

## MISSION EXAMEN SELF STUDY

January 2017

### PART I, PREFACE

#### The Process.

Seattle University marks its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary by undertaking, in the spirit of its founding vision, a Mission Examen review. Under the direction of the AJCU Examen Coordinating Committee, and at the request of the Superior General of the Jesuits, Seattle University entered into the Mission Examen process in the 2016–17 academic year.

Fr. Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J. appointed a Mission Examen Chair and a 14-person Mission Examen Planning Committee made up of administrators, faculty, staff, and students (see Appendix A). The Committee met roughly every two weeks in the fall quarter to coordinate the process and to advise the Chair. The Committee facilitated a series of input sessions to allow various segments of the campus community to reflect on what they see as mission strengths and mission challenges. The Planning Committee then used the data from these sessions, along with additional research, to draft this self-study document. The process is capped by the visit of the external peer review committee on February 15–17.

The first phase involved seeking input from more than 400 members of the University community, including trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Some input groups were large, 50–60 people, some were as small as three people. Participants in the input groups received an electronic copy of the 2010 AJCU document “Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument” along with a list of the seven characteristics as modified by the Committee to more accurately reflect the University’s conception of its mission. The Committee asked each group to address two questions: (1) “*What are the ways in which the spirit of our Jesuit, Catholic Mission finds expression in the life of Seattle University with regard to these seven characteristics?*”(2) “*What are the challenges we face as we seek to grow in the expression of our Jesuit, Catholic mission?*”

This phase of reflective listening constituted a crucial element of the process. Though not expressly emphasized in the process, the fundamental Examen feature of gratitude became abundantly evident in people’s comments. Members of the Seattle U community are deeply grateful for what they have found here. To ensure that the input sessions were reflective in the way the word “examen” suggests, and that each person’s voice was heard in response to the two questions posed, the larger gatherings were divided into groups of 10-12 respondents with a facilitator. At the beginning of the process, participants were asked to reflect quietly for a few minutes on the first question, then to respond one-by-one. The process was repeated for the second question. Facilitators recorded the responses, which were entered into a matrix that broke out the responses according to the seven characteristics.

## The Context

As already mentioned, the immediate context for Seattle U is the year-long celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University. A central contextual feature to keep in mind is that almost one-third of those 125 years – forty one years to be exact – have unfolded under the strong direction of two Jesuit presidents, Fr. William Sullivan (1976–1996) and current president Fr. Steve Sundborg, who was inaugurated in 1997. During the interim year between these two presidents, a highly respected administrator, Dr. John Eschelman, carried forward Fr. Sullivan’s vision and paved the way for his successor, assuring a seamless transition from one president to the next. The continuity of vision and the consistent strengthening of the University’s academic, fiscal, and spiritual condition provide an important backdrop for the discussions that follow. Respondents in the input session recognized over and over again the strong mission support from Fr. Sundborg. This strong continuous Jesuit leadership is surely a mission strength. It is also a challenge. As the University looks back at forty years of continuous, if not always smooth or trouble-free development, it contemplates the responsibility of providing for the continuance of strong leadership throughout the University as we look forward to the next twenty-five years.

A second contextual factor is the religious and cultural character of the northwest. This area is commonly recognized as the most unchurched in the country. The relative lack of religious commitment among people in the northwest is reflected in the University’s student body, faculty, and staff. Along with the lack of religious adherence goes a very liberal progressive way of looking at the world. In some ways this is a strength, in some ways a challenge. In either case, it is a factor that must be taken into account in looking at the way the Catholic, Jesuit mission is integrated into the life of the University. As the rest of the country moves more and more into this secularized form of culture, Seattle University provides a model of how a commitment to a Catholic and Jesuit vision can, through creative flexibility, thrive in the midst of a culture that is not altogether hospitable to the values it promotes. Seattle University has a way of drawing the members of its community into a vision that may not have been theirs when they entered.

It is also important to note as factors of contextual importance for this Self Study, two circumstances in the life of the University community that have come to a head in the past year and significantly influenced the conversation accompanying this Mission Examen. The first factor is the May–June 2016 protest of students from Matteo Ricci College (MRC) demanding the resignation of their dean and the reform of their curriculum. Students occupied the MRC offices, day and night, for three weeks. The dean first took an administrative leave, and then left her position. It was a dramatic intervention by the students and seriously challenged the University’s normal way of doing business. Mention of these events came up in many of the input sessions, often with unfavorable comments on how the administration handled the affair. The second factor that influenced input sessions is the ongoing effort by the SEIU to unionize the University’s part-time and full-time adjunct professors and the University’s refusal to allow the unionization to take place. The administration’s rationale for non-recognition of SEIU as a

bargaining agent for the adjunct faculty, that the NLRB does not have jurisdiction to enter into the affairs of a religious institution, seems to be little-understood by a significant number of faculty and staff. We have here two different ways of focusing on our Catholic identity. The administration wants to ensure that the University is recognized by the Federal Government as a religious institution, inclusively religious but still genuinely religious. Faculty, staff and students who have spoken publicly on the matter emphasize the Church's teaching about the rights of workers, including the right to unionize. The underlying tension between these positions runs through the input described below.

Related to these two issues mentioned above is an underlying tension, present before either of these issues arose but heightened by them, that recurred regularly in the input sessions: the tension between being *both* inclusive in the hiring of faculty and staff and recruiting of students on the one hand, *and*, on the other, Catholic and Jesuit in our foundational identity. For some, the concern is that the inclusiveness will dilute the Catholic, Jesuit identity; others fear that the Catholic identity – more than the Jesuit identity – contradicts their notion of social justice because of the Church's opposition to key elements of the progressive social justice agenda.

If Seattle University had entered into this Mission Examen process a year earlier than it did, the tone of the input would have had a different cast – but the underlying issues would have been the same. The heightening of tensions during this past year has actually served to highlight issues that the University must continue to take seriously. What has happened here during this past year reflects forces at work in higher education across the United States. They are ingredients of a new campus climate that demands new responses from leadership and all levels of the university community.

The Self-Study moves now to a listing of the mission strengths and mission challenges related to the seven characteristics for the AJCU document, "Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument" (2010). As noted above, the planning committee chose to modify the characteristics listed in the original document to better fit the current preoccupations and concerns of the University. The material under each of these modified characteristics clearly reflects input provided during the many listening sessions. But the Self-Study is more than a recording of what was said or a listing of opinions expressed. The input sessions, while valuable and informative, do not constitute an adequate reflection of where the university community as a whole stands. A more scientifically designed instrument would be needed to determine that. The crafters of the Self-Study document, all thoroughly familiar with the dynamics of the University, have appealed to their own knowledge and experience as well as to what they have heard.

