and Residential Life (S4-C4–Student Clubs and Organizations).

Since 2014, OSI undergraduate student clubs and organizations, events, and extracurricular activities have increased 62% across both campuses (from 151 to 246). In rounding out their formal learning, Fordham students can engage in any number of cultural, technology, skills development, engagement, service, and awareness groups (S4-C4–New Student Clubs Since 2019). Growth in this area signifies positive appeal to students and affirms Fordham's commitment to the Institutional Priorities of Holistic Student Success and Flourishing and Community and Institutional Belonging. Typically, clubs and organizations are assessed either through individual events or organizationally. For example, the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) collects surveys following many of its events and tracks the number of participants in OMA-sponsored training sessions, such as the Racial Solidarity Network and the LGBTQ and Ally Network of Support. To improve programming, it also seeks feedback on what motivates student participation in these initiatives. OSI assesses the effectiveness of student club and organization events, as well as other student-facing undergraduate events, through attendance trends, year-over-year retention, and overall effectiveness of activities.

Since 2019, the number of campus-based student clubs has increased by 18% at Fordham College at Rose Hill and 13% at Fordham College at Lincoln Center. Club/organization funding comes from a student activity fee, which can be increased only with approval from the student body via a referendum. Given the rate of growth and budgetary needs of each club/organization to carry out its mandates and activities, in spring 2024 each campus's USG proposed a fee increase. Students across both campuses adopted the increase, the first since 2013 at Rose Hill and since 2003 at Lincoln Center. Funding is now more closely aligned with student needs in this area and will continue to be assessed for effectively fulfilling this aspect of Fordham's mission (S4-C4–Student Activity Funding Allocations 2015-24).

Third-Party Student Support Services (Criterion 5)

2U Inc. Online Learning Platform
Fordham has partnered with 2U on select graduate programs, as noted above in Chapter 3 and below in Chapter 7, and students were regularly surveyed to determine their satisfaction with various services provided in partnership with 2U. For example, Gabelli School of Business online program students expressed the following at the end of their first semester during 2020–21 (S4-C5–2U Student Satisfaction):

- 95% strongly agreed/agreed that the application process was straightforward and that they received their admission decision in enough time to finalize plans for the term.

- 87.5% strongly agreed/agreed that the online orientation helped them become familiar with University resources and policies.
- 90% were extremely or moderately satisfied with the online course platform.

Knack Tutoring Platform
As noted in Chapter 3, Fordham has partnered since 2021 with Knack, a tutoring platform that allows undergraduate students to sign up for free sessions with peer tutors. Surveys of tutors and students were conducted, with 100% of survey respondents indicating their tutoring sessions were "excellent" or "very good," and 95% of respondents indicating they would return for additional tutoring sessions. About 65 Fordham Knack tutors earned Knack Badges during 2022–23, affirming the development of translatable skills in collaboration, reflection, and assessment. These evaluations demonstrate that students on both sides of the relationships are satisfied with this resource (S4-C5–Knack Student Satisfaction).

Assessment of Student Experiences (Criterion 6, Requirement of Affiliation 8)

To understand and improve the student experience across the broad array of Fordham programs, the University employs a diverse set of regularly used assessment tools and methods. These include institution-level assessments typically managed by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment as well as those deployed by specific administrative University offices. The Office of Athletics, Career Center for Cura Personalis, Center for Community Engaged Learning, Counseling and Psychological Services, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Office of Residential Life, Office of Student Involvement, Office of Substance Use Prevention and Support, Ram Hospitality (Dining Services), and University Health Services engage in annual assessments of their programs and services.

The design of assessments is generally of high quality across areas, and the results are considered essential for understanding the impact of services on students. For example, some regular assessments used by CPS focus on identifying student needs, such as the Assessment of Psychological Symptoms Survey to gauge the presenting mental health needs of students seeking support. Data from 2022–23 indicate that the three most common problems among Fordham students seeking help are the same as indicated by national data: social anxiety, generalized anxiety, and academic distress (S4–Student Affairs Assessment Presentation 2023, p. 44). Spring 2024 survey results indicate general satisfaction regarding access to student support resources, affirming the value of these assessments (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data; S4-C6–Student Satisfaction with Support Services Select Data).

Finally, the University also conducts needs assessments to best understand and anticipate student mental health needs. Insights from these assessments are used to improve the student experience. For example, assessment of the CARE session offered during First Year Core Programming led to the involvement of United Student Government Committee on Sexual Misconduct members as student presenters. Also, close tracking of substance misuse incident data revealed an uptick in student adverse reactions after purchase and consumption of cannabis edibles. In response, a rapid public education campaign was launched to provide warnings to students.

Two other examples illustrate the use of assessment findings. Four Diversity Graduation Celebrations (APIDA, Black, Latine, and Lavender) were initially held at both campuses at the same time. Based on student survey feedback, the events were transformed into joint

campus celebrations to be as inclusive as possible. Ram Van passes were provided for ease of transportation, and the format was adapted to encourage greater interaction among attendees. Finally, Office of Disability Services assessments, which indicated a surge in students registering for its services and support between 2013–14 and 2022–23 (13.5% average annual increases and overall 208% increase), allowed the office to advocate successfully for more staff to meet students' needs (S4–Student Affairs Assessment Presentation 2023, pp. 79, 92).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Fordham invests significantly in supporting the student experience, in ways that directly reflect its mission and through innovation, assessment, and evidence-based decision-making and resource allocation. The transformation of undergraduate student advising in the Arts and Sciences to address students' challenges both within and beyond the college setting, and University efforts to strengthen and streamline undergraduate transfer student enrollment illustrate this. To study and learn at Fordham is to know that you are cared for as an individual and welcomed into a community of peers, mentors, and others who are committed to your health, well-being, and future success and flourishing.

1. While Fordham is poised to make gains in retention, the institution should continue to enhance and optimize student support by building on existing strengths and promoting interoffice coordination regarding retention and graduation rates, both generally and for special populations of students.

2. Additional gains to support transfer students may be realized through the acceleration of ongoing efforts to streamline processes to evaluate and award transfer credits. An increased focus on graduation rates, possibly modeled after the University's investment in increasing student retention, also holds promise.

STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

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.

Institutional Priorities most closely aligned with this Standard: Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning; and Holistic Student Success and Flourishing.

Introduction

Fordham's commitment to the formation and growth of students' "lifelong habits of careful observation, critical thinking, creativity, moral reflection, and articulate expression" is an explicit part of its mission. Faculty throughout the institution routinely engage in critical reflection on the effectiveness of the academic programs for which they are responsible, and the assessment and monitoring of student achievement occurs at all levels of the University using metrics appropriate to each school and program.

Educational Goals (Criterion 1)

As described in Chapters 1 and 3, curricular development is led by the faculty, under the oversight and authority of the school deans and councils and in keeping with the broad academic profile of the University and its mission. Though specific practices differ by school, new programs are designed with learning goals tailored to the field of study or professional domain. Established programs undertake periodic, though sometimes informal, review of those goals, as described below. In addition, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) requires applications for program approval to include a statement of learning objectives, identification of courses that permit students to achieve those objectives, and an assessment plan (S5-C1–Sample NYSED submission MS Biotechnology).

The undergraduate Core Curriculum (see Chapter 3) is designed to foster a coherent student learning experience that promotes a synthesis of learning. The aims of the current core include learning goals reflected through five mission-guided aims: excellence in the essential skills of writing, speaking, listening and reading; sound reasoning; respect of difference; service and engagement; and wisdom. These goals are mapped onto appropriate courses by the Core Curriculum Committee and its subcommittees (S5-C1–Toward 2016-Fordham's Liberal Arts Core Curriculum).

Fordham relies on the core curriculum to ensure that all undergraduates develop respect for the dignity of all people and a desire to be of service to others. As noted in Chapter 1, several undergraduate majors and graduate programs establish explicit connections to the University mission through their learning goals. For example, the Graduate School of Social Service Master of Social Work program seeks to develop in students the ability to engage with diversity and difference; the practice of advancing human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice; the promotion of ethical and professional behavior; and the ability to understand and use research to guide their work. Gabelli undergraduate and graduate degrees include the expectation that students will "demonstrate the capacity for ethical decision-making and an understanding of how business can positively impact society." One of the most popular undergraduate majors within the Arts and Sciences, Communication and Culture, reflects the Fordham mission through its learning goal that students be able to "assess the affordances of communication and media practices for addressing or perpetuating social inequities, and for promoting positive social change."

In keeping with Institutional Priorities of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Learning; and Holistic Student Success and Flourishing, program-level learning goals are reviewed periodically to ensure their continued importance in the discipline and ties to students' needs and aspirations. For example, Gabelli program-level learning objectives are reviewed by faculty upon completion of each extension of accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), received most recently during AACSB's visit to Fordham in spring 2024. In the Arts and Sciences, the periodic program review guidelines, reenvisioned in 2019, direct programs to examine learning goals and assess their continued alignment with course requirements and offerings (S5–FAS Program Review Self-Study Guidelines). As noted in Chapter 3, since 2020 a faculty committee has undertaken a revision of the core curriculum; it has articulated more explicit learning goals from the outset of its work (S5-C1–Core Revision Approved Phase 1 Deliverables Spring 2024).

The University relies on faculty expertise to determine appropriate learning goals and standards of achievement at each degree and course level. In the context of assessment of student learning, faculty responsible for assessments operationalize learning goals and develop measurement scales that reflect student achievement appropriate for their program and degree level. Almost all program-level learning goals for degree-granting programs are available on school or program websites, or in the Academic Bulletin (S5-C1–Sample Program Level Learning Goals Gabelli School). In schools and programs governed by field-specific accrediting standards, learning goals uniformly take the form of a list, while other programs' learning goals are described via program aims and value. In both forms, assessment and curriculum design are guided by goals faculty share with and for their students.

Assessment Organizational Structure and Support (Criterion 2, Requirement of Affiliation 8)

Fordham's commitment to the assessment of educational effectiveness is evidenced by the following:

- School-specific committees or personnel responsible for monitoring student outcomes

- Informational presentations, individual consultations, and the development of assessment instruments for Arts and Sciences by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

- Online resources for development and assessment of learning goals, assessment planning, rubric development, direct/indirect evidence, and use of assessment results

- The expectation, communicated in the Undergraduate Faculty Handbook, that faculty include learning objectives in syllabi

- Analysis of institutional data concerning course outcomes, undergraduate retention and graduation, and postgraduation outcomes at the University, school, and program level

- A standing committee, the Retention Working Group, responsible for the continuous improvement of the undergraduate student experience

- Reports of undergraduate graduation rates and career outcomes, available to faculty and administrators as well as the public via the University website
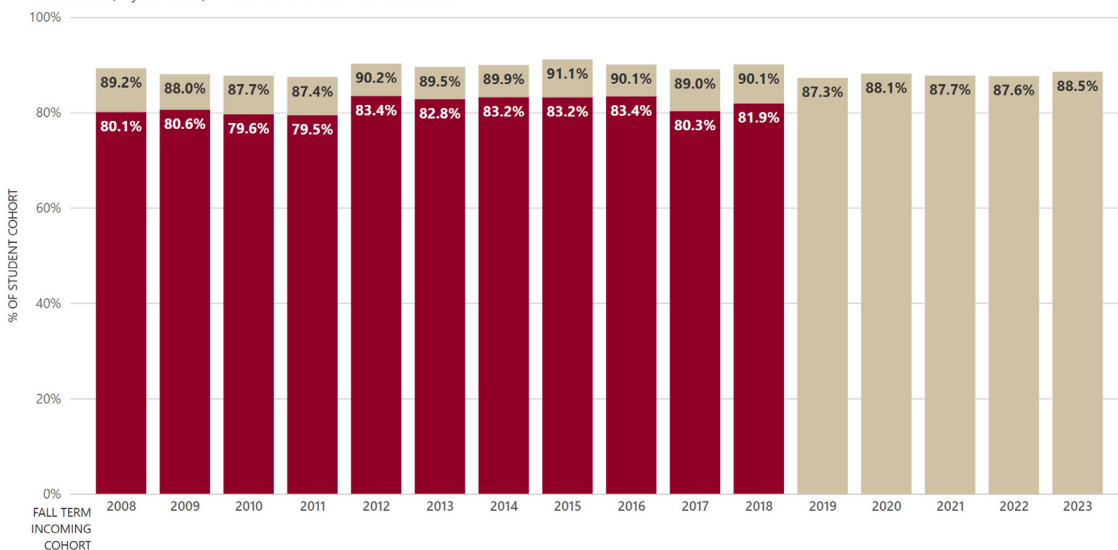
Evidence of Student Learning (Criterion 2)

Fordham's administration, faculty, and Board of Trustees carefully attend to global metrics of

student achievement, including undergraduate retention, graduation rates, and postgraduation outcomes. These metrics are available to current and prospective students, and the public at large, on the University's Consumer Information web pages and school-specific web pages (Criterion 2c and RoA 8.).