## **PART II: SUMMARY OF DOMINANT MISSION STRENGTHS AND MISSION CHALLENGES**

### **MISSION STRENGTHS:**

*From the responses of the input sessions and from other reflections on the state of the University in this is 125<sup>th</sup> year, five dominant mission strengths can be discerned:*

- 1. Pervasive recognition and embrace of the University’s mission.**  
 The University’s faculty, staff, and students, especially those who have come to SU from other institutions of higher education, comment on the pervasiveness of mission awareness. Accreditation bodies, consultants, and program reviewers note the phenomenon. Some employees from the University Services area spoke of a friendliness and lack of aggressive behavior they had not found until coming to Seattle University. For others, the sensitivity to service and issues relating to social justice best typifies the mission consciousness. For still others it is the atmosphere of inclusiveness and respect for individual conscience. Many place a high value on the religious inspiration of the University and the broadness of that inspiration.
- 2. Integration of aspects of the Catholic, Jesuit character throughout the academic, co-curricular, and operational dimensions of the university.**  
 The University’s academic programs integrate the traditional Catholic, Jesuit commitments to philosophical and theological studies as well as more contemporary practices, such as service- learning, global awareness—including opportunities for foreign study—social analysis, and diversity studies. The University keeps alive the long Jesuit educational tradition of augmenting its commitment to traditional disciplines and the cumulative wisdom it has inherited by incorporating new areas of development opening up in our times.
- 3. A high level of service, social justice, and global awareness among faculty, staff, and students.**  
 The University’s commitment to these aspects of its mission is pervasive. Two examples illustrate the commitment. First is the **Seattle University Youth Initiative**, mentioned often in the input sessions and recorded below under the characteristics. This program, recognized by President Obama, serves at-risk students in the neighborhood adjacent to the University’s southern border. The program offers service-learning opportunities for SU students by providing learning-enhancement activities for the public primary, middle, and high school students in our area. The second example of the University’s commitment is offered through the Center for Jesuit Education’s Endowed Mission Fund. This fund allows as many as twenty or thirty faculty and staff to sponsor creative activities in the U.S. and abroad to help people living on the margins of society.
- 4. Collaboration among Jesuits and lay faculty and staff in providing programs to enhance awareness of and commitment to the University’s Catholic, Jesuit identity.**  
 This collaboration is pervasive in the university community and serves as the focus of the

University's Center for Jesuit Education and its Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture. This array of programs (mentioned under Characteristic Six, "Jesuit Presence and Lay Leadership Formation") has had a transformative effect on both Jesuits and lay companions on campus. These programs and activities constitute one of the principal ways in which the University comes to terms with the diminishing presence of Jesuits on campus. The growing number of lay leaders on campus at the same time that the number of Jesuits is decreasing can be attributed in large measure to these efforts.

**5. The University's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and institutional integrity.**

The importance of this area has been growing during recent years, at Seattle University as well as in other universities throughout the country. It is clear that the promise of the Civil Rights Movement is far from being realized. Racial sensitivity, interreligious awareness, and issues surrounding gender have grown, not lessened, in importance. Defects in our own performance in these areas have moved the University to face these challenges in the ways described under Characteristic Seven below. Attention to these aspects of our university culture promise to continue in coming years and the University is prepared to learn and to honor its commitments.

**MISSION CHALLENGES:**

**1. Maintaining the University's commitment to the Catholic, Jesuit character of the University during the next twenty-five years and beyond.**

The University finds itself in the midst of an era of change that continues to challenge its Catholic, Jesuit identity. The aging of Jesuits who, from the beginning, have played and continue to play such an important role in maintaining what President Sundborg has called "the soul of the University," will require ever greater attention to the development of lay commitment to the Catholic, Jesuit character of the University and lay leadership throughout the University. Part of this commitment must be the claiming of our Catholic and Jesuit character as pervasive in all areas of the University, not just the theology faculties and Campus Ministry.

**2. Increased intentionality in mission-focused hiring, promotion and development for faculty and staff, and clear communication of our Jesuit Catholic mission.** Within the multifaceted religious context of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest, Seattle University has a unique challenge to maintain our Jesuit Catholic heritage and mission, even as we embrace a diversity of religious experiences in our faculty, staff and students. What is the best way to communicate this reality to prospective students and parents, to prospective faculty and staff employees, and to the broader public? What are the best ways for us to preserve our founding religious inspiration, while continuing to welcome

the rich diversity of students, faculty and staff who compose our community, with a special attention to our hiring and promotion/development practices?

**3. Polarization between the administration and some elements of the university community calls for increased efforts to build procedures of mutual listening, respect, and openness as we face together a challenging future in higher education.**

At the beginning of his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola lays out an important guiding principle:

*That both the giver and the receiver of the Spiritual Exercises may be of greater help and benefit to each other, it should be supposed that every good Christian [and every person of good will] ought to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbor's statement than to condemn it. Further, if one cannot interpret it favorably, one should ask how the other person means it. If that meaning is wrong, one should correct the person with love; and if this is not enough, one should search every appropriate means through which, by understanding the statement in a good way, it may be saved.*

In order to move forward in the directions the University needs to go, it must go as a community of love and respect. Profound differences of judgment will still exist in such a community but they will be held together by the understanding that people committed to the same good end may look toward different means of realizing the goal. Such an understanding rejects the rules of engagement that characterize so much of the social and political exchange that take place in public life.

**4. In this era of social change, the University must continue to build its capacity to engage with students, faculty, and staff on timely issues of transparency and effectiveness.** University leadership needs to recognize the new activism of students, staff, and faculty as being grounded in a sincere commitment to the University's Catholic, Jesuit mission and find ways to continue the conversation in the atmosphere described in Characteristic Three below.

**5. A recurring challenge heard in the input sessions of fall 2016 is the strain put on university life, student access, and program support by limited financial resources.** People who spoke highly of the educational opportunities made available at the University lamented the fact that many students who could most profit from these opportunities are denied access by lack of financial resources. The University is squeezed in its operational resources, students are squeezed during their time here and as they move out from the University with their degrees, and some simply can't get in the doors.

## PART II, THE SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS

*Readers of this document will note that some programs are mentioned under more than one characteristic. This is because they have implications in different areas. The Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture, for instance, offers programs that relate to the academic life (Characteristic 2), a Catholic Jesuit Campus Culture (Characteristic 3), and service to the local church (characteristic 5). The repeated mention of these programs also shows how widely recognized they are by the various groups interviewed.*

### **Characteristic One: LEADERSHIP'S COMMITMENT TO MISSION**

First, it is of importance to note that the input groups queried responded to this question almost universally by measuring whether university leadership was meeting the claims of our mission, vision and values statement: that we are “dedicated to educating the whole person, to professional formation, and to empowering leaders for a just and humane world.” It is a mission statement that inherently – though not explicitly – invokes our Jesuit and Catholic heritage, and perhaps because of this, the responses from our groups focused more on these attributes and less on explicitly Jesuit and Catholic ones.