Undergraduate Retention and Graduation Rates*

● Graduation (6-year total) ● First-to-Second Year Retention

Fall Term Incoming Cohort	Graduation (6-year total)	First-to-Second Year Retention
2008	80.1%	89.2%
2009	80.6%	88.0%
2010	79.6%	87.7%
2011	79.5%	87.4%
2012	83.4%	90.2%
2013	82.8%	89.5%
2014	83.2%	89.9%
2015	83.2%	91.1%
2016	83.4%	90.1%
2017	80.3%	89.0%
2018	81.9%	90.1%
2019		87.3%
2020		88.1%
2021		87.7%
2022		87.6%
2023		88.5%

* DATA INCLUDES ALL FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATES.

Fordham's first-to-second-year undergraduate retention exceeds that of similar institutions. In the decade prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the University's retention rate averaged 89%. Following the pandemic, it suffered a nearly 3 percentage point decline. Since 2020, the retention rate has improved gradually to a current five-year average (2017–21) of 87.8%. By comparison, the current average retention rate of national universities ranked by U.S. News was 82%. Fordham's graduation rates also suggest strong student success. Over the past five years, the six-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time Fordham students has averaged 82.3%. According to the most recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics, the mean six-year graduation rate for national research universities was 61% between 2018 and 2022.

Although the retention rates of domestic students of color over the past 10 incoming cohorts (fall 2014 to fall 2023) have been comparable to that of white students and those for whom race/ethnicity is unknown, graduation rates of students of color have consistently, sometimes substantially, lagged behind. Retention and graduation of international students has also been a challenge, though their attrition often can be attributed to external factors such as changes in visa regulations and the COVID-19 pandemic. University leadership and faculty are committed to eliminating these achievement gaps, as discussed in earlier chapters.

The skills, knowledge, and habits students develop at Fordham prepare them to pursue their long-term aspirations, as evidenced by their success after graduation. Fordham's Career Center reaches out to each student during their senior year and first postgraduation year to offer assistance and support in securing a "first destination" after graduation and to collect individual information about that outcome. Though this metric varies with each graduating cohort, on average since 2017, 90% of students are employed, in military or public service, or are pursuing further education or another activity of their choice within seven months of graduation.

Undergraduate Diversity: 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates
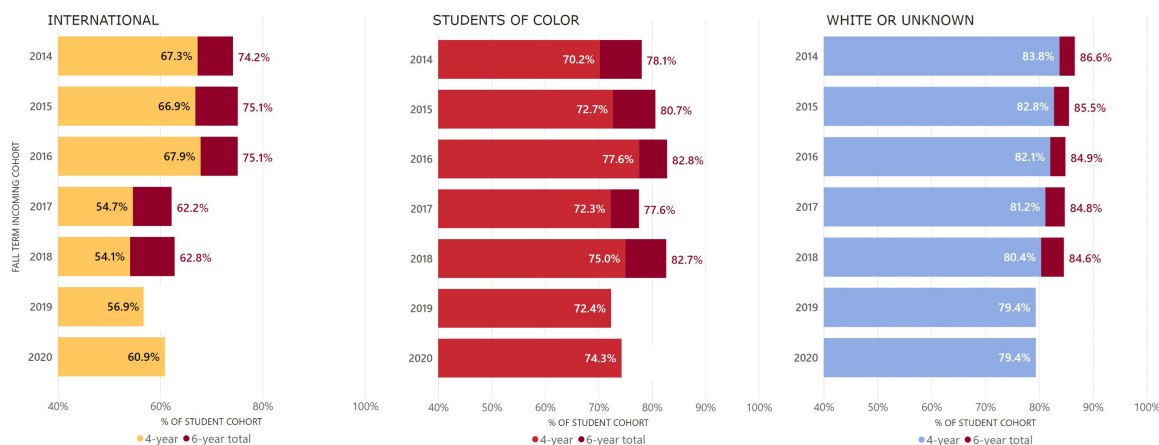
Nonetheless, Fordham seeks to improve these metrics. The indicators of student learning and achievement noted above, as well as academic performance indicators such as GPA and successful course completion, are reported regularly by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) and are disaggregated by demographic variables such as race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, and first in their family to attend a four-year college. These data were included and discussed by President Tetlow in her annual report to the Board of Trustees, reviewed in additional detail with the board's Student Success and Academic Quality and Mission and Social Justice subcommittees (S5-C2–Student Learning and Achievement Disaggregated). The data also were shared with faculty and staff in a town hall meeting and reviewed by the Retention Working Group.

Post-Graduation Outcomes
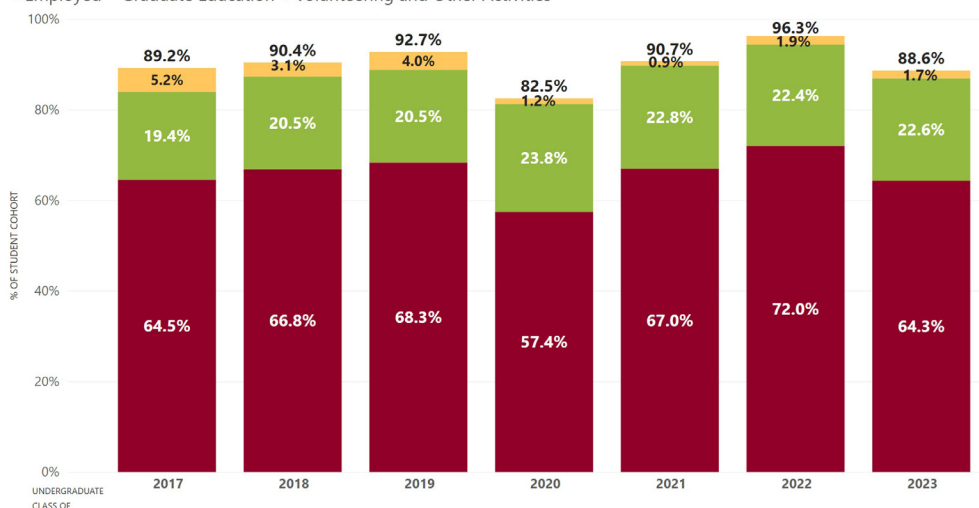
Graduate student outcomes often are shared on school or program websites. For example, the Law School's bar passage rates have exceeded national averages from 2021 to 2023, and 98% of students who took teacher certification exams passed. However, despite a desire to do so, many of Fordham's graduate schools and programs have not systematically or routinely collected postgraduation outcomes information, instead relying on other metrics to assess educational effectiveness. Examples are described in the next section.

Assessment for Program Improvement (Criterion 3)

Given the decentralized structure of the University and the diversity of curricula and disciplinary or professional practices, the faculty and leadership of each school organizes their own systematic assessments for improvement of educational effectiveness. Since decisions concerning program improvement are made by school and program leadership, most assessment data and reporting resides within those units. The University does not maintain a centralized repository of assessment information beyond the annual reports, described in Chapter 6, in which student outcomes and their assessment are expected but not always included. Assessment practices vary by school. Examples of ongoing, program-level assessment of student learning include the following:

Arts and Sciences

While most of its programs are not accredited by profession-specific accreditors, many Arts and Sciences programs have demonstrated active interest in student outcomes. At the undergraduate level, common strategies include monitoring the performance of students, particularly seniors, through signature assignments such as senior theses or capstone projects, often using rubrics, student self-assessment questionnaires, and surveys or interviews to gain deeper insight into students' academic experiences. Many Graduate School of Arts and Sciences programs use field or comprehensive exams to assess mastery within a concentration or subfield, along with capstone and thesis/dissertation projects to determine performance. Most programs focus on the assessment of essential foundational skills and knowledge in the introductory or gateway courses where improvements facilitate successful student program completion (S5-C3–Program Assessment in Arts and Sciences).

In addition to annual program assessment, Arts and Sciences departments and programs are expected to undertake periodic program reviews. To promote forward-looking, strategic thinking about the learning needs of its students, Arts and Sciences significantly revised the periodic program review template and process in 2019 (S5-C2–FAS Program Review Self-Study Guidelines). In that new process, programs are asked to review student learning goals in the context of the future needs or directions of the field and also to review the recent assessment results to identify programmatic or curricular strengths and weaknesses.

Gabelli School of Business

The Gabelli School of Business, which is accredited by the AACSB, uses a variety of assessments aligned with undergraduate- and graduate-level program learning competencies and guided by curriculum maps (S5-C3–GSB Learning Goals, Courses, and Assessment Outcomes). These assessments, developed by instructors, include exams, case studies, written assignments, and team presentations. Rubrics are also often used. Assessment procedures are coordinated across multiple sections of core courses, especially at the undergraduate level. Following the administration of assessments, faculty members analyze the results, formulate strategies for improvement, and integrate these enhancements into subsequent course offerings. To create a more holistic view of students' grasp of relevant competencies and in the spirit of AACSB's guidance, Gabelli also tracks indirect measures at the class, program, and degree level. Some examples include self-reported information from students, feedback from industry partners, and job placement rates.

Graduate School of Education

The Graduate School of Education, which offers programs accredited by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation, the American Psychological Association, the

Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC), and the National Association of School Psychologists, utilizes rubrics to assess students' performance on a variety of artifacts, such as essays, capstone and student teaching portfolios, laboratories of practice, dissertations, and performance on state exams. Additionally, psychology programs and teaching certification programs obtain evaluations from fieldwork and student teaching supervisors. Some programs survey alumni to gauge how effectively graduates are demonstrating key program competencies. Given the psychometric expertise of the faculty, rubrics used for assessing program-level and schoolwide outcomes are reviewed for validity and reliability by the Program Review and Evaluation Committee and school faculty.

Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education

Each year, the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education conducts an annual review of the entire school and its programs, including peer reviews among professors and student course evaluations. In addition, the master's program in mental health counseling and spiritual integration collects graduation rate and alumni outcomes data each year in accord with MPCAC requirements. This annual assessment includes internship evaluations, exit interviews, employer surveys, and national licensure exam passage rates.

Graduate School of Social Service

Similarly, in the Graduate School of Social Service, which is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), students are evaluated on their attainment of competency-based benchmarks aligned with CSWE standards through various assessments, including performance on course assignments and field-based instruments. The school monitors and posts on its website the percentage of students who surpass these benchmarks (S5-C2–GSS Competency Achievement Results). In 2022–23, more than 95% of advanced (specialist) students in the Master of Social Work program and more than 85% of students in the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work program exceeded competency standards.

Law School

The Law School, accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA), routinely reviews crucial metrics, including the percentage of students successfully passing the bar exam and employment outcomes. In addition, the Law School reviews course evaluations and reviews syllabi to ensure that program and course goals are aligned with ABA standards. To broaden assessment practices, the Law School recently formed an Institutional Assessment Task Force, and the dean included institutional assessment in his charge to the Law School's curriculum committee.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Educational Effectiveness (Criterion 3, Requirement of Affiliation 9)

In a 2024 survey of assessment representatives from each school, area, or department, respondents reported that the University has robust assessment procedures in place. About two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their assessments are trustworthy, informative, relevant to their teaching, valuable, and provide accurate insight into their program's strengths and weaknesses. Examples of how programs use their assessment outcomes to improve their areas of study and increase student achievement include the following:

Gabelli School of Business

For the AACSB, all programs must "close the loop" for all learning competencies at least once

in the review period. Doing so requires that programs assess achievement, modify courses or programs, and then reassess the student learning goal with demonstrated improvement.

Graduate School of Education
The Program Review and Evaluation Committee of the Graduate School of Education oversees biennial reviews of student performance to improve school operations and program quality. Each of the school's degree and certificate programs evaluate their effectiveness in preparing education professionals consistent with school, program, and professional standards. In addition to evaluating evidence collected over two years, these reports require programs to: a) assess progress on goals identified in the last review, and b) identify future program goals along with strategies and resources for meeting them. For example, an MPCAC site visitors' report in 2015 affirmed the program's alignment of course learning goals with broader school and mission goals concerning social justice; it also led the faculty of the Mental Health Counseling program to design a neuroscience course for master's-level practitioners.

Graduate School of Social Service
The Graduate School of Social Service periodically reviews the achievement of nine social work competencies in accordance with Council on Social Work Education requirements, making curriculum updates accordingly. Past findings led to specialized practice certificates in health and in crisis and resilience (S5-C3–GSS Annual Report 2021–22).

International Studies
A review of students' senior theses by International Studies, an interdisciplinary undergraduate program in Arts and Sciences, revealed several challenges for students. Though the findings were generally positive, students' difficulty with framing and contextualizing a thesis via a multidisciplinary lens was evident. In response, the program faculty developed guidelines and rubrics it shared with all thesis mentors as well as workshops to support students at the beginning of their research.