Overall, the input groups expressed a **divided vision of how leadership is fulfilling the demands of our mission**. While many asserted that leadership does a good job of both communicating the mission and making it manifest through various campus institutions and activities, there was also a clear feeling that leadership has made decisions that many in our campus community see as failing to accord with mission. As one respondent said, “while leadership may understand the mission, they do not always live it.” This perceived tension between the leadership’s espousal of and emphasis on mission and its inconsistency in implementing the mission in its actions and decisions is the most significant tension running through the responses of the input groups regarding this characteristic.

### **MISSION STRENGTHS**

1. Many respondents found much good to say about leadership’s commitment to mission. For example, there was much sentiment that **Fr. Sundborg’s leadership** and the **strong Jesuit presence on campus** were very valuable in maintaining a clear focus on our Jesuit mission and an emphasis on a Jesuit, inclusive, and values-based education. Leadership’s support of such institutions as the **Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture** and the **Arrupe Seminars** and such activities as the **Mass of the Holy Spirit** and **Mission Day** were also seen as important to maintaining our Jesuit and Catholic identity.
2. Many university employees appreciated that they were introduced to the University mission upon employment through our **Employee Orientation program**. They were also impressed by leadership’s continued emphasis on mission throughout their employment,

that **hiring for mission fit** was a priority on campus, and that they were encouraged to pursue opportunities to engage in **mission-oriented community service**.

3. Input groups also saw a strong commitment by leadership to the **mission's emphasis on service, social justice, and community engagement** in the University curriculum and undergraduate learning outcomes, especially in the new University Core Curriculum. Many appreciated leadership's commitment to addressing outstanding issues surrounding diversity in response to the 2015 Campus Climate Survey.
4. Input groups also pointed to leadership's support of such institutions as the **Seattle University Youth Initiative** and the **Center for Community Engagement** as demonstrating a commitment to lived mission.
5. Most importantly, input groups often expressed that leadership not only understood the mission very well, but also took it into account when **making decisions, especially those concerning curriculum, hiring, and social justice initiatives**.

## MISSION CHALLENGES

1. There was some concern that **leadership does not present the mission as explicitly Catholic and faith-based as might be wished**, and SU is therefore in danger of losing its intellectual and moral foundation, especially as the number of Jesuits on campus diminishes. The elimination of the Vice President for Ministry's position was troubling to some, as was the probability that our next president will not be a Jesuit. There was also a degree of anxiety that future leadership hires might not emphasize mission.
2. Many also expressed the **need for more women and people of color in positions of leadership**, and see leadership at top levels still too white and too male. The perception is important, but it needs to be measured against the fact that five of our eleven cabinet members are women, and five of the ten deans are women.
3. Some members of the SU community articulated a perceived **tension between the University's Catholic, Jesuit identity and social justice** – including perceived incongruities between the mission and the actions of the leadership of the institution. One salient example is the **unionization matter involving contingent faculty**. Many respondents highlighted the tension regarding the University's NLRB stance and the social justice dimensions of the mission. There is a fair amount of animation and a sense that this exemplifies the institution's lack of respect for the circumstances around humane treatment of many in our community.
4. Some have identified **the lack of a defined strategy of shared governance** as contributing to confusion and frustration among some students, faculty, and staff regarding how decisions are made, including a lack of transparency in the decision-making process, a "top down" management style, and poor communication. A vocal



group of students in input sessions shared that they felt their voices have been ignored, and that leadership has failed to engage robustly on several social justice issues. They see a significant difference between what is presented to them as SU mission and what is delivered. The **handling of last spring's Matteo Ricci sit-in** also received criticism. Two kinds of criticism emerged. Some within the University who were sympathetic to the students' point of view felt that the administration had failed to listen to the critical voices that had been raised for some time and was not sufficiently open about what was happening when the protest took the form of occupying the MRC offices. Many outside the University, alumni and others, believed that the administration was too tolerant and should not have allowed the student protest to go as far as it did.

## Characteristic Two: ACADEMIC LIFE

### MISSION STRENGTHS

1. Seattle University's **Mission, Vision, and Values Statement** includes several academic goals for itself as part of its Catholic, Jesuit character: First, **as its mission**, the University is "dedicated to educating the whole person, to professional formation, and to empowering leaders for a just and human world." This includes **its vision** as "the premier independent university of the Northwest in academic quality, Jesuit Catholic inspiration, and service to society." Among **its values** are several that drive its academic quality: **Care** for student, **Academic Excellence** in learning, teaching and scholarship, **Diversity** of students, faculty and staff, **Faith** both within its Jesuit Catholic ethos and the many faiths of its university community, **Justice** as a prime concern of its academic life, and **Leadership** on the part of its students in promoting the common good.

This Mission has been fostered over the past ten years by a two-part **Academic Strategic Action Plan** (2009–14 and 2013–16) that reached its eight goals, which are included in the programs centers, institutes, scholarship and student supports listed in the following sections 2 to 5:

2. The following **programs** have been developed from the Strategic Action Plan within the University mission: First, a **new Undergraduate Core Curriculum** was created by the faculty and implemented in 2013 to foster liberal education in the Jesuit tradition, with special emphasis on inquiry-based learning, global themes including justice and diversity, communication skills in writing and speaking, critical thinking, ethical and spiritual reflection, and whole person education through the inclusion of the range of disciplinary knowledge in 14 courses: written composition, humanities (literature and history based), fine arts, science, mathematics, social science, philosophy/ethics, theology, and a senior synthesis.

The **Matteo Ricci College** was founded in the late 1970s as a 3-3 high school/college humanities BA program with Seattle Preparatory School, with a special emphasis on Jesuit goals and learning methods. Recently, it has begun to re-fashion itself, but has kept several important mission components, including courses in "Jesuit Education"; "Leadership, Ethics, and Discernment"; and "Leadership, Discernment, and Global Engagement" all with a diversity and justice focus.

**Graduate Programs** in Law, Education, Business, Software Engineering, Theology and Ministry, Psychology, Counseling, Criminal Justice, and others. Most of these include a course in ethics, study of global and diversity issues of justice, and professional formation. The School of Theology and Ministry is Catholic, ecumenical, and inter-religious; it also sponsors programs for the wider religious community in the area, e.g. the Search for Meaning Annual Book Festival, lecture series, inter-religious dialogues, etc.

Global programs relevant for mission are the **Study Abroad Programs**, including those in Mexico and France, China, Zambia, Ireland, Nicaragua. More recently, several summer abroad courses (linked to on campus study in the previous spring quarter) have arisen: several in China, Zambia, Ireland, Paris, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and others. Also, the University sponsors **Immersion Programs** to study and work for shorter periods in Latin America, often with Jesuit and Catholic enterprises in places like Nicaragua, El Salvador, Belize, or Mexico. The **Office of Global Engagement** has also taken leadership in coordinating global programs.

3. Academic **Centers and Institutes for Scholarship, Learning, and Action** include the Center for the Study of Justice in Society; the Center for Global Justice (School of Law); the Center for Poverty Education (Matteo Ricci College); the Bearle Center on Corporations, Law, and Society; the Center for Indian Law and Policy (School of Law); the Center for Leadership Formation (Albers School of Business and Economics); the Center for Service and Community Engagement; the Korematsu Center for Law and Equity (School of Law); the Center for the Study of Sport and Exercise; and most recently, the Center for Religious Wisdom & World Affairs (School of Theology and Ministry). **Institutes** established in recent years include the Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture, the Institute for Access to Justice, and the Institute for Environmental Justice and Sustainability.
4. Many of the centers and institutes listed above provide **funding for faculty scholarship**, with dozens of grants awarded each year. The Research and Grants Office also has assisted faculty in gaining many external grants for research in the past ten years. The largest grant received recently is a **2016 National Science Foundation ‘advance it’ Grant** that provides \$2.3 million for the project “What Counts as Success? Recognizing and Rewarding Women Faculty’s Differential Contributions in a Comprehensive Liberal Arts University,” designed to increase representation of women and underrepresented minorities in science, social, science, and engineering careers.
5. **Learning support** for students, faculty and staff at Seattle U is central to the university’s academic excellence. The **Residential Learning Communities** program clusters all first-year students with faculty advisors in groups (in the Residential Halls) according to academic interests. Annually, more than 2000 students take one or more **Service Learning** class, which enhance their in-class learning through service projects related to their academic courses.

Additionally, **Faculty/Staff Academic Development for Mission** has been fostered by such formation programs as the **Arrupe Seminar** (which has reached 30 faculty and staff a year for twelve years on the subject of Jesuit higher education), the **Summer Justice Seminar** (which has led 10 faculty a year for 15 years in the study of Catholic social thought and other justice inquiry), and the **Colleagues In Jesuit Education Program**, a

quarterly evening lecture, discussion, and dinner program that has reached faculty and staff for nearly thirty years.

In addition to these programs, the **Teaching/Learning Center** has for decades provided workshops, programs, individual counseling, and other ways for faculty to improve the teaching/learning process. In particular, the Center has taught the **Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm** to most new faculty, as well as to the entire faculty of a school/college at the request of the dean. The Center for Digital Learning and Innovation (CDLI) relies heavily on the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm in developing its programs. The recently revamped **University Advising Systems** has improved its method of helping students in the selection of classes and in getting help from the University **Learning Center and Writing Center**.

All of these aspects of the academic mission have helped the University significantly improve its enrollment, retention rate, inclusion of a diverse student body, and a successful career and life preparation program. These components in turn have raised Seattle U's standing in the annual evaluations by *U. S. New and World Report* (usually #6 among the 130 comprehensive universities in the West), and by the *Wall Street Journal* (#2 among Jesuits universities in the West and #6 in the country among the 28 Jesuit universities).

## MISSION CHALLENGES

1. **Many faculty are committed to the teaching and scholarship of justice issues, but some have difficulty in knowing how to link that with faith or spirituality.**
2. Another challenge is a perceived “siloe” atmosphere, with **separation among schools and colleges** (or between undergraduate and graduate programs, or between tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty).
3. The current tension in the world and in academia about issues of **cultural diversity** has raised challenges for a university to provide an environment for discussion and teaching/learning about such issues.
4. Another challenge is the need for greater **collegiality among faculty, and between faculty and administrators** in some parts of the University.
5. A final major challenge is the need to **hire and foster faculty and staff for the SU Mission**, especially finding candidates who have familiarity with and interest in issues important to Catholic, Jesuit higher education.

**Characteristic Three: A CATHOLIC, JESUIT CAMPUS CULTURE  
COMMITTED TO FORMATION AND EDUCATION OF THE WHOLE PERSON**

**MISSION STRENGTHS**

1. Seattle University offers opportunities that **support and challenge students in their individual and communal journey toward wholeness** and tools to carry this into their futures.

The University offers services that reflect the value of ‘educating the whole person’ in the spirit of our Jesuit roots. The definition of “whole person” in the Catholic, Jesuit tradition is described as the integration of the intellectual, personal/social, and spiritual lives.

The **Division of Student Development** is dedicated to this value, and its offerings include Counseling and Psychological Services, Integrity Formation, Residence Life, Campus Ministry programs and pastoral care, Resident Ministry, and University Recreation. The **Office of the Provost** oversees Career Services, Disability Services, and the Center for Community Engagement. **Alumni** are provided these services through **Magis: Alumni Living the Mission** and **Contemplative Leaders in Action**. **Athletics** is an area of great personal challenge and growth for students, strongly supported by staff and coaches. Student-athletes are offered spiritual, personal, and intellectual opportunities including retreats, fellowships, and service opportunities.

These and other programs and services promote direct care of students who are in need, but also challenge students to reflect on their lives as a whole, encouraging them to see and create connections between their personal growth, intellectual engagement, and spiritual lives. In discussion groups, staff, faculty, and students all referenced the care that they experienced from the services offered through the university, and more importantly from individuals within the campus community.

2. **Seattle University seeks to integrate the academic domain of learning with service, vocational discernment, professional development and civic and global awareness.**

Seattle University offers **experiences in which students learn from one another as they engage in group projects**. Some areas where this is evident include the Center for Community Engagement, Learning Communities, Outdoor Adventure Recreation, Immersions, the Office of Global Engagement, Career Services, and on-campus employment opportunities. Many of the departments or services include language about including classroom, campus, and community in their mission statement as a way of showing the commitment to learning through all facets of students’ lives.

**Service learning** is integrated into academics and other student experiences. As stated on the Center for Community Engagement Website, “Service-learning helps prepare you for a lifetime of civic engagement and leadership. In addition, service-learning is an important learning tool that allows you to apply the concepts, theories and other material

covered in class. The community becomes a text for the class and is as critical to “read” as other textbooks.”

During input sessions, respondents indicated their belief that **faculty and staff welcome open discussion and diverse experiences**. Additionally, faculty and staff can facilitate discussion within the classroom, working group, organization, etc. that allows the opportunity to practice, not just theorize. Students deepen the connections within their micro-communities and also move on to new opportunities to gain experience in many different areas for growth. Some examples include spiritual retreats, clubs and organizations, and other student-led efforts that value the growth opportunities given when **students are actively involved in the learning process**.