Biological Sciences
Biological Sciences, an undergraduate program in Arts and Sciences, uses institutional data to explore student persistence within the discipline. This is done in collaboration with STEM faculty across the University and as part of a multi-institution initiative sponsored by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. One notable outcome: The department invites students who might benefit from greater knowledge of biology basics to begin their coursework with the class Foundations of Biology before enrolling in General Biology.

Assessment of the Effectiveness of Assessment Process (Criterion 5)

Fordham faculty and administrators are committed to the continuous improvement of assessment processes to benefit teaching and learning. Some examples:

Arts and Sciences
Because most of its programs are not accredited by profession-specific accreditors, Arts and Sciences warrants particular attention in this self-study. Since 2018–19, deans and faculty, in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, have experimented with approaches to student learning assessment in an effort to develop processes and tools for program-level outcomes assessments that are useful, organic, and sustainable. When, in 2015,

the University initiated a new approach to its strategic planning (see description of CUSP in Chapters 1 and 6 for greater detail), the program-level assessment of student learning was conducted as a separate enterprise. Student learning assessment results were rarely used to shape strategic initiatives or evaluate the outcome of those initiatives. In an effort to align and integrate student learning assessment into the mainstream of annual program planning, separate assessment reporting was replaced with a single prompt in the Annual Reporting templates under CUSP: "Summarize evidence that students met your unit's learning goals or intended student outcomes." Within the Arts and Sciences, between 2019–20 and 2021–22, this item alone was used to capture the essential outcomes of student learning assessment.

This approach was neither successful in promoting student learning assessment nor its inclusion in the main thrust of program planning. A review by OIRA found that in the 2021–22 annual reports, only 13% of departments reported the results of completed assessments. Another 13% had conducted an assessment that addressed faculty concerns rather than program-level learning goals (e.g., program attrition, the effectiveness of course placement), and 18% had reported pending results to be forthcoming in the fall.

These findings had been anticipated, and thus in March 2022, the Arts and Sciences undergraduate and graduate associate deans and members of OIRA convened as an advisory committee to reconsider this approach and to identify the support needed to facilitate both the conduct and reporting of student learning assessment. Initial steps included presentations to the undergraduate college councils, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Council, and the Arts and Sciences Council; communications directing faculty to online resources; and invitations to use the consultative services of OIRA. More recently, the Arts and Sciences deans led discipline-specific workshops and OIRA staff offered a tutorial-style presentation at the annual Arts and Sciences orientation for chairs and program directors.

In addition, in 2022–23, the Arts and Sciences reinstituted an assessment-focused annual reporting template (S5-C3–A&S annual reporting template for SLA). Based on the analysis of the 2021–22 annual reports described above, they also shifted the reporting cycle timeline so that assessments conducted in the late spring of the academic year are submitted in late October of the next academic year, providing an opportunity for department and program faculty to review the findings and determine actions before sharing the assessment reports with the deans. At the same time, in a continued effort to integrate assessment into annual reporting and planning throughout academic affairs, the provost's office continues to include in the annual report template two questions: How have you worked to improve the effectiveness of your unit over the past year? And what informed your decision to make these changes?

Gabelli School of Business
The Gabelli School of Business began mapping its courses to learning goals a few years ago to improve assessment practices. In addition, to improve faculty engagement in this Assurance of Learning process, the school has begun to incorporate information about its practices and expectations in several forums within the school. The process is introduced to new faculty during orientation as well as covered in faculty, program director, and Gabelli School Council meetings.

Third-Party Providers (Criterion 4)
No third party has provided assessment services for Fordham. Although the University has partnered with 2U for student recruitment and admissions in several schools as well as for the

development of online courses, Fordham faculty are responsible for instruction and assessment of those programs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Among programs accredited by specialized accrediting bodies, educational effectiveness assessment is occurring in a systematic fashion. In some of those programs and in many others that are not specially accredited, assessment is driven by a concern for student learning and program improvement rather than by mere compliance. Evidence suggests that programs, especially in the Arts and Sciences, conduct assessments and use the findings to make program improvements but have not reported this consistently via annual report mechanisms. An absence of complete documentation attenuates some long-term benefits of assessment as faculty cannot review progress over time, and assessment results are not available to leaders and other stakeholders.

There are opportunities for improvement across the University. According to a 2024 survey of program and school assessment representatives, of the programs that conducted assessment in the past five years, 69% disseminated and discussed the results at a department meeting or similar setting, and 83% used assessment findings to inform program improvements. In a 2021 survey of all faculty, conducted to determine their professional development needs, about one-third of respondents indicated interest in basic training in course and program assessment, while more indicated interest in advancing their existing understanding and practice in course (51%) and program (39%) assessment (S5-2024–MSCHE Survey of Assessment Contacts Results; S5-C5– CIL Needs Assessment Survey Report).

As a reflection of the University's decentralized structure, no central body or repository is dedicated to University-wide assessment. This reality, along with the results of this self-study, indicate the University might benefit from establishment of a centralized assessment system or body. This could facilitate meaningful dialogue concerning teaching, learning, and assessment; increase reporting and transparency; and enable the University to more easily track assessment and student learning outcomes. Within Arts and Sciences, authority for the curriculum and its assessment has rested with the faculty, while operational oversight of assessment has been located in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. The latter has no authority in relation to school faculty, leaving the enterprise of assessment without clear lines of authority. This ambiguity likely will be resolved through the Arts and Sciences leadership restructuring in 2025.

1. More deliberately integrate student-learning assessment into academic planning processes to ensure that student learning outcomes inform school and institutional goals and priorities. This includes setting strategic goals for educational improvement based on assessment findings and tracking progress over time.

2. Provide more robust professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance their understanding of program-level assessment principles and practices. This could include workshops, seminars, and resources on designing effective assessments, analyzing data, and using assessment findings for program improvement. Within this context, facilitate collaboration and communication among units and across schools to share effective practices, lessons learned, and resources related to assessment. This could involve establishing communities of practice, cross-unit working groups, and regular meetings to discuss assessment initiatives and generate feedback on such efforts.

STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

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.

The Institutional Priority most closely aligned with this Standard: Institutional Vitality and Continuous Improvement.

Introduction

Fordham University engages in continuous institutional planning in support of its mission and goals through processes that ensure alignment of decisions and activities across academic and administrative units as well as in the allocation of resources. These structures—including a thorough and transparent budget process—position the University to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges. Fordham's overall fiscal strength is documented via additional information in the evidence inventory.

Developing and Assessing Plans and Goals (Criterion 1, Requirement of Affiliation 10)

Chapter 1, which focuses on the mission and goals of the University, documents how the mission informs institutional goals, as articulated in strategic plans of the past decade. Each school and unit has translated the University's mission and overall institutional goals into its own vision statement and goals, which are publicly shared on each unit's web pages. Examples from schools and administrative units are included in the evidence inventory (S6-C1–Unit Vision Statements).

Over the past decade, Fordham has taken varied approaches to institutional strategic planning to better position the University to react quickly to the rapidly shifting higher education environment. The University adopted a new model of "continuous planning" from 2015 to 2020. This approach had mixed results; it brought a large variety of stakeholders into the planning process, but the "continuous" aspect of the process meant that the planning and implementation phases blended together. By 2021, the University shifted to a more traditional planning approach while maintaining the transparency and participatory aspects of the previous model.

A Brief History of Fordham University Strategic Planning (2015–2024)
Prior to 2015, the University's strategic planning cycle covered 10-year periods. As the need for more frequent updating became evident, the University initiated a three-year project to develop a Continuous University Strategic Planning (CUSP) process that would create the foundation for more nimble and responsive strategic planning. Whereas previous strategic plans had focused on specifying concrete outcomes and new University initiatives, the primary task assigned to the CUSP Committee was to identify core institution-wide goals that would provide strategic direction and guide decision-makers at all levels of the institution. As then-president Joseph M. McShane S.J. wrote to the University at the CUSP process outset in 2016, "CUSP replaces a static strategic plan, written a decade ago, with a process. It does three very significant things: it ensures that the University is agile and responsive to emerging needs and trends in higher education; it enables collaboration, empowering faculty and staff to share in the decisions that shape the institution; and it pushes the planning process down to the local level, ensuring that each department is able to contribute to the plan in a way that makes the most sense for its faculty and staff, and the communities they serve" (S6-C1–Email from Office of the President: Board of Trustees Adopts CUSP Strategic Framework).

The CUSP committee—co-chaired by a vice president, a dean, and a faculty member—consisted of 22 faculty members and administrators from across the University (S6-C1–CUSP Membership Rosters). Membership fluctuated through the years, but the committee maintained its broad, representative character and emphasis on inclusiveness and transparency. To this end, it developed a process to engage all parts of the University community through meetings with stakeholder groups, newsletters and email communications, town halls, and a strategic planning website. The process was guided by the advice and counsel of the newly formed Board of Trustees Strategy Committee and close collaboration with the President's Advisory Council (consisting of University leadership, including the Faculty Senate president).

During the "foundational" 2015–16 academic year, the CUSP Committee (a) completed a Strategic Framework to set high-level University priorities and goals; (b) articulated principles to guide local strategic planning among the academic and administrative units; and (c) developed metrics to assess progress. The framework outlined interconnected strategic priorities (represented in the figure below as interlocking circles) and identified focus areas to more effectively achieve mission goals. The sixth priority (represented in the full circle) emphasized the overall institutional improvement necessary to achieve the other five priorities.

Strategic Priorities
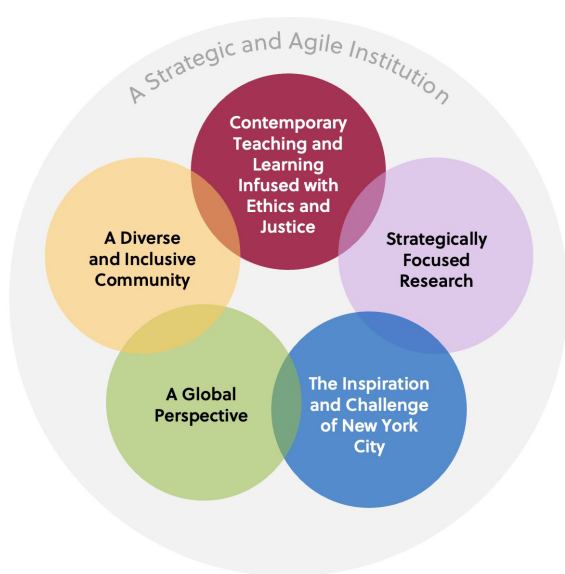
In September 2016, the Board of Trustees approved *A Strategic Framework for Fordham's Future: Bothered Excellence* (S1-C1.g–Bothered Excellence). It charged the University's administration to move forward in partnership with local planning units and undertake focused strategic planning guided by and aligned with the University framework. It also called for periodic updates on the planning process to the trustees' new Strategy Committee.

In year two (2016–17), the local planning units undertook focused strategic planning processes to delineate goals and specify initiatives needed to accomplish these institutional goals—guided by and aligned with the newly designed University framework.

Meanwhile, the CUSP committee continued to provide guidance to local planning efforts and prepared a set of specific strategic initiatives—consistent with the priorities articulated in the strategic framework, the work of local planning units, and the demands of a rapidly changing environment—for consideration and adoption by the Board of Trustees. The result was *Advancing "Bothered Excellence": A Plan to Implement Fordham's Strategic Priorities, 2020–2025*, which highlighted four goals along with concrete objectives and strategic initiatives under each (S6-C1–Advancing Bothered Excellence). Annual reporting templates allowed every school and administrative unit to report how their activities supported the CUSP strategic priorities. In spring 2019, the University designated a Strategic Initiative Fund of $8.1 million to advance initiatives congruent with the CUSP strategic priorities.

The current provost assumed leadership of the CUSP process in 2019 and worked with the committee to improve and streamline the plan. Teams were established to address specific issues (e.g., the student experience, academic programs and pedagogy, leveraging the resources of New York City, research and public engagement) and were charged with designing initiatives to translate the goals into measurable action. World events during that period—specifically the COVID-19 pandemic and national attention on racial justice following the murder of George Floyd—added urgency to the task.

The resulting plan, *Educating for Justice: Fordham University's Vision and Strategic Plan 2021–2026*, was approved by the Board in December 2020, and had three main goals:
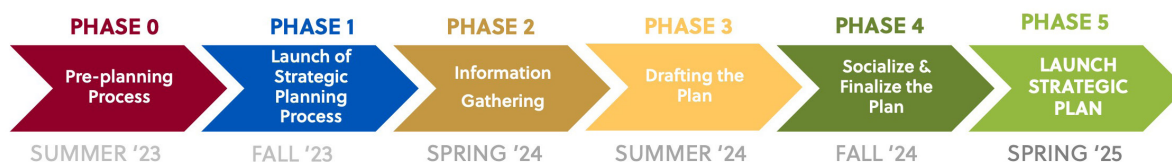
1. Educate students as global citizens and transformative leaders for justice in the innovation age.

2. Excel across the natural and applied sciences and allied fields to promote social change and equity.

3. Cultivate a diverse, equitable, inclusive, caring, and connected community that promotes each member's development as a whole person.

The plan's goals and supporting initiatives were assigned to appropriate board committees, which tracked their progress (S6-C8–Educating for Justice Timeline and Resources). Metrics included the timeline for execution, the percentage of the initiative that had been completed, the funds associated with the initiative (allocated, requested from current/capital budgets, or targeted for fundraising). Board members reviewed progress annually.

This plan was in place when President Tetlow joined the University in the fall 2022. In the spirit of the Institutional Priority of Institutional Vitality and Continuous Improvement, she immediately undertook a year of listening and gathering information about the needs and desires of the Fordham community. In February 2024, she shared her vision with the University, highlighting key themes reflecting "the ways Fordham matters most": (1) who we educate and the opportunity we create; (2) the way we transform our students' lives, both inside and outside the classroom; and (3) research and scholarship that helps solve the world's most urgent problems" (S6-C2–President's Email on Strategic Planning Feb 2024). She announced the formation of a steering committee that would oversee the gathering of additional input from community stakeholders through the spring 2024 semester, with the goal of bringing a new strategic plan to the Board of Trustees for its approval by February 2025.

The president then charged a coordinating committee in spring 2024 to engage the Fordham community and gather data to inform articulated priorities for the University. Composed of members from across the University, its work included (1) providing ongoing opportunities to submit ideas through the strategic planning website; and (2) holding virtual and in-person meetings to share ideas and perspectives that would shape the institution's priorities going forward. In September 2024, President Tetlow shared a framework document that included "diagnoses of our challenges and opportunities, the direction we might head, and the beginnings of our collective ideas to achieve our goals" (S6-C1–Framework for Our Strategic Plan)

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Strategic Planning Timeline

PHASE 0	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4	PHASE 5
Pre-planning Process	Launch of Strategic Planning Process	Information Gathering	Drafting the Plan	Socialize & Finalize the Plan	LAUNCH STRATEGIC PLAN
SUMMER '23	FALL '23	SPRING '24	SUMMER '24	FALL '24	SPRING '25

Throughout the various stages of strategic planning, University leadership has sought widespread participation and engagement from many groups across the University. A 2024 survey of administrators and staff found 93% agreed that they understood how their work contributes to the overall success of the University (up from 86% in 2015). The CUSP Strategic Framework and the goals of *Educating For Justice* were shared widely and incorporated into annual report templates, enabling University units to detail progress in furthering these shared goals.

At the same time, "continuous" planning led to some frustration and planning fatigue. *Educating for Justice* presented a more streamlined strategy comprising three goals with a concrete implementation plan over a five-year period. President Tetlow's current approach similarly seeks to strike a balance between inclusiveness and flexibility, clear goals, assignment of responsibility, and metrics for measuring success. Like prior strategic planning initiatives, it also included widespread participation and engagement from University stakeholder groups and communities. As she wrote in her message to the community in September 2024, "[w]e are using our own, very Jesuit, discernment process to craft a strategic plan. It is radically inclusive, unlocking our community's collective wisdom and creativity. It is also a leap of faith in the power of transparency and shared governance" (S6-C2–President's Email State of the University September 2024).

Beyond the University's institutional strategic plan, other University-wide planning efforts have proceeded in specific areas, as noted in Chapter 1. These include *Laudato Sí: A Fordham Green Plan, Addressing Racism, Educating for Justice*, and the Jesuit Mission Priority Examen.

Sharing Plans for Continuous Improvement (Criterion 2, Requirement of Affiliation 10)

As noted, the CUSP process identified creating a more agile, efficient organization as a key priority and prerequisite for progress on the other identified priorities. President Tetlow also has emphasized the importance of "making Fordham more functional, nimble, and efficient" as a "pillar" of the current strategic planning process (S6-C2–President's Email on Strategic Planning Feb 2024). This self-study process has incorporated that emphasis into the Institutional Priority of Institutional Vitality and Continued Improvement.

The annual report process allows each unit of the University to translate this overall institutional goal into operations by reporting on accomplishments and challenges of the previous year, assessing the extent to which previously articulated goals have been achieved, and reflecting on where and why a unit might have fallen short in achieving its goals. It also requires each unit to establish new goals for the upcoming year, which then can be assessed in the next annual report (S7-C5–VP Annual Report Template 2022-2023).

Additionally, the process explicitly incorporates assessment of student learning and institutional assessment. Academic departments, programs, and schools are required to address how they have worked to improve teaching and learning over the past year and what factors informed their

decisions to make changes. Units not directly involved in teaching are required to document how they have worked to improve the effectiveness of their unit and what data informed their decision to make these changes. Finally, units are asked what resources and support they need to achieve their goals. Although requests usually exceed available resources, this process serves as a direct link between planning efforts and resource allocations through the budget process (discussed below). In the academic affairs area, department and school reports are used by the provost in authorizing tenure-stream faculty lines—one of the most important long-term investments the University makes (S7-C4–Provost Interview).

Examples of continuous improvement range from the day-to-day operations to University governance. Some of these efforts involve modernizing University processes to enhance efficiency. For example, in response to community feedback, the finance area adopted a suite of applications in 2018—Fincon, Fintrex, Finbuy, and Finpay—to streamline contracts, travel, and purchasing. These platforms have decreased the time spent processing requests and disbursing funds. They also reinforce the University's commitment to sustainability by creating paperless workflows (S6-C2–FINBUY User Guide). Other areas have implemented systems to improve processes and internal communication, including the Interfolio faculty management system, PeopleAdmin, and an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) system (discussed below).
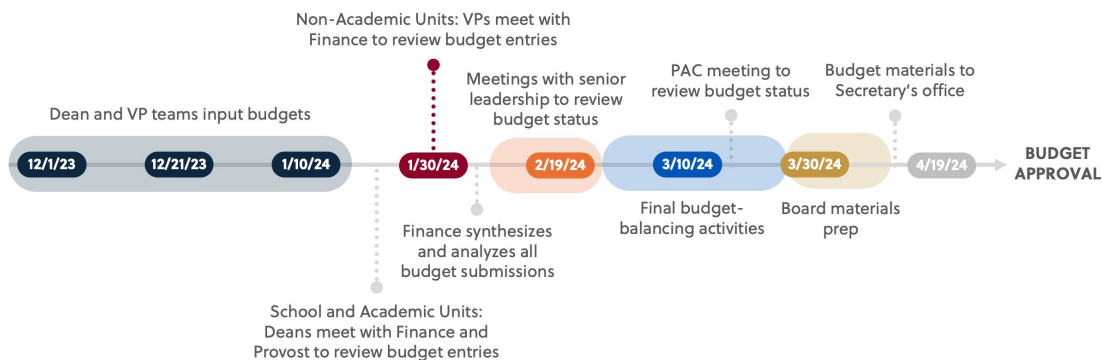
In the area of University governance, the president has restructured cabinet meetings, moving away from units reporting out and toward more issue-focused and directed engagement (S7-C4–Provost Interview, S7-C1–President Interview). Similarly, and relevant to Criterion 8, the Board of Trustees now receives more data and is more informed and engaged than in the past. The president regularly provides a dashboard to the board with data on finances, enrollment, student success, faculty, rankings, fundraising, and facilities sustainability (S7-C2–BOT 2022-2023 Annual Report). She also shares this information with the University community by presenting the same slide deck in a town hall forum following board meetings. The board also receives updated data on a monthly basis on finances, enrollment, fundraising, and diversity and inclusivity goals in enrollment and employment.

A Holistic Budgeting Process (Criterion 3)

The University budget is made up of budgets from schools, departments, and operating areas across the institution. The annual budget process begins in September with outlining needs and strategic priorities (S6-C3–Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Plan Update). From September to April, the iterative budgeting process considers expected revenues and expenses, strategic initiatives and priorities, and stakeholder concerns.

The deans, along with their budget managers, meet individually with the provost and representatives from the Office of Finance to discuss the deans' expectations for enrollment, tuition rates, financial aid, strategic initiatives, operating expenses, and any other budget-related matters. The vice presidents from each nonacademic unit have similar meetings. The Office of Finance subsequently calculates the overall net operating result and meets again with deans, vice presidents, the provost, and the president to review the overall budget and discuss budget- balancing opportunities, if necessary. Ultimately, the budget is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at the April board meeting. Below is a graphic illustrating the budget process for FY2024 (which started later than normal in order to provide the Office of Finance time for a careful review of the University's existing budget situation with the new president, the provost, and other University leaders.)

Budget Process Timeline

Non-Academic Units: VPs meet with
Finance to review budget entries

Dean and VP teams input budgets

Meetings with senior
leadership to review
budget status

PAC meeting to
review budget status

Budget materials to
Secretary's office

| 12/1/23 | 12/21/23 | 1/10/24 | 1/30/24 | 2/19/24 | 3/10/24 | 3/30/24 | 4/19/24 | BUDGET APPROVAL |

Finance synthesizes
and analyzes all
budget submissions

Final budget-
balancing activities

Board materials
prep

School and Academic Units:
Deans meet with Finance and
Provost to review budget entries

Aligning with institutional priorities, the University collects varied perspectives on budgetary needs and priorities. Budgeting forums are held annually and are recorded so they may be viewed by University community members unable to attend in person. Strategic planning sessions and University-wide town hall meetings with the president also invite participation in the planning process. Financial data is presented and discussed, and all members of the community are invited to submit questions/comments in advance or raise them publicly at the meeting.

Another avenue for input into the budget process is the University Budget Planning Committee, composed of six members of the faculty selected by the Faculty Senate and six administrators appointed by the president. The statutory charge of the committee, chaired by the University's chief financial officer, is to "assist the president of the University in the formulation of the University's annual budget." The Budget Planning Committee meets at least three times annually: in late fall, before pro-forma budgets are sent to the deans for feedback/modifications; in early spring, to review the deans' submitted budgets as well as the next year's capital budgets; and in late spring, to review the preliminary budget for the following fiscal year.

To provide a more complete financial picture, in FY2023 the finance team implemented a new "all-funds" budgeting process incorporating direct donor contributions and government grants in addition to the traditional operating budget. The University also has announced that over the next two years, it plans to move to a multiyear budget planning process to better support the new strategic plan.

Given the importance of undergraduate tuition to Fordham's financial position, the Enrollment Group engages in year-round planning to recruit, admit, and enroll the incoming class for the undergraduate colleges. Determining the appropriate target numbers for first-year student enrollment is a primary step in planning that year's budget. The Committee for Undergraduate Enrollment discusses proposed targets and considers financial considerations and factors such as the University's instructional and residential capacity. Recruitment and admissions efforts help shape a class with an eye toward academic profile, diversity (including geographical and socioeconomic diversity), mission alignment, and financial sustainability.

Graduate and professional school admissions and enrollment are also integral to the overall financial health of the University. Following several years of declining enrollments in several graduate programs, the Office of the Provost strengthened centralized support to the schools by establishing positions within the provost's office. In 2024, the position of associate provost for

graduate programs was established. It is responsible for conducting market research to shape Fordham's portfolio of graduate programs, aligning program modalities with student demand, providing strategic guidance to the University's marketing team to reach key populations of prospective students, and helping to set the enrollment target for each degree program during the annual budget planning process. The provost also appointed an assistant provost to develop a suite of non-degree programs to serve corporate clients and their workforce by leveraging many cross-disciplinary intellectual assets (e.g., ethics, health care, law, media, and technology).

Additional areas of emphasis for revenue enhancement include developing new summer precollege programming, enhancing support for faculty to apply for external grants, and investing in additional fundraising capacity within the Office of Development and University Relations (DAUR). At its September 2024 meeting, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved an annual $7 million investment in DAUR to be phased in over three fiscal years. Fordham has historically lagged in investing in its advancement operation, and this strategy is meant to put the University on a path that other Jesuit aspirant schools such as Georgetown University and Boston College have already navigated (S6-C3–DAUR Advancement Strategy Summary).

Supporting Operations (Criterion 4, Requirement of Affiliation 11)

Fiscal resources support the University's operations. The Fordham University Office of Finance is responsible for the management, safeguarding, and investment of cash; the administration of University-wide financial systems; and the recording and reporting of financial activities. These financial activities culminate in various reports issued by the Office of Finance, including year-end financial statements, the annual budget, monthly forecasts, and Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax).

Fiscal responsibility and the financial health of the University are shown in the University's year-end financial statements, specifically in the statements of financial position, activities, and cash flow as well as in footnotes to the financial statements and the independent auditor's report contained therein. The University's financial health also is independently assessed and reviewed by auditing firm KPMG and by two of the leading rating agencies, Moody's and Standard & Poor's. All of the following data is as of June 30, 2023, for the fiscal year ending on that date (S6-C4–Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities).