3. In the spirit of Ignatian leadership, the University provides opportunities for **leadership connected with formation of skills and attitudes** that create leaders for the future.

Student leadership formation is an integral part of the values of the University. The Division of Student Development “encourages the holistic support of students. To facilitate the growth of the next generation of leaders, we promote the development of strong multicultural competence, faith exploration, and personal development.” Some of the areas in which this is evident include: the Center for Student Involvement and iLead, Student Government at Seattle University, Ignatian Scholars, Sullivan Scholars, Costco Scholars, on-campus employment, internships, and lay leadership formation of religious groups including the Muslim Student Association, Catholic life, Christian fellowships, and the Jewish Student Union. Students have many opportunities to get involved that have leadership components to them – from organizing events to working in the fitness center or being a member of student government. The student leadership development program, iLead, was created to coordinate the efforts of the student leaders across campus so there is common learning occurring that enhances their ability to lead in the future.

Within those leadership positions, students are seen as being able to live the mission and take initiative to make positive change in their communities. According to community members, students have opportunities to guide and shape the campus community in ways that make sense to enhance their experience. Student leaders are encouraged to ask questions, make decisions, and learn through success and challenge in their positions.

4. The University’s **Students for Life Club**, formally recognized by the student government and advised by a faculty representative, engages in a wide variety of activities to call attention to the broad spectrum of life issues. On campus presentations and debates have called attention to different aspects of the pro-life agenda. A recent event featuring a debate on various Catholic positions on abortion drew a large audience and produced a lively dialogue. Students have attended national and local events focusing on life issues, most recently a gathering at the state capitol in Olympia.

5. SU embodies its Catholic, Jesuit mission through **architecture, events and traditions** that are integral to the life of the University. Some programs, events, and opportunities that reflect this ideal include: the Arrupe seminar, Colleagues in Jesuit Education, Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture lectures and events, all-university liturgical gatherings to mark joys and sorrows (Mass of Holy Spirit, Baccalaureate, Memorials, Trans day of Remembrance, and prayers for national and international tragedies), and meetings beginning or ending with reflection and prayer. These elements of university life invite the community to reflect on our Catholic heritage, our evolving experience of that heritage, and the Jesuit traditions that serve as a living legacy of our foundation. Notably, community members identified the presence of Jesuits on campus, in residence halls, and lay resident ministers as indicators of how the University embodies its Catholic, Jesuit nature. Also identified multiple times was the Core Curriculum, with its focus on the liberal arts, as seeking to instill in students and the campus culture this element of the mission. The visual markers on campus that identify SU's Catholic, Jesuit heritage include the Chapel of St. Ignatius and other chapels on campus, the fountain, multiple crosses, artwork, and the beautiful gardens and landscaping.

## MISSION CHALLENGES

1. **SU's ability to operationalize "care for the whole person" is inhibited by the reality of the University's resources**, specifically the inability to provide four years of on-campus housing to undergraduates (and overcrowding in residence halls), high demand on Counseling and Psychological Services, and high tuition rates. The level of care promised to incoming students may also create an atmosphere in which students' expectations can never be matched by the services provided. This leads to the challenge of instilling in students a sense of personal responsibility and accountability.
2. Community members explicitly referenced "Jesuit" as the source of Seattle U's formative environment for students, and the basis for "caring for the whole person." They did not as frequently identify "Catholic" as an element of this care and formation. **It seems very comfortable for the SU community to claim "Jesuit" absent a clearly-articulated understanding of the how the mission is also "Catholic."**
3. While the intent is for the learning experience to be integrated holistically across campus, community members have said the institution needs to work to have more interactions between students, faculty, and staff to realize this goal. One of the common challenges people voiced was the growing size of the institution. It is believed that the University is becoming more premier or elite at the expense of the relational aspects that were possible when it was smaller. **Each individual office, department, school, or college may have a piece of the mission within it, but those pieces do not always work in coordination with each other.**

4. **Student voice concerning making effective change within the community is thought by some community members to be limited by policies and tradition within the university.** One example given was the modification of the student protest policy, which clarified the space available for students to demonstrate. Additionally, there is a need for more faculty and staff guidance and advising of clubs and organizations to help students navigate their leadership journey.
5. Some respondents also described what they see as a **less-than vigorous emphasis regarding our Catholic heritage.** Suggested reasons for this include the fact that there are so few Catholic students, staff, and faculty, and the prevalence in the Northwest of people with no traditional faith practice or background. In some areas of university life there appears to be a reluctance to highlight the Catholic heritage of the school (examples given: marketing and admissions materials and Student Government). There seems to be a lack of appreciation of the complexity of the relationships between the institutions of the Society of Jesus, the Roman Catholic Church, and an institution of higher education.
6. The embodiment of the Catholic, Jesuit mission at SU most frequently embraced by some students, faculty and staff is the appropriation of the “social justice mission.” The definition of this element of the mission appears to be quite relative to individual interpretation. We found a **paucity of common understanding by the community of what constitutes a “social justice mission” at a Catholic, Jesuit institution, or Seattle University specifically.**



## Characteristic Four: SERVICE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

At Seattle University there is a strong commitment to service and justice at the local, regional, and global levels. This commitment is articulated in our mission statement and values, embraced by those who comprise the University community, and for a number of students as well as faculty and staff, is one of the reasons that they choose to study or work at Seattle University.

### MISSION STRENGTHS

1. **Service-learning** is embraced as a valuable pedagogy, and is facilitated by a well-resourced Center for Community Engagement, and strengthened by faculty development vehicles such as the Service Learning Fellows program.
2. The **Core Curriculum** design, discussed under Characteristic Two, expresses this local/global commitment. Professional schools include clinics and community engagement elements in their curricula, and faculty frequently engage such issues in class using reflective practices and critical engagement.
3. **Co-curricular activities** including local service and international and national immersion opportunities. Student advocacy efforts provide a breadth and depth of engagement opportunities for students.
4. **Faculty and staff have development opportunities** for this mission emphasis through a range of programs (locally and globally), and the University has a Community Service Leave Benefit to facilitate staff involvement.
5. The University invests in **scholarships** with a specific intention of making our education accessible, and also has developed **centers and institutes** that reflect this commitment.
6. The Office of **Global Engagement** and Education Abroad provide global learning, service, and scholarship opportunities for students, with particular emphasis on cultivating relationships with Jesuit universities and ministries in Central America, South Asia, and Southeast Africa.
7. Of particular note at the local level is the **Seattle University Youth Initiative (SUYI)**. This program is a university-wide undertaking to partner with public schools in the neighborhood community to advance educational opportunities for underserved youth and their families, many of whom represent incomes below the poverty level and/or who are immigrants or other traditionally marginalized populations. SUYI staff engage significant percentages of our students and faculty in this project, and are very conscious of the importance of developing cultural competence and mutual respect as the way to foster a spirit of true collaboration.

**MISSION CHALLENGES:**

1. As mentioned in the introduction to this document (2-3), the current contextual reality of the University includes two important areas of tension focused on justice issues – **unionization** of contingent faculty, and **racial justice** in the SU community, the classroom, and the curriculum. In both cases, there is a lively, ongoing engagement among faculty, students, administrators, and staff about how to advance as a university. Regarding unionization, voices from the University leadership and from faculty/staff/students cite our Catholic, Jesuit mission in support of differing positions, **reflecting both the strong interest in our mission, as well as the challenge of applying it.** Regarding racial justice, the university has taken some concrete steps to address this area, though others in the University community seek more engagement and investment.
2. Other areas of growth also exist. One is the **importance of linking faith with the commitment to service and justice**, to more accurately reflect the Jesuit mission emphasis on “the service of faith and the promotion of justice.” More can be done to clarify and strengthen this link, and to help faculty, staff, and students more fully to understand and embrace this relationship.
3. Another is the challenge of **approaching service in a mature fashion that promotes mutual respect and understanding, recognizing power imbalances and cultural and racial differences.** Efforts are underway to prepare students more intentionally for service in the community, in order to help make the encounter more mutually enriching.
4. Finally, **educational accessibility for those of modest incomes** remains a challenge at Seattle University. Even with the significant scholarship investments that are being made, many students and families are unable to attend the University due to cost. This is a challenge we share with many other Jesuit and independent universities, but we do want to recognize it here.

## **Characteristic Five: SERVICE TO THE LOCAL CHURCH AND A CONNECTION TO THE WIDER GLOBAL CHURCH**

### **MISSION STRENGTHS**

During one input session, the observation was offered that “the category ‘Service to the Local Church’ is outside the consciousness of most people on campus. People generally don’t think about this area and have little awareness of what we do.” That being said, there are a number of ways in which SU is of service to the local church and connects to the wider global church. **The role of the University as an academic resource for the local church** is lived out most significantly through the following relationships and engagements:

1. **The School of Theology and Ministry** has trained many lay leaders in the local Catholic Church who now serve in roles at parishes, the archdiocese, Catholic schools, hospitals, and social service organizations, as well as other ecumenical and interfaith communities and organizations.
2. **Matteo Ricci College** serves the local Catholic schools by offering college-credit courses to the Catholic high schools and collaborating with the Mission Office of the archdiocese on the education of 7<sup>th</sup> graders on the social justice dimension of faith through the Missionary Discipleship Program, among other engagements.
3. In addition to training future teachers and administrators of Catholic Schools more generally, the **College of Education** continues to be in conversation with leaders in Catholic education about programs to address the specific preparation needs of future administrators of the schools.
4. One of the articulated goals of **The Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture (ICTC)** is to “serve the wider community as a crossroads for vibrant discourse on Catholicism in all its richness and texture.” ICTC has worked toward this goal by offering public lectures, study groups, and faculty expertise to local communities as well as working collaboratively with local faith leaders to offer resources available at the University to advance critical conversations for the local community and to the broader Church. ICTC is intentionally building relationships with the local Catholic Church through lay leaders, clergy, and the hierarchy.
5. **The Chapel of St. Ignatius**, under the direction of Campus Ministry, welcomes the broader community to its daily and Sunday liturgies, provides opportunities for reconciliation, performs weddings, and celebrates significant occasions.
6. **The Campus Ministry Office** also has multiple connections to the archdiocese, from work with St. James Cathedral Kitchen to connections with Catholic Relief Services. The Office organizes activities that connect students with the global church, like attendance at World Youth Day and Immersion trips to Nicaragua. These activities include

engagement with Base Ecclesial Communities and also serve an ethnically diverse and international Catholic student population.

7. The members of the **Arrupe Jesuit Community** members preside over liturgy and offer retreats, talks and spiritual direction to parishes, Catholic schools, and other groups in the archdiocese. They maintain contact with and support work in Zambia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, India, Mexico, and many other places. Some offer their expertise on the intersection of Catholicism and cultures in national and international contexts. The community is also proud to welcome international Jesuits to campus.
8. Each year, an annual gathering is held that includes President Sundborg, the faculties of the School of Theology and Ministry and the Theology department, together with the local ordinary and the auxiliary bishop. **This annual dialogue is held to create a space for interaction between the Archdiocese and the University.**

### MISSION CHALLENGES

1. While engagement with the local church can be easily identified, the fact remains that a **Catholic university's role to serve the local and global church is not one that is widely known by the university community** nor publicly named by the institution.
2. Some respondents find a tension between academic freedom on the one hand and the Catholic identity of the institution on the other, between the status of Catholics and of those of other faith traditions (or who do not identify with a faith tradition), between Jesuit and Catholic. **At times tensions between the local ordinary and the university have arisen that reflect the differences of viewpoints about the mission of a Catholic, Jesuit university**, for which academic freedom has a prime value.
3. Some have observed that there is an absence of or avoidance of the term "Catholic" in SU's marketing. This avoidance may reflect an awareness of an ambivalence of the Catholic Church's image in the broader American culture. **The connection of Seattle U's commitment to social justice, interreligious dialogue, and diversity and inclusion are not understood in relation to the Catholic Church's mission and the Catholic university's role within this broader mission of the Church.**
4. The challenges that exist for Seattle University in relationship to "service to the local and wider global church," are also shaped significantly by **the University's location in the most unchurched region of the country**, and by the fact that only about one-third of the current student body identifies as Catholic, and fewer still identify as practicing.

At Seattle U, the local context makes clear that to be Catholic is to be ecumenical and interreligious, and to serve "the church" includes service to and engagement with the plurality of local faith and spiritual communities. An understanding of the mission of a Catholic university as

the place where faith and reason, religion and culture, and church and world are brought into dialogue suggests that the diversity found within Seattle University and its local context is fertile ground for discovering ways to serve the Catholic Church, local and global, so as to enable the Church to faithfully live into its mission in our diverse and plural world.

Seattle University has an important opportunity to lead the way in enacting and communicating an understanding of Catholicism that is deeply informed by Vatican II and the Pontificate of Pope Francis. This understanding invites dialogue with religions and cultures that is informed by the wealth of knowledge gained through academic scholarship and by a special concern for the most vulnerable, so as to enable the Catholic Church to more authentically proclaim the Gospel of love.