Fiscal resource amounts:

- $2.4 billion in total assets and $0.8 billion in total liabilities
- $1.0 billion in total gross revenues ($0.7 billion total revenues, net of financial aid)
- 3 to 1 assets to liabilities ratio
- $3.8 million in operating result surplus
- More than 50 years of positive operating results
- Enrollment of approximately 10,000 undergraduate and 6,000 graduate students
- $0.1 billion in total financial assets and liquidity resources available within one year (including $50 million of an unsecured line of credit)
- $1.0 billion in total investments (endowment—see below)
- Moody's and Standard & Poor's bond rating of A2 stable

Fiscal resource processes include the following:

- Annual financial statement, including Independent Auditor's Report
- Board of Trustees Finance Committee financial oversight
- Weekly cash flow projections
- Annual budgetary process and monthly forecasts
- Budget allocation models by school
- Budget development and oversight
- Financial management processes
- Accounting resources
- Skilled finance professionals with relevant credentials such as certifications (CPA, CGMA, and CMA) and advanced degrees

The University, particularly through the efforts of DAUR, has worked diligently to increase the value of Fordham's endowment. By FY2024, the endowment was $1.019 billion, an increase of 41% since 2014. The current chief investment officer, appointed in 2022, manages the University's investment strategy in collaboration with the Board of Trustees' Finance and Investment Committee and Fordham's senior leaders in the finance area.

Endowment Value
● Investment Pool ● Segregated Investments

FISCAL YEAR	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Segregated Investments	$37.2M	$44.5M	$38.6M	$45.3M	$62.0M	$89.7M	$70.6M	$48.2M	$30.5M	$5.9M	$13.3M
Investment Pool	$683.5M	$676.5M	$621.7M	$694.5M	$745.4M	$767.1M	$755.5M	$965.5M	$948.3M	$967.8M	$1,006.1M
ANNUAL TOTAL	$720.7M	$721.0M	$660.3M	$739.8M	$807.4M	$856.8M	$826.1M	$1,013.7M	$978.8M	$973.7M	$1,019.4M

As described in Chapter 2, human resources are also integral to supporting University operations, which are carried out daily by more than 3,400 colleagues. There have been significant changes under the leadership of the Office of Human Resources (OHR) vice president, who joined Fordham in 2017. For example, in interviews with University deans, many pointed to the difficulty in getting timely approval to fill vacant staff positions. In response, OHR overhauled the staff hiring process using Formstack, a digital workflow platform, which decreased the average time to approve and hire by 25%, from 67 to 50 days. The University also implemented a proactive outreach program that leverages LinkedIn Recruiter and partnerships with schools to source recent graduates for entry-level roles to enhance recruitment. These initiatives reflect the University's commitment to improved hiring practices.

OHR has worked to reposition from transactional-style interactions to more strategic and long-term approaches to employee development and wellness. This shift helps attract and retain excellent employees who contribute to the effectiveness of University operations and also is mission-relevant. OHR strives to "inspire the Fordham community to be their best every day by providing innovative OHR services and solutions that nurture a spirit of *cura personalis*—care for the whole person—and *cura apostolica*—care for the work we do together." For example, in response to a needs assessment survey conducted by OHR, Fordham committed to enhancing the employee experience by providing ongoing mental health support through Ginger (OnDemand Behavioral Health). It also established a partnership with Bright Horizons, a national provider of backup childcare, eldercare services, and summer-camp resources; and with SWORD, offering digital physical therapy services. Consistent with this ethos, in a summer 2024 survey of administrators and staff, 95% of respondents indicated that treating its employees fairly is important to Fordham's mission, and 74% agreed that the "wellness and support programs offered by Human Resources benefit the University community" (S2–Spring 2024 Survey Data).

Alongside these innovations, however, 64% of staff and administrators surveyed have indicated that they "feel overwhelmed by my workload" at least sometimes, with 18% reporting that experience most of the time or always. Consistent with that sentiment, 73% reported that they at least sometimes "work significant overtime beyond my scheduled hours." More than half of those respondents (34% of the total) indicated they work overtime most of the time or always. These experiences are consistent with a 2022 assessment of staffing levels conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data, which indicated that Fordham's student-to-staff ratio (9.4 student FTEs/staff FTE) is considerably higher than the average among peer institutions.

Turning to infrastructure creation and improvement, it is important to note that the high costs of construction in New York present an ongoing challenge. Nonetheless, the University's physical and technological infrastructures have been updated in the past several years in a number of ways (the planning process is discussed in Criterion 6). Select examples include the following:

- Renovations to the sixth floor of the Lincoln Center Lowenstein building to house the Fordham Center for Cybersecurity (FCC), an interdisciplinary and interschool hub for cybersecurity education, research, and training. Planning and investment in this area led to designation as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education by the National Security Agency and U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and opened the doors to millions in grant funding for tuition scholarships and research.

- Expanding Fordham's London Center through a long-term lease in Clerkenwell, U.K., has resulted in increased student interest in study abroad (see Chapter 3). It also provided a hub for Gabelli Launch, where new full-time MBA students spend a global applied learning immersion week focused on sustainability and environmental, social, and governance topics.

- Establishment of Learning and Innovation Technology Environment (LITE) centers (mentioned in Chapter 3), located at both the Rose Hill and Lincoln Center campuses, providing state-of-the-art facilities for podcasting and digital recording, virtual reality technology, and a makerspace with 3D scanning/printing, along with full-time staff to help students and faculty use its resources. It is also a step toward the goal of improving STEM at Fordham.

- Investment in technological infrastructure updates across the University in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the use of Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds. This support allowed Fordham IT to upgrade online course delivery systems and instructional technology, enabling faculty and students to work and interact remotely. Classrooms also were updated with audio/visual equipment, and the University purchased a Zoom site license to facilitate accessibility and interactivity in remote and hybrid learning.

With respect to program modality, the University is moving away from a partnership with an online program management partner, 2U, toward in-house support for course design and delivery, marketing, and student support. This entails investments in both technological infrastructure and human capital. The Office of the Provost appointed an inaugural senior director for online programs, who reports to the associate provost for graduate programs. The senior director is charged with leading a multifunctional team to assist in the development and ongoing support of fully online and hybrid degree/certificate programs in close partnership with the sponsoring graduate schools. The central online team includes instructional designers, instructional technologists, and those who support Blackboard Ultra, the University's learning management system.

A priority area in need of improvement, as identified in the University's Strategic Plan, is science facilities. As *Educating for Justice* noted, "[i]t is no secret that Fordham's current facilities lag behind our peers' and threaten our ability to recruit and retain diverse, outstanding students in STEM and allied fields." Investing in natural and applied sciences was identified as one of three University-wide priorities in that plan. Subsequently, the provost established a "visioning committee" consisting of faculty from various STEM disciplines who were charged with developing a "bold and forward-thinking vision for the natural and applied sciences at Fordham" and a roadmap to realize the vision in the short term and over the next decade. The committee identified six important and interconnected elements:

- Advancing signature academic programs
- Promoting research and leveraging partnerships
- Developing a stellar team of faculty across the sciences
- Enhancing facilities and infrastructure
- Developing inclusive and integrative STEM communities for students and faculty
- Developing a STEM honors program

New programs such as the proposed Master of Science in Biotechnology are moving through internal and external academic program approval processes. With respect to space, the provost established a STEM space planning group with academic stakeholders as well as administrators from facilities management, the latter having appointed a director of University facilities and programming. They completed a study of current capacity within existing facilities as well as an assessment of space needs under various scenarios. This planning process is iterative; final decisions about renovations or new space will depend on costs as well as academic factors that consider what programs the University wants to prioritize and the student learning experiences it seeks to emphasize. A number of options will be submitted to the University Budget Planning Committee and the Board of Trustees, which will decide the level and type of investment necessary to enhance Fordham's science facilities.

Decision-Making Processes (Criterion 5)

Decision-making and assignment of responsibility and accountability are an aspect of University governance, and thus addressed in more detail in Chapter 7. Most units operate independently and collaborate with other departments, areas, and schools when appropriate. There is more definition around decision-making and responsibilities for administrative roles, and the University organizational chart is available in the Evidence Inventory (S7-C4–Org Charts). Ultimately, each vice president is accountable for decision-making within the vice president's area, and the president (who oversees all vice presidents) is accountable to the Board of Trustees, as discussed in Chapter 7. For the many issue areas that cross divisional boundaries, committees have been established to promote collaboration and ensure units are making decisions in a collaborative fashion. Select examples of this important work:

- The Committee on Undergraduate Enrollment includes representatives from across the University (e.g., finance, enrollment, faculty senate, provost and school deans, student affairs, marketing). It addresses topics including class size targets for the first-year class, discounting, and collaborative recruiting and retention efforts.

- The Graduate and Adult Admission Council brings together admissions professionals from across the schools along with central administrative support (e.g., information technology, marketing, student financial services) to review best practices, share information, and collaborate on cross-school initiatives.

- Committees and working groups focused on issues such as accessibility, emergency management, online learning, Title IX administration, transfer students, and undergraduate student retention.

- Enrollment management and institutional research are two teams that have critically supported enrollment through collaboration on data analysis.

- The provost's area has additional centralized capacity to support new academic program development, marketing, and recruitment efforts for graduate and professional schools.

- On an ad hoc basis, when issues cut across divisions, new task forces are created. Recent examples include groups focused on first-year student orientations, shared governance, and STEM facilities planning. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Fordham also assembled an ad hoc committee to respond to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the legality of race-conscious affirmative action in college admission.

Internal and external audits have helped identify accountability. The Office of Internal Audit, reporting to the chief financial officer, provides an independent appraisal for management and, when applicable, furnishes analyses, recommendations, counsel, and information concerning the reviewed activities. The University's finances are audited by KPMG. Decision-making authority within the academic area is governed by the University Statutes, as discussed in Chapter 7. Finally, Chapter 7 also provides a case study in which the University restructured the leadership of Arts and Sciences, precisely to address unclear decision-making authority that existed with four deans managing different parts of Arts and Sciences.

Comprehensive Planning Processes for Facilities, Infrastructure, and Technology (Criterion 6)

Facilities Management

The Division of Facilities Management, overseen by the vice president of administration, supervises construction, building operations and maintenance, power plant operations and maintenance, grounds and custodial services, and waste management/recycling services. The division manages a running list of deferred maintenance needs and, with input from the operations facilities group, separates urgent projects that must be addressed in the next five years from longer-term projects. At times, the unit brings in external firms (e.g., to inspect building roofs or facades), and project funding is allocated annually.

In contrast to this bottom-up maintenance process, strategic projects are driven by University leadership priorities originating from the board, president, cabinet, and academic leadership (the vice president for administration meets regularly with each cabinet member to understand their facilities needs). One result of the Shared Governance Working Group's efforts (see Chapter 7) has been that the University Budget Committee consisting of faculty and administrators provides input into these decisions. Working groups on each campus consider classroom and teaching lab capacity and needs, informed by external studies. (S6-C6–Classroom Utilization Working Groups; S6-C6–Long-term Facilities Development Plan: Lincoln Center Campus; S6-C6–Long-term Facilities Development Plan: Rose Hill Campus).

Once priorities are identified, the vice president for administration conducts engineering assessments and risk analyses to prioritize a list of projects that can be completed within the capital budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The president's cabinet reviews the list, and the trustees' Facilities Committee endorses it before moving it for approval by the Board of Trustees. Ultimately, financial considerations—including fundraising—inform the University's ability to take on new projects. For example, the major capital project of the past five years was the McShane Campus Center. This renovation and expansion of the existing student building opened on the Rose Hill campus in 2022. The McShane Campus Center offers an expanded, lighter, more modern, and appealing space for students to interact. The project also prioritized creating a welcoming campus space for commuter students, who make up approximately 40% of the Rose Hill student population. In addition and as mentioned earlier, investment in STEM facilities emerged as a central priority of *Educating for Justice*. Goal 2 commits to "Excel Across the Natural and Applied Sciences and Allied Fields to Promote Social Change and Equity," and objectives are provided to reach this goal. Specifically relevant is the need to build adaptable infrastructure for STEM education.

Considerations of sustainability also play an important role in facilities planning. The University has focused on reducing emissions from its buildings, which constitute the majority of CO_2 emitted from the University's campuses. This commitment is manifested by early involvement with New York City's Carbon Challenge, which started in 2007. Since joining the challenge, Fordham has reduced its CO_2 equivalent intensity (CO_2e) by 31.77%, on the way to meeting a commitment to reduce emissions 40% by 2030 (S6-C6–Climate Action Plan Annual Report). Energy consumption has been reduced by 22.6% since 2005. In 2022, a University-wide *Laudato Sí* Committee established an action plan to guide a seven-year transformation process. The

committee's goal is to continue working across the University to unite sometimes siloed or disparate areas under a unified vision of environmental and climate justice.