## **Characteristic Six: JESUIT PRESENCE AND LAY LEADERSHIP FORMATION**

The long-standing commitment to lay collaboration by the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus has set the stage for a robust and collaborative relationship between the Arrupe Jesuit Community and the lay faculty, staff, and students at Seattle U. The University is blessed with a strong cohort of Jesuits whose presence enlivens our Catholic, Jesuit mission, and whose partnership with lay leaders has enabled a broad and diverse network of stewards and carriers of this mission.

### **MISSION STRENGTHS**

1. **Jesuit Presence:** Seattle University benefits from a very positive relationship with its resident Jesuits, something this community appreciates greatly and does not take for granted. The gift of Jesuit presence – in the residence halls, as Jesuit assistants in the Albers School of Business and Economics and in the School of Law, on the Board of Trustees, as faculty in academic departments, as retreat leaders, as chaplains to athletic teams and alumni – is deeply cherished by the Seattle University community. The campus feels especially fortunate to have Jesuits present in the lives of students. The Jesuit Opportunity Fund that allows for the hiring of qualified Jesuits in departments that do not have already funded lines for these positions was named as a key piece of making possible a robust presence on our campus.

The Jesuits not only show great generosity of spirit as collaborators, presenters, consultants, and spiritual directors, but they lead us in the spirit of St. Ignatius, by their example and their witness. The hospitality of the Jesuits as hosts of the New Faculty Social and the Ignatius Day Breakfast were noted as examples of the inclusivity, openness, and welcome experienced by faculty and staff colleagues.

2. **The University enjoys a strong relationship with the Society of Jesus at the local, regional, national and international level.** SU is pleased to have strong ties to the local Provincial and to the wider U.S. Assistancy, along with a commitment to share experiences of international General Congregation gatherings with the local community (for example, a recent presentation by GC delegates to our local Seattle-Tacoma leaders of Jesuit works).
3. **Vocation Discernment.** To encourage men to discern a vocation to the priesthood, the University works with the Jesuit vocational director to advertise vocational discernment opportunities to Catholic students. All students are invited to consider their vocational calling through a series of programs (sponsored by Career Services in partnership with other offices) that promote discernment. Faculty and staff, as well, are encouraged to reflect on their vocations – for example, the Albers School of Business and Economics sponsored a series entitled “The Vocation of the Business Leader.” A further sign of the

fruits of the vocational discernment offerings at SU are the many SU alumni living lives of service, justice, and leadership in many contexts.

4. **The Center for Jesuit Education** provides a wide range of formation programs and leadership development opportunities in the Jesuit mission for faculty and staff throughout the university. These are offered in a broad range of formats and include: Colleagues in Jesuit Education, Ignatian fall retreat, Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life, New Staff Orientation, Women in Mission, Nicaragua and India Immersion programs, New Employee Orientation, Jesuit Mission Fellows, Mission Day, the Endowed Mission Fund, the Justice Conference gatherings, and others. Customized programs to animate the Jesuit mission in various departments, offices, and divisions are designed and offered on a regular basis. Specific leadership development programs include the Ignatian Colleagues Program, the AJCU Leadership Seminar, and the Collegium program.
5. **The Arrupe Seminar on the Foundations and Vision of Jesuit Education** was often mentioned as a foundational and animating experience for the faculty and staff at SU. The Seminar, housed in the Center for Jesuit Education, consists of fifteen sessions spread across the academic year. It introduces between 30 and 40 faculty and staff each year, broken into two sections, to basic texts of the Society of Jesus and invites them to explore connections with their own experience in higher education.
6. **Other programs mentioned as powerful opportunities for formation include:** the Catholic Heritage Lectures, Ignatian retreats for students, liturgical events, sacramental preparation, Catholic Faith Formation, the New Faculty Institute, and the School of Theology and Ministry.

## MISSION CHALLENGES

1. **The declining numbers of Jesuits**, and how the anticipated diminishment of their numbers on our campus will impact our ability to carry forward the distinctiveness of our Jesuit education, was mentioned numerous times during input sessions. Several people expressed sadness and concern about this reality, noting a desire for transparent, strategic conversation and planning around the eventual further decline in Jesuit presence on our campus, so that the special character of our university, which combines the intellectual life with spiritual pursuit and action for justice, can be preserved. The possible transition from a Jesuit to a non-Jesuit president is a particularly important instance of this decline of Jesuits.
2. Respondents in input sessions encouraged **the expansion of formation programs to more people across campus**, including non-tenured faculty and administrative staff. This expansion would need to be coupled with encouragement from supervisors to enable interested employees to attend these programs as part of their professional development. Several people noted that faculty in particular need a more robust orientation to Jesuit

education, as not much time is available for a “deep dive” during the New Faculty Institute. It was also noted that developing a greater investment in staff around mission would help retain those who are best suited to our mission, vision, and values.

3. Some groups noted that the practice of **hiring for mission** is a pervasive practice across campus. Others expressed the need for more clarity and breadth around hiring for mission. There is a sense that the University could embrace more strongly the Catholic aspect of our mission and do more to hire and promote people who understand it deeply.



## **Characteristic Seven: UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION, AND INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY**

The University seeks to foster an institutional culture where there is no dichotomy between its values of diversity and inclusion, and its goals of educational quality and excellence. Building on its Catholic, Jesuit roots and heritage, it advances these aims of inclusive excellence by providing an academically rigorous educational experience that cultivates curiosity and the transformational development of the whole person, providing a welcoming campus environment that honors the dignity of all those who live, learn, and work here. Inspired by the Catholic, Jesuit orientation toward open dialogue, acceptance, and care of the soul, Seattle U has a strong commitment to creating a culture that not only values differences but leverages the multiplicity of identities, faiths, experiences, and perspectives in the pursuit of preparing students to understand, live among, and contribute to a just and humane world.

### **MISSION STRENGTHS:**

1. **At Seattle University there is a noteworthy commitment among administrators, faculty, staff, and students to build a diverse and inclusive culture with respect to religious practices and faith traditions.** This is, in part, unavoidable: Seattle U is in the Pacific Northwest, the part of the country with one of the greatest concentration of “nones” – those without religious affiliation – and our student body reflects this environment (just under 30% of undergraduates identify as Catholic). The Pacific Northwest is, many think, a bell-weather, in the sense that it represents the future of the United States as a whole. During input sessions, respondents noted the University-wide focus on and commitment to student formation, the diversity of religious practices represented among our colleagues and in the student body, and programming to support students from many traditions:
  - a. **A full-time interfaith minister in Campus Ministry**, who coordinates a variety of interfaith dinners, social action groups, and prayer gatherings.
  - b. **An active Zen Buddhist community, called the Eco-Sangha.**
  - c. **The School of Theology and Ministry (STM)**, which has a full-time assistant dean for ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. STM educates the clergy of eleven different Protestant denominations, and has extensive outreach to Muslim, Jewish, and other religious groups in the Puget Sound area. STM has recently received grant funding to establish the Center for Religious Wisdom and World Affairs. The School also hosts the Seattle U’s annual Book Festival, all-day event that draws between 2000–3000 people to hear a variety of authors read from their works.
  - d. The University has recently launched, with the help of significant support from generous donors, the **Indigenous Peoples Institute (IPI)**, which promotes Native

cultures and religions, and supports the University's growing native student population. This is a dramatic development of the Oregon Province's long-standing commitment to the Native Peoples of the Northwest.

- e. **The University's Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture (ICTC)** keeps the ecumenical and interreligious dimension in mind in its program planning. The University's Interreligious Dialogue Initiative (IDI), housed in ICTC, fosters dialogue among the various religious traditions represented on the University's faculty and staff. The presence of IDI in the Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture underscores the University's belief that ecumenical and interreligious dialogue is an essential dimension of our Catholic character. We are ecumenical and interreligious *because we are Catholic*.

## 2. **Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Diversity**

- a. Appointed in September 2013, the **Task Force on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence** was charged by President Sundborg to "review the progress Seattle University has made on recommendations from the 2008 Engaging Our Diversity Report, assess the current state of diversity on campus, and recommend next steps." The work of the task force culminated in a 62-page report comprising a set of recommendations centered around six goals, which are aimed at infusing inclusive excellence throughout all dimensions of the institution.
- b. **The Campus Climate Survey** was conducted as part of work of the Task Force on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, focused on gaining a baseline understanding of the present campus climate as experienced and perceived by students, faculty, and staff. This information offered a broad-based snapshot that is driving current planning, prioritization, and decision making on macro and micro levels. Additionally, the University has sought greater understanding of the religious practices, observances, and beliefs of the student body through the Religious Climate Survey for Undergraduates.
- c. The position of **Chief Diversity Officer** was established in 2016 to engage in strategic diversity/inclusion leadership and to guide university-wide efforts to achieve a climate of greater inclusion.
- d. **Programmatic endeavors** support students, faculty, and staff and enrich campus engagement across differences and critical issues of our time, including racial justice. These programmatic endeavors enliven our campus community through the work of offices like **Office of Multicultural Affairs** with programs like the Moral Mondays series, for example. These discussions are beginning to take place more regularly across the schools and colleges and among faculty and staff. Other positive examples include **Mission Day** and **Indigenous People's Day**, and the **Search for Meaning Book Festival**.

- e. Seattle U also has several **initiatives focused on the experiences of the LGBTQ community on campus**, including the establishment of **Gender Neutral bathrooms and signage across campus**.
- f. A spirit of **interfaith and interreligious acceptance and dialogue** enhances inclusion by making space for religious diversity. The openness and flexibility of the mission in this regard is deemed to be a great strength of the institution. The make-up of the faculty and staff who are not Catholic reflect that community members are encouraged to engage across differences based on a variety of religions and faith traditions.
- g. Faculty, staff and students also engage in mutual learning and collaboration through **community engagement opportunities**, including the Seattle University Youth Initiative (discussed in Characteristic Four).

### 3. **Institutional Integrity**

This category covers a wide variety of institutional practices, policies, and procedures. These elements taken together form one of the most important ways the University lives out or fails to live out its Catholic, Jesuit mission. A pattern of constant vigilance has given rise to significant improvements, of which the following are some examples:

- a. The administration has shown a commitment to making Seattle University a supportive workplace for faculty and staff. To help achieve this goal, Human Resources has administered two **faculty/staff satisfaction surveys**, developed, administered, and tabulated by outside consultants, one in 2009, the other in 2013. In response to significant concerns about compensation revealed in the 2009 survey, university leadership initiated and carried through a 5-year market equity pay increase that significantly improved faculty (tenure-track and adjunct) and staff salaries.
- b. The 2009 survey also surfaced concerns about **shared governance**. Faculty and staff have continued to express their desire for clear structures that allow for input into university decisions. The administration has continued to work with groups in the University dedicated to improving this aspect of campus life. Efforts are under way but have not come to a satisfactory conclusion at this point. The commitment is there.
- c. Through the efforts of the Vice President for Finance, who has completed the Ignatian Colleagues Program, **the Office of Budget and Finance now uses a discernment model for decision-making around budgets**. This has been a helpful way to strengthen the connection between budget decisions and mission goals. Senior budget officers are invited to look beyond their own program needs toward the larger goals that affect the University as a whole.

- d. Seattle U offers **excellent benefits** to faculty and staff, including a strong retirement plan and 100% tuition remission for faculty and staff and their dependents for most SU academic programs. Excellent health insurance benefits base premiums on salary level, which keeps insurance options affordable.

#### **MISSION CHALLENGES:**

1. The Climate Survey revealed a large percentage of **individuals experiencing exclusionary conduct**, including micro-aggressions, isolation, bullying, and intimidation in their everyday interactions at the University. These climate conditions not only impact the learning environment, but also retention, productivity, and the ability to thrive in the context of the campus community.
2. Faculty, staff, and students would benefit from **cultural intelligence professional development** opportunities to advance knowledge and skills around engaging across differences.
3. Respondents also expressed concern around a **perceived lack of diversity in hiring for faculty and staff** and the nature of **microaggressive cultural dynamics that impact retention** of people of color and women, and other marginalized groups.
4. As mentioned elsewhere, **the financial strain on students** and its impact on diversifying the student body in meaningful way is a challenge for the University.
5. A number of respondents indicated a perception that **pay for staff is low**, and that there are not enough opportunities for advancement and growth among staff.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Our *examen* of the seven mission characteristics has yielded an encouraging list of mission strengths—surprising even to us who are familiar with the University—and some clear mission challenges, light and shadow. One final point remains, perhaps the most important of all. At the heart of the Ignatian practice of *examen* lies the response of gratitude for favors received. A sense of gratitude has emerged from the Mission Examen process undertaken in this 125<sup>th</sup> year of Seattle University's existence. Those who participated in the listening sessions heard such expressions of gratitude repeated over and over from almost every input group. This sense of gratitude, far from inducing a sense of complacency, has opened up the participants to a critical reflection on our own situation as a university. We have been blessed. That is clear. The question underlying all our examination can be reduced to one fundamental set of inquiries: What must we do to remain open in the years to come to the blessings still in store for us? What will we have to do to keep open the channels through which those blessings flow? How can we keep alive the vision that gave us our beginning, has sustained us along the way to this 125<sup>th</sup> year, and will lead us into the future?