Information Technology

The University's technological infrastructure is managed by the IT department, which reports to the finance division. Following the arrival of a new chief information officer in 2020, IT announced a reorganization and a set of strategic organizational goals in 2022 that are linked to *Educating for Justice* and future-focused on enhancing IT's contributions to teaching, learning, and research; digital transformation; the student experience; and educational and workplace innovation (S6-C6–IT Reorg Summary). On a yearly basis, the department assesses progress through the annual report and, on a more ongoing basis, the chief information officer (CIO) tracks the progress of each goal, the due date, the person accountable for the goal, and other notes and feedback about the process (S6-C6–2024 IT Goals STATUS redacted).

As is the case for facilities, IT sees itself as serving a range of areas of the University in achieving the institution's mission, and thus meets on a regular basis with VPs. The CIO is a member of the Faculty Senate Technology Committee, whose statutory charge is to "advise University officials concerning the purchase, support, and use of technologies relevant to all aspects of academic affairs." Projects are prioritized and capital requests are brought to the cabinet for approval and then shared with the Budget Planning Committee. Ultimately, resource approvals are made by the Board of Trustees' Finance Committee. IT relies on community surveys to measure satisfaction with its services and to guide decision-making.

Independent Audit (Criterion 7, Requirement of Affiliation 10)

As part of Fordham's commitment to quality assurance and financial viability, the University's financial statements are audited annually by an independent reviewer, KPMG. Audits are completed in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) and made available via Fordham's website (2019-23 reports are currently featured). Each is accompanied by the reviewer letter noting that no concerns were identified. Internally, five additional years of statements and the accompanying letters are available with Fordham credentials (S6-C7–Financial Reports and Presentations).

Assessing the Utilization of Resources and Effectiveness of Planning (Criteria 8 and 9)

Internal documents, such as the Strategic Plan timeline and resource document, describe specifically how far along in the process each goal is, the funding needed, and any monies already allocated to individual projects (S6-C8–Educating for Justice Timeline and Resources). As noted above, the president presents a dashboard with data on a variety of metrics to the board and subsequently shares the same information at University-wide employee forums. At the divisional level, assessment strategies and subsequent actions taken are described in each unit's annual report, which are shared with divisional vice presidents and the president.

Within the academic area, efforts are ongoing to assess systems that often run in the background of everyday campus life, but that have significant impact on how Fordham delivers on its mission. For example, as changes in undergraduate enrollment and curricular reforms (e.g., core curriculum) require adjustments in course offerings, the Office of the Provost has worked with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to model the demand for instructional capacity. These results are then used by the provost in instructional staffing decision-making processes across schools and departments.

Another important part of the planning process has been anticipating and proactively preparing for various risks facing Fordham and higher ed more generally. Risk management, therefore, has become a critical University priority. It has helped to outline where resources are needed and whether they are being best applied as well as opened lines of interdepartmental communication. In 2019, Fordham adopted an enterprise risk management framework to take a dynamic, responsive approach to all levels of risk. The framework, overseen by the board's Audit and Risk Management Committee, involves tracking trends alongside risk likelihood and impact, yielding a risk rating. Based on the rating system, a heat map provides a holistic visual representation of institutional risk factors. This process is overseen by the University's director of treasury and risk, who provides reports to the Board of Trustees each April (S6-C9–ERM Charter; S6-C9–2024 ERM and Heat Map).

Each risk is assigned an "owner" from the functional unit to which it most closely aligns, and these "owners" form the University's Risk Assessment Committee. This committee meets at least twice a year, and its members undergo interdepartmental training to gain an understanding of the interconnectedness of risks and possible mitigation tactics. Subsequent to the committee's meeting, the president and cabinet review the top risks and mitigation strategy. The board then reviews the risks at its April meeting and provides feedback. In response, University officials who are risk owners update the risk evaluation and treatment. The board then considers the additional top risks not addressed in April and provides feedback. This process occurs every year. The heat map in the evidence inventory illustrates the current risks, arranged by impact and likelihood.

As described throughout this chapter, regular assessment has become integral to University processes and informs the annual reporting process, internal and external audits, the establishment of cross-divisional committees and task forces, the use of external consultants, and other mechanisms. Chapter 7 provides additional details on the role that University leadership plays in overseeing planning and resource allocation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Fordham's institutional planning in support of mission centers on thorough, ongoing assessment and alignment between strategic planning and institutional priorities to elevate all areas of the University's work. Recent initiatives including OHR's overhaul of the staff hiring process, investments in strategic, long-term approaches to employee development and wellness, and the establishment of the McShane Campus Center demonstrate how it fulfills this Standard. Continued assessment of these and other planning initiatives is vital to ensuring responsible and responsive stewardship of resources and to delivering on the Institutional Priority of Institutional Vitality and Continuous Improvement.

1. Fordham should continue advancing its coordinated, multifaceted efforts to strengthen its financial position and enhance revenue, including through assessment of the impact such efforts may have on academic program development and student learning and satisfaction.

2. The University should advance the commitment to move to a multiyear budget planning process to support President Tetlow's new strategic planning process, which aims to balance inclusiveness and flexibility, clarify goals, assign responsibility for achieving them, and implement metrics for measuring success. Such a system would enhance long-term planning and informed decision-making across the University.

STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

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 other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

The Institutional Priority most closely aligned with this Standard: Institutional Vitality and Continuous Improvement.

Introduction

Fordham affirms the value of shared governance at every leadership level and endeavors to build trust and transparency by listening to our community, communicating regularly and clearly across the community, and partnering to meet identified challenges fully. Through this commitment, the University is able to operate effectively as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy, with education as its primary purpose, to forge a greater sense of belonging for all, and to focus on lifting the whole institution and the communities that help sustain it.

Clear and Transparent Governance (Criterion 1)

The University's governance structure is described at length in the University Statutes, a 157-page document that can be found online in the Leadership and Administration/Board of Trustees section of Fordham's website as well as from a link on the Faculty Senate web page. The statutes incorporate the University's Charter (Article 1), the bylaws of the Board of Trustees (Article 2), details about the structure of the University (Article 3), as well as policies and processes regulating a range of governance and faculty-related matters (Articles 4–6 and appendices). Adherence to these statutes is a core element of the University's commitment to the principle of shared governance.

In spring 2023, the Faculty Senate passed a motion that requested the president create a representative group to focus specifically on reviewing the University Statutes, both to make them "more readable, internally consistent, and clear" and also to consider substantive changes in order to enhance the effectiveness of decision-making and shared governance. The president appointed a task force with equal numbers of faculty members and administrators, which began meeting in spring 2024.

The University Statutes describe the process of making amendments, incorporating input from the Faculty Senate, Office of the Provost, Office of Legal Counsel, and ultimate approval by the Board of Trustees (§4-10.01). The practice has been to bring amendments to the board only if all parties are in agreement. In her interview with members of the Self-Study Working Group, the president reiterated her commitment to effective shared governance (S7-C1–President Interview; S7-C1–Protocol for BOT Consideration of a Senate Resolution).

In spring 2024, Fordham's full-time faculty participated in the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey. COACHE is a research-practice partnership of more than 300 peer institutions dedicated to improving outcomes in faculty recruitment, development, and retention surveys. Faculty were asked questions about their perceptions of shared governance at Fordham using a five-point Likert scale, with five being most favorable. The results suggest that Fordham faculty are slightly more critical of the way shared governance

functions compared to the faculty of other institutions participating in the survey (S7-C1–Faculty COACHE Survey Select Responses).

The University's Governing Body (Criterion 2, Requirement of Affiliation 12)

Fordham University's Board of Trustees operates under the laws of New York State and by University Statutes. It is responsible for directing and managing all business and affairs of the University and is the final authority over all other matters involving the University, including the budget and all changes in tuition, fees, salaries, and benefits. As a body, the board brings to Fordham a wide range of expertise (S7-C2–Board of Trustees Bios; S7-C2–Board Profile as of 07012023). The board's by-laws outline the number of board members, qualifications, terms of office, processes for filling vacant positions, resignation and removal from office, and conflict of interest; officers of the board; powers and duties of the board; meeting procedures; and power and responsibilities of the executive committee (S7-C2–By-Laws of the Board of Trustees). Minutes for every meeting are kept by the University Secretary/Secretary to the Board of Trustees and are considered confidential.

The Board of Trustees is composed of 38 members who are primarily alumni from across the University's schools. As of 2024–25, it includes five members of the Society of Jesus, demonstrating the University's connection with its Jesuit mission. The president of the University is an *ex officio* voting member of the board.

The board chair, in an interview with the Self-Study Committee, emphasized that the board involves itself in matters of strategy, fiduciary oversight, and supporting the mission. Otherwise, it refrains from involving itself in the day-to-day operation of the University, which is the responsibility of the administration. As one trustee said, as a board, "[w]e recognize a good idea when we hear it." It takes its responsibility seriously to provide policy direction and oversight to the University and support its CEO and president with strategic initiatives (S7-C1–President Interview). For instance, the board has been supportive of the strategic priority of enhancing science facilities; one trustee has provided resources to engage a consultant who advises the University on what is needed in terms of space planning and capital investments. The board Strategy and Innovation Committee discusses these issues in greater detail. The full board ultimately votes on approving the University's strategic plans. In an interview, the president confirmed that the Board of Trustees "has a good understanding of fiduciary responsibilities and its role in shaping strategy and maintaining mission. They pay close attention but do not micromanage" (S7-C1–President Interview). The president further explained that while her job is to earn their trust with transparency, data, and metrics of performance, their job is to ask good questions and to hold her accountable.

In interviews, lay board members expressed commitment to the University's Jesuit identity and mission. This is inculcated in the orientation for new board members, regular board retreats at which mission is discussed, and other activities, such as opportunities to participate in pilgrimages to Rome to meet with Catholic and Jesuit leadership. The Mission and Social Justice Committee meets jointly with each committee, rotating across all of them over the course of several board meetings; as one board member put it, "[e]very committee is reminded of their role in the mission through this interaction." The president confirmed the centrality of the mission to all University stakeholders, including the Board of Trustees, saying "mission has to be on everyone's lips throughout" (S7-C1–President Interview).

Every new board member, when they join, participates in an orientation that covers their responsibilities while providing background on all areas of the University. As the board chair remarked in an interview, "In the past, serving on a board was mostly an honor and rubber stamp. … No more. The responsibility of sitting on a board needs to be understood before acceptance." New trustees are assigned board mentors to discuss questions, processes, and mission.

Most of the board's work is conducted through committees, which recently were restructured. This organizational change had its roots in a board retreat in summer 2023. Based on assessment results from board surveys, and with input on best practices from the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, the board decided to move away from a committee structure that mirrored University divisions (one each on academic affairs, student affairs, facilities, etc.) in which vice presidents reported to their respective committees. Instead, and with support from the president, the board divided its committees into those with a fiduciary focus and those with a strategic focus (S7-C2–BOT Committees). Many of the new committees were deliberately created to span divisions of the University. For example, instead of a separate student affairs and academic affairs committee, the board now has a Student Success and Academic Quality Committee that focuses on issues such as enhancing the student experience and increasing retention/graduation rates (S7-C1–President Interview). Each board committee drafted committee charters, which were reviewed and approved by the full board.

The Board of Trustees takes its fiduciary duties seriously to ensure the integrity of financial management. The Audit and Risk Management Committee meets with the University's independent auditors, KPMG, which reports its findings to the committee. Each year at the April Board meeting, the University's chief financial officer presents the fiscal year budget to the full board, which has the opportunity to ask questions prior to a vote for approval.

The board continually assesses its policies and procedures. It surveys its members often regarding their experience on the board and about general board operations; invites trustees to assess their own performances as trustees; asks general questions about the board's role in University governance and board culture; and invites open-ended insights for improvement (S7-C2–Template Full Survey 2023). Survey results are reviewed by the Executive Committee, but data is shared with the entire board and informs its practices. In addition to the committee restructuring described above, the board also formed a subcommittee that reviewed the body's bylaws. In February 2024, the board approved its revised board by-laws, which are posted on the University website in Chapter 2 of the statutes.

The president reports to the board on a range of issues, including operations, revenue and expenses, endowment, educational costs per student, enrollment, diversity, student profiles and retention, graduation outcomes, faculty makeup, research expenses, and more. Following board meetings (except for the December session), the president shares this information with faculty and staff via town hall meetings (S7-C1–President Interview; S7-C2–BOT 2021–22 Annual Report; S7-C2–BOT 2022-23 Annual Report).

Each year and in compliance with New York State law, the University requires trustees to sign a conflict-of-interest document that defines conflicts of interest and outlines fiduciary responsibilities and procedures for the disclosure, review, and resolution of conflicts of interest (S7-C2–Conflict of Interest Policy).

Over the past decade, current and past board members have made significant financial contributions to Fordham, which have helped establish 14 endowed chairs and 35 endowed or current-use scholarship funds; helped fund construction of new residence halls at Rose Hill and Lincoln Center, the Joseph M. McShane, S.J. Campus Center at Rose Hill, academic space for the Gabelli School of Business on both campuses, and Fordham Law School at Lincoln Center. The board's Advancement Committee regularly reports to the full board on the board's financial contributions.

The board communicates to the entire Fordham community on key issues. For example, the board reported on developments throughout the hiring process of the new president (S7-C2–Sample Communications from the Board of Trustees). University stakeholders also have opportunities to engage with the board. For example, the president of the Faculty Senate addresses the full board at every meeting. Faculty, students, and administrators serve as resources on select board committees. The board also invites Faculty Senate and Administrative Council members to join board meeting luncheons.

Chief Executive Officer (Criterion 3)

Fordham's current president emeritus, Joseph M. McShane, S.J., announced his retirement in fall 2021. Shortly thereafter, the board formed a Presidential Search Committee led by the board chair (S7-C3–Presidential Search Committee Fall21). In response to 19 listening sessions and in collaboration with an outside search firm, the committee gathered community input on the kind of experience, skills, and credentials the new president should possess (S7-C3–Presidential Search Listening Sessions Email-Fall21) and articulated the desired profile of Fordham's new leader (S7-C3–Leadership Profile President).

The search resulted in the hiring of the University's first lay and woman president, Tania Tetlow, who joined Fordham on July 1, 2022. President Tetlow has held a series of senior positions in other universities, most recently as president of another Jesuit institution, Loyola University New Orleans (S7-C3–Tania Tetlow Named President of Fordham). The Board of Trustees and vice presidents conveyed confidence in the credentials and professional experience of the new president and her commitment to the University's mission (S7-C3–Tetlow CV 2022 Academic).

President Tetlow has presented her vision for the University in her inauguration speech and three State of the University addresses. These communications clearly support her commitment to the University mission to deliver excellent education consistent with Fordham's Jesuit identity. She has pledged to cultivate diversity and equity, and promote institutional vitality and continuous improvement while confronting the many challenges facing higher education, including accessibility and affordability (S7-C1–President Interview; S7-C3–President Tetlow Inauguration Speech 2023; S7-C3–President Tetlow State of the University 2024 Speech).

The president of the University is an *ex officio* voting member of the board but does not chair it. She is continually assessed by the Board of Trustees (S7-C3–2023 Presidential Assessment Survey). In her interview with the Self-Study Committee, the president welcomed this assessment, explaining that trustees are surveyed for input about her performance, which is evaluated by the board's Compensation Committee. In addition, the president submits yearly short- and long-term goals to the Board of Trustees, followed by a year-end report.

In her self-study interview, the president also emphasized that she is invested in supporting the professional development of her senior leadership team and building cohesion among them. The

senior leadership team takes two annual retreats and is supported by an executive coach who helps them improve communication, develop awareness of their strengths, and work on their weaknesses (S7-C1–President Interview).

The president meets regularly with her cabinet, a group of senior administrators whose composition has evolved over time, particularly with the change from one presidency to another (discussed below). She also meets two or three times each semester with a larger group—the President's Advisory Council—which consists of the cabinet along with additional vice presidents and vice provosts, the academic deans, the Faculty Senate president, the chair of the Administrators' Council, and (beginning in 2023–24), the co-chairs of the Middle States Steering Committee (S7-C3–President's Advisory Council). While this group does not have an official charge, it promotes communication across the various University units, provides the president with input in strategic decision-making, and proposes ways to identify and address challenges.

Since arriving at Fordham, the president has emphasized the importance of transparency through regular, ongoing internal and external communications from her office to the University community (S7-C3–Office of the President News and Communications). Additionally, in response to a question about whether University leadership communicates effectively with University constituents, surveyed vice presidents indicated there is potential for increased attention to this area. In response, she elevated the position of two associate vice presidents in marketing and communications to a single role of vice president of that area. In May 2024, the vice president for marketing and communications announced a restructuring of the office, moving from two legacy silos (communications and marketing) to an agency model that prioritizes strengthening internal communications through new processes and governance.

Administrative Structure and Senior Leadership (Criterion 4)

Vice Presidents
Fordham vice presidents possess appropriate credentials relative to their roles and are appointed by the president and board, in most cases following a rigorous national search conducted by the University (S7-C4–University Senior Leadership Biographies; S7-C4–University Senior Leadership Job Descriptions and Profiles). In recent years, progress has been made in diversifying the senior administration (S7-C4–DEI Dashboard EMPLOYEE 20230510). Their suitability is determined through assessments by the respective search committees.

Vice presidential searches are generally preceded by the appointment of a search committee composed of administrators, staff, faculty, and students (S7-C3–Presidential Search Committee Fall21). In most cases, the search committee approves the job description and leadership profile. Initial vetting of candidates is undertaken by the Office of Human Resources (OHR) or by a search firm if one is engaged. The search committee interviews top candidates and provides input to the president, who makes the final decision.

An example of such a search culminated in the recent appointment of a new vice president for finance (S7-C4–Job Description Vice President for Finance and Assistant Treasurer). Once the position was posted publicly, OHR conducted the initial screening and provided the search committee with a long list of candidates. The committee conducted interviews and created a list of finalists, who visited Fordham for on-campus interviews with key stakeholders. These stakeholders then provided input to the chief financial officer and president. For the general

counsel and vice president of equity and inclusion searches, the search committee chairs and president's chief of staff conducted the initial screening. They provided the search committee with a long list of candidates, from which they selected a short list to interview and then identified finalists. Finalists met with stakeholders, who provided input to the president (in the case of the general counsel) and the president and provost (in the case of the vice president for equity and inclusion).

Both search committees included an OHR staff representative. These processes, which demonstrate Fordham's commitment to the Institutional Priority of Community and Institutional Belonging, support the president's commitment to transparent processes and support for a qualified organizational structure and administrators (see criteria 7.3.d, 7.4.b, and 7.4.c below).

Each administrative unit has a clearly articulated organizational structure (S7-C4–Org Charts). A significant majority of surveyed vice presidents (67%) strongly agreed on the clarity of the University's organizational structure, with no disagreement observed (S7-C4–VP Survey Questions). The vice presidential structure itself is subject to change in response to changing circumstances, and vice presidents have the discretion to reorganize their areas. For example, the chief information officer, vice president for marketing and communications, and provost each reorganized their respective areas since being hired (S7-C4–Org Charts). However, any change in academic organization that establishes, abolishes, or merges departments or schools must go through a statutory process (described in Article 3 Chapter 7 of the Statutes) that involves consultation with faculty and, ultimately, approval of the board.

In the aforementioned survey, vice presidents agreed they have clarity about their responsibilities and goals within Fordham's governance structure and autonomy in their areas of operation (88% perceived clarity in their articulated goals to support the University's strategic plan, with no strong disagreement voiced; S7-C4–VP Survey Questions). However, they conveyed concerns about the adequacy of resource allocation, a concern echoed by academic deans (discussed below). A significant portion (44%) strongly agreed that their responsibilities were clearly articulated in the University's governance structure, with an overall positive sentiment of 77%. About 22% expressed ambiguity, suggesting the need for further clarification in this area.

Overall, the size of the administration (as measured by staff FTEs as reported to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, or IPEDS) has remained relatively constant, declining by 1% from 2015 to 2021. However, if measured by staff-to-student ratios, there has been a 9% decline in staff during this period (S7-C4–Student Staff ratio, IPEDS EF and HR, 2015–2021, with and without research expanded).

In interviews with the president and provost, both identified silos across the organization as an obstacle to achieving individual goals as well as the broader mission (S7-C4–Provost Interview). The president is committed to fostering a culture of collaboration at Fordham, emphasizing a sense of shared ownership in the overall well-being of the University. In her interview for the role, she laid out a vision for breaking down silos, which she found to be "fierce." Since taking office, examples of breaking down silos include providing coaching on team communication; clear messaging to her direct reports that she would like them "to figure it out together" rather than micromanage them, and prioritizing issues that cross multiple silos (e.g., retention). For example, the recent restructuring of Board of Trustees committees reflects strategic concerns rather than mirroring university units. The new structure created committees that crossed

divisions and allowed for more strategic discussion and engagement (S7-C2–Notes on BOT Exec Committee Meeting).

In interviews and surveys, senior administrators expressed appreciation for the attempt to break down silos across areas and encourage collaboration. The provost said in an interview with the Self-Study Committee that until recently, the practice was that vice presidents "stay in their lane" and not interfere in matters within other divisions (S7-C4–Provost Interview). The vice presidential survey demonstrates that VPs have confidence in the University's culture of collaboration and the leadership's engagement with faculty, staff, and students to advance the goals and objectives of the University. The survey revealed positive perceptions regarding fostering a culture of collaboration, with no explicit disagreement. At the same time, the VP survey demonstrated less agreement on a related question about whether the University's leadership fosters a culture of innovation, implying that there is room for improvement in the areas of innovation and communicating initiatives (S7-C4–VP Survey Questions).

Office of the Provost

The provost is charged with overseeing academic life at the University and promoting the mission of Fordham's nine schools. The current provost, Dennis C. Jacobs, was appointed in summer 2019 following a national search, after the unexpected death of the University's previous provost. Jacobs previously held a similar position at Santa Clara University, another Jesuit institution (S7–C4-Leadership Profile Provost).

The provost has regular interactions with deans through monthly University Council of Deans meetings, monthly one-on-one meetings, yearly retreats, and annual evaluations at the end of each academic year. In addition, the provost attends monthly meetings of the Faculty Senate, where he presents a report and answers questions from senators. He also meets on an annual basis with the faculty of each school to hear viewpoints and address questions. He communicates regularly with the University community and has organized town hall sessions with faculty based on faculty interest on particular topics, including COVID protocols and the restructuring of Arts and Science leadership, discussed below (S7-C4–Provost Communications).

Soon after his arrival, the provost engaged an external consultant to reexamine the Office of the Provost. The consultant surveyed and interviewed staff in existing areas such as academic program planning, development, and approval; faculty development and pedagogy; online/hybrid learning; and the offices of Academic Financial Planning and Analysis, Chief Diversity Officer, Faculty Affairs, Institutional Research and Assessment, International Initiatives, and Research. Although the restructuring was put on hold during the pandemic, a number of changes were subsequently made. Examples include developing centralized expertise and the capacity to more effectively support schools or respond to new challenges as well as updating titles and responsibilities. As described in Chapter 6, positions were created to support graduate and online programing and the duties of program planning, development, and approval were redistributed, eliminating one position. A new position was established to develop partnerships with corporations in order to create customized academic programs and introduce Fordham's faculty members as potential research collaborators and consultants.

Academic Deans

All dean searches are conducted in accordance with the University Statutes §3-05.02, which entails the appointment of a committee consisting in large part of faculty from the relevant

school. In each case, the process begins with broad consultation with faculty, staff, students, and alumni. A leadership profile is developed and (often with the help of a search firm) candidates are recruited from across the country. The committee reviews the credentials and experience of the candidates, selects a group of semifinalists to meet with virtually, and subsequently invites three to four finalists to campus to meet with stakeholders. The committee makes recommendations to the provost, and, ultimately, the president makes the appointment.

Schools' organizational structures are varied, reflecting their unique needs, students, and size (S7-C4–Schools Leadership and Administration). These structures are subject to change at each dean's discretion (although as stated above, changes that abolish, merge, or create departments must go through a process of statutory review and approval). Most deans feel that they and those on their leadership teams are well credentialed and prepared to serve their areas (S7-C4–Dean Interviews Summary). Many deans have restructured roles and positions within their offices. For instance, in spring 2022, the deans of Fordham College at Rose Hill and Fordham College at Lincoln Center reorganized their offices in a move away from class deans (responsible for overseeing academic advising for first-years, sophomores, juniors, and seniors) to a professional advising model (S7-C4–Fordham University Mail - Academic Advising Reorganization for FCLC and FCRH). See the discussion in Chapter 4 on academic advising for more detail.

Each school operates with its own set of guidelines and norms as permitted through the statutes while answering to the provost's office. Deans who were interviewed for the self-study noted that they were pleased with the relationships with the provost's office and felt that they were supported by this office. Deans also feel encouraged by changes they have seen under the fresh leadership of President Tetlow, specifically citing the emphasis on a collaborative culture (S7-C4–Dean Interviews Summary). At the same time, they expressed concern about resource constraints (including some outdated systems at the University level) and delays in being able to fill vacant administrative positions within their offices.

Following the University's general assessment process described above (S7-C4–Provost Interview; S7-C1–President Interview), each dean establishes a set of goals for their own unit at the beginning of the year. Usually during the summer at an off-site retreat, the provost brings deans into conversation about shared goals. Subsequently, at the end of the year, the provost meets with each dean, returning to those goals to assess progress toward meeting them.

University Community Participation in Governance (Criteria 1 and 5)

Faculty Senate
The Faculty Senate is composed of 25 elected senators representing all of Fordham's schools (S7-C1–Faculty Senate Elected Members). The senate is the faculty institution most central to shared governance throughout the University and promotes communications between the president, provost, and faculty. Its work is regulated by its own constitution and bylaws (S7-C1–Faculty Senate Bylaws). The senate keeps minutes and shares them with the faculty (S7-C1–Faculty Senate Minutes). It operates through an executive committee and a range of committees, some elected by the senate, others elected by the faculty at large (S7-C1–Faculty Senate Committees).

Senate leadership and high-level administrators meet regularly to identify key issues and inform the agenda for senate meetings, with the senate's executive committee setting the final

agenda. The senate president also meets with senior administration each month to review issues, providing the Senate president an opportunity to troubleshoot some issues that may not be of University-wide significance and thus inappropriate for the full senate to address.

A Spring 2024 survey showed high satisfaction among senators for the workings of the senate. Senators expressed satisfaction or agreement with the bylaws, the way in which the senate operates relative to the bylaws, and how the senate communicates with faculty. However, 11 of 15 respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the senate and its processes, indicating some room for improvement. (S7-C1–Faculty Senate Survey Summary). For example, much of the work of shared governance relies on the faculty senate committees. In interviews, senate leaders suggested it might make sense to rethink the senate committee structure, noting that the Board of Trustees recently restructured its committees. Senate leaders were asked how well information moves back and forth between the administration and the senate and between the senate and the faculty. Most respondents indicated confidence in this process.

With respect to shared governance more generally, interviews with the current and former senate presidents brought the following issue to light: There is no publicly agreed-upon set of norms and standards regarding shared governance or how these may be operationalized. For example, the University statutes state that the administration negotiates with the senate's Salary and Benefits Committee to determine annual raises. Most of the time, that works well (and in recent years, both sides consented to negotiate three-year salary agreements, rather than negotiate on an annual basis). But when negotiations reach a stalemate, as happens from time to time, there is not necessarily agreement on what happens next. The dual role of the senate to participate in shared governance with the administration while efficiently negotiating for salary and benefits as a collective bargaining unit can be confusing for all parties.

To address this and similar issues as well as explore shared governance more generally, in 2022–23, the provost and senate established a working committee of six senior administrators and six faculty members. The group reached consensus on several principles of effective shared governance:

- Value of stakeholder input: Shared governance requires a nuanced understanding of what it means to provide input. People may disagree with the final decision, but it is important that their input is heard and considered before a decision is rendered.
- Timeliness of decision-making: Shared governance should balance the "value of engaging in longer information-gathering processes to frame decision-making" with the "need to make some decisions with urgency, for which a lengthy consultation period could hinder progress."
- Effective communication: In particular, the final decision and its rationale should be communicated to all those who offered input along the way.
- Trust and respect: Information sharing alone will not necessarily build that trust.

The group investigated how these principles are already incorporated into decision-making around six issues: faculty personnel matters (tenure/promotion), the creation and revision of academic programs, appropriate faculty composition (proportion of tenure-line, lecturers, clinical faculty, adjuncts across various schools), University strategic priorities, budget planning, and changes in academic and administrative organization.

School/College Councils

A second facet of faculty participation in shared governance exists in the form of college councils. As mentioned in Chapter 3, each school at Fordham is governed, in part, by a school council or a college council, charged with formulating its academic policies (University Statutes §3-06.01). Each council is regulated by its own bylaws (S7-C1–Council Bylaws) and each of which has different criteria for membership. Though council structure and practices vary across schools, councils share a common goal and role: shaping and directing academic programming and quality. However, Fordham councils also play other roles. For example, the councils of Fordham College at Rose Hill, Fordham College at Lincoln Center, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Arts and Sciences were asked to vote on the reorganization of Arts and Sciences, suggesting a role that includes decisions potentially impacting unique school cultures.

The structures and rules vary across schools; for instance, the Gabelli School of Business Council comprises all faculty, whereas the Arts and Sciences Council is a representative body. In some cases, students have a role (e.g., the Fordham College Lincoln Center and Rose Hill councils), but in others they do not (e.g., the Graduate School of Education Council). In some cases, deans and/or chairs participate; in others, they are invited guests. Many have subcommittees (e.g., on curriculum, online programs, student evaluations). A Spring 2024 survey of select schools found that school councils are viewed as effective in their roles in governance. Each has processes by which amendments can be made to council bylaws. Changes adopted at the council level must be approved by the Board of Trustees (S7-C1–Select School Council Survey Results).

Case Study: Reorganization of Arts and Sciences Leadership

Historically, the Arts and Sciences have been led by four deans, three each charged with responsibility for one of the schools and one charged with responsibility for the Arts and Sciences faculty. In February 2023, the provost launched the "Arts and Sciences Leadership Structure Project" (S7-C1–Redesign of the Leadership Structure in Arts and Sciences). The stated goal of this project was to identify a refined, coherent model of leadership in Arts and Sciences that would foster a vibrant intellectual environment for students, faculty, and staff supporting excellence in research and teaching; improving accountability, efficiency, collaboration, and transparency; and ensuring Arts and Sciences has a clear, coordinated, and comprehensive vision and strategy. The project built on earlier faculty-led projects that considered the structure of the Arts and Sciences at Fordham (S7–Reimagining the Function and Structure of Arts and Sciences at Fordham).

The first stage of this project (spring 2023) involved gathering input from the Arts and Sciences community to identify the challenges of the current structure and outcomes that would be desirable in a new structure. This process included individual interviews with nearly 30 stakeholders, including administrators and faculty, as well as surveys and focus groups. In these conversations, participants shared their personal experiences of working, teaching, learning in, and supporting the current Arts and Sciences structure. Individuals shared aspects of the structure that function well for them and should be preserved as well as pain points they encounter on a frequent basis.

In fall 2023, the criteria were shared with the Arts and Sciences community along with three conceptual proposals of alternative leadership structures. Through the 2023 fall semester, further

surveys, focus groups, and town halls considered proposed changes to the leadership structure. In 2024, the provost introduced a new proposed structure (with one central dean of Arts and Sciences, supported by a leadership team of vice deans focused on undergraduate education, graduate education, faculty affairs, and an executive director for finance and administration). Councils held meetings for deliberative discussions followed by council votes in March 2024 on the provost's resolution (S7-C1–Arts and Sciences Restructuring Proposal Council Votes Spring 2024). A majority of councils supported the resolution; the Fordham College at Lincoln Center council did not. The faculty senate also voted against the resolution. The Board of Trustees approved the plan at its April 25, 2024 meeting. In fall 2024, a search committee began the process of identifying an inaugural dean of Arts and Sciences, and an Implementation Planning Committee was formed to review and refine the needed structures in support of each member of the Arts and Sciences senior leadership team.

Administrators' Council
One innovation the new president introduced was an Administrators' Council, representing a group that previously had no official way to communicate with the president. Her experience at other institutions led her to see the value in establishing a council that provided a voice for nonunionized administrators. The council does not include senior leadership who, according to the president, have other channels to communicate with her (S7-C1–President Interview). The council includes 25 members, proportional to the size of divisions (e.g., one person from facilities and one from public safety). The council meets regularly throughout the year. Like with the Faculty Senate, the president attends meetings and provides a report, which is followed by a Q&A featuring questions posed in person and anonymously submitted (S7-C1–Administrators' Council; S7-C1–Interview with Administrative Council President). The council operates in accordance with posted bylaws (S7-C1–Administrators' Council Charter and Bylaws).

The Administrators' Council's goals are to provide a voice for administrators, to figure out what's working and not working, and to put forward ideas. It also formed a committee to examine bylaws. The council is guided by the following principles: representation for all areas, importance of individual professional growth, and emphasis on systemic policy issues (rather than fixing small problems). The goals chosen in the first year included building community, improving job evaluations, creating more opportunities for professional development, and addressing concerns about employee benefits (S7-C1–Interview with Administrators' Council President).

Student Voice
Each school provides multiple ways for students' voices to be heard on academic and student life issues, usually through a student council (see Standard 4 for more). Students also participate in the Board of Trustees' committee meetings. Two students serve as resources on the board's Student Success and Academic Quality Committee, and students are frequently invited to speak to the members of the board's Mission and Social Justice Committee. In addition, President Tetlow has begun meeting regularly with a Student Advisory Council made up of the student government presidents across Fordham's schools.

At the undergraduate level, United Student Government (USG) has numerous committees that include both elected USG members and unaffiliated students. The Student Life Council (SLC) is convened at Rose Hill by the Student Life Council Executive Board and the Office of the Dean of Students and is made up of students, faculty, and administrators. The council maintains

contact between these campus constituencies and encourages ongoing consultation on activities, events, organizations, student government, and collaborative efforts. It also votes on the final club and organization budgets each semester, club funding status, and general collaborative oversight of the budget process managed by the USG/SLC Budget Committee. Many graduate and professional schools also have School Councils (e.g., GSAS Graduate Student Council, GSS Student Congress).

The structure of the Residence Hall Association (RHA) provides opportunities for engagement with a wide range of resident students. The RHA board in each residence hall shares information from and provides feedback to the main executive board. RHA avoids sending long emails; they host town hall meetings regularly but are unsatisfied with the low participation. The Commuting Students Association (CSA) also organizes a range of events and activities to help commuting students stay actively involved in campus life.

In recent focus groups with student leadership at both campuses, respondents reported general satisfaction with the accessibility and support of administrative advisors. At Rose Hill, student leaders indicated they see themselves as the voice of the general student body and feel they have a positive impact on the mission through the creation of these goals and efforts to achieve them. At Lincoln Center, students indicated that in recent years, students believe that the USG has made purposeful efforts to take action on suggestions they receive from the general student population rather than trying to decide for itself what their priorities should be.

Assessment of Leadership and Administrators (Criterion 5)

The University has robust assessment procedures for units and unit heads (S7-C5–Performance Appraisal Admin; S7-C5–Cabinet Self-Assessment). Vice presidents are assessed by the president (S7-C1–President interview). At the beginning of each fiscal year, vice presidents outline their goals for the year, and meet with the president for a six-month review as well as a year-end review organized around an annual report submitted by the unit. These annual reports lay out achievements and challenges of the past year as well as set goals for the coming year. The report is reviewed by the president and discussed with the division head (S7-C1–President Interview; S7-C4–Provost Interview). In addition to these formal benchmarks, unit heads' meetings with the president throughout the year involve coaching/feedback. The VP survey confirms that vice presidents are clear about the formal evaluation process.

The provost submits an annual report to the president that assesses the past year's performance and sets priorities and goals for the upcoming year. The provost meets with the president on a weekly basis; there is a midyear progress meeting in January and an end-of-the-year evaluation in the summer. The provost also reports on progress toward meeting these goals to the Board of Trustees, both at its regular meeting and, occasionally, at the monthly executive committee meetings (S7-C4–Provost Interview). The provost also meets annually with each dean, asking them to provide a written self-assessment that is used as the basis for a discussion about performance and goals for the year (S7-C4–Provost Interview). This is separate from the annual review, which focuses on the school-wide assessment.

Administrators within each unit have their performance assessed annually by their supervisors (S7-C1–President Interview, S7-C5–Performance Appraisal Admin, and S7-C5–Performance Appraisal Clerical Maintenance).

As described in Chapter 6, each unit submits an annual report at the end of each academic year that lays out achievements and challenges of the past year and sets goals for the coming year (S7-C5–VP Annual Report Template 2022-2023). The president reviews the report and discusses it with the division head (S7-C1–President Interview; S7-C4–Provost Interview). During a six-month review, the president considers progress and offers feedback (S7-C1–President Interview). Modes of gathering faculty input include periodic town hall meetings (for instance, as part of Arts and Sciences restructuring) or larger surveys, such as the one administered through the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education in spring 2024.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Fordham has experienced significant change in senior leadership over the past several years. This has created new opportunities for the institution to examine and assess all areas of governance and administration. Examples include the reorganization of Board of Trustee committees, efforts to strengthen key aspects of shared governance, and the Arts and Sciences Leadership Structure Project that aims to reimagine and revitalize this central area within Fordham's academic governance. To continue to strengthen how the University leads through its mission and further distinguishes itself as an institution dedicated to wisdom, learning, faith, and service, Fordham should do the following:

1. Continue efforts to enhance internal communications and build higher levels of trust, particularly between administration and faculty. The work of the Shared Governance Committee and Statutes Task Force should be encouraged and modeled. Consider organizing and holding an annual "orientation" on shared governance to ensure new faculty and administrators are knowledgeable about our commitment to this principle.

2. Formalize and share the results of assessment procedures of administrative units more widely.