

NEW JERSEY CITY UNIVERSITY



Addendum to
2019-2020 Self-Study

Presented to the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education

For the Evaluation Team Visit
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UPDATES RELATED TO THE STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF AFFILIATION

This Section contains updates on each of the Standards, with reference to relevant pages in the Self-Study document.

Standard I. Mission and Goals

Updates related to Standard I include:

- The University has adopted the Playing to Win framework (A.001) for development of its new strategic plan. Accordingly, NJCU has changed consultants from AKA Strategy to Deloitte. The Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer has assumed lead responsibility, and the timeline indicates completion by the end 2020 (A.002). *Reference in Self-Study: pp. 4-5, pg. 18.*

Standard II. Ethics and Integrity

Updates related to Standard II include:

- The University has established the President's Executive Council on Diversity and Inclusion, which includes two members of the NJCU Foundation Board and members of the community at large. The Council will build on the work of the President's Diversity and Inclusion Council and will continue to examine issues of Diversity and Inclusion affecting NJCU and its community. The University has also commenced plans to hire a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), which is expected to be completed by July 1, 2021. Until completed, the Chief of Staff to the President will serve as interim CDO. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 25.*
- The Civility Task Force presented its recommendations at a Town Hall in February 2020 (A.003). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, next steps are pending. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 25.*
- In 2019-2020, there were 12 grievances at dean level. This is an increase from six in the previous year, calling into question the hypothesis described in the Self-Study that disagreements were being addressed at the individual faculty level. However, 10 of the 12 grievances came after the University went to remote instruction; further investigation is needed. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 26.*
- The Senate has made recommendations regarding updating the faculty handbook, including organizational and substantive suggestions (A.004). *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 25, pg. 32.*
- As an alternative to Senate input on evaluation of administrators, the Senate passed a resolution seeking to have input in the retention of administrators (A.005). *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 29.*
- The Internal Audit plan has been updated (A.006). *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 31.*

Standard III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Updates related to Standard III include:

- As part of the review of General Education undertaken for the self-study process, the University Senate voted in April to make two key adjustments to the program, effective Fall 2021: 1) removing the "Modes of Inquiry" and shifting to the learning outcomes as the organizational structure of the program; and 2) reducing the credits required from 45 to 36 (A.007). Together, these adjustments will improve program assessment and help students complete the program in timely manner. The new Director is currently developing plans for implementation. *Reference in Self-Study: pp. 45-47.*
- In part prompted by COVID-19, the Provost Office launched a professional development opportunity for all faculty related to teaching online. The asynchronous course includes the following modules: Principles and Standards of Online Course Delivery, The Online Student, The

Online Instructor, Planning Your Online Course, Preparing Your Learning Activities, and Managing Your Online Course (A.008). *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 42.*

Standard IV. Support of the Student Experience

The Working Group for Standard IV has no updates to share.

Standard V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Updates related to Standard V include:

- In order to be sensitive to the disruptions related to COVID-19, the Program Assessment Coordinating Committee is expanding the options for 2019-2020 assessment submissions. Departments can submit standard reports, if feasible. However, departments are also given the option to submit an assessment of the transition to remote instruction for students and/or faculty, departmental reflections on assessment during Spring 2020, or the like. *Reference in Self-Study: pp. 66-67.*
- PACC has enhanced its 2020-2021 work plan to include outreach to individual programs to discuss three-year trends in their assessment results. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 67.*

Standard VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

Updates related to Standard VI include:

- As noted under Standard I, the University has adopted the Playing to Win framework (A.001) for development of its new strategic plan.
- In addition to campus preparations related to COVID-19, staff took advantage of the unoccupied state of the campus in Spring to make repairs and upgrades including to generators, boilers, and flooring. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 81.*
- The Budget Task Force held a summer meeting in June to update members on the state of the FY 2020 financials. *Reference in Self-Study: pp. 82-83.*

Standard VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration

Updates related to Standard VII include:

- The Shared Governance Task Force presented its recommendations at a Town Hall in February 2020 (A.009). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, next steps are pending. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 92.*
- The Board of Trustees saw changes in membership. Three members left and two new members were added. The new members include: Irene Trowell-Harris, former Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Women Veterans; and Luke Visconti, founder and Chairman of DiversityInc. (See A.010 for biographies of all members). *Reference in Self-Study: pp. 92-93.*

UPDATES RELATED TO COVID-19

The University's response to COVID-19 includes:

- The University began remote instruction and remote work on March 16. To enable the process, the University provided over 300 computers to students and over 100 computers to faculty/staff. Hot spots were also provided to students without internet access. Additional technology tools such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and the video platform Panopto were also acquired for both teaching and working.

- The University established a business continuity task force with cabinet-level individuals, sent regular email communications, and established an informational website (A.011). Further, the President held bi-weekly town halls to inform the campus of developments and to answer questions.
- The Provost established grading options for both undergraduate and graduate students for the Spring semester (A.012).
- Remote instruction continued for all summer sessions.
- The Provost Office launched professional development for faculty related to online pedagogy, with opportunities facilitated by both NJCU faculty and staff from Edge, a NJ-based nonprofit technology solutions provider.
- In accordance with guidance from the State, the University submitted a Pandemic Recovery Plan (A.013). Per the restart standards, the plan addressed general safeguarding; screening, testing, and contact tracing protocols; instruction; residential housing; computer labs and libraries; research; student services; transportation; on-campus dining; study abroad and international travel; and athletics.
- Staff began returning, under low-density guidelines, in July.
- On August 13, 2020, the Governor's Executive Order 175 allowed for in-person instruction by institutions of higher education, under appropriate safety protocols. In Fall, the University offered classes in various formats including: face-to-face (3% of organized classes), asynchronous/synchronous online (78%), hyflex (17%), and hybrid (2%) (see A.014).

The financial impact of COVID-19 is described in the *Enrollment and Financial Updates* Section of this Addendum.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Significant changes in organizational administrative structure and leadership include:

- Effective April 2020, the President's Senior Team was reconfigured to include only divisional Vice Presidents and the Chief of Staff. The University Counsel, the Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness, and the Executive Coordinator to the President/Secretary to the Board of Trustees continue to report to the President and serve on the Cabinet, but no longer sit on the Senior Team.
- The University Advancement Division has been renamed to University Advancement and Strategic Initiatives.
- The Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management resigned effective July 2020. It is anticipated that the search for a replacement will be completed by Summer 2021. In the interim, the Enrollment Management component of the division is reporting to the Provost and the Student Affairs component is reporting to the Vice President of the University Advancement and Strategic Initiatives (A.015).
- In Spring/Summer, the Division of Academic Affairs changed leads for the General Education Program, Honors Program, Orientation to College Program, Summer Bridge Program (Achieving Success by Cultivating Excellence and Nurturing Discovery [ASCEND]), and Lee Hagan Africana Studies Center. The Division also lost its Director of Online Learning in April 2020, and the Provost Office is currently providing leadership for the department.

ENACTMENT OF EMERGENCY LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE POWERS

This is not applicable to NJCU.

FINANCIAL AND ENROLLMENT UPDATES

This Section contains financial and enrollment updates.

Financial Update

The social and economic circumstances surrounding COVID-19 have impacted NJCU's financial position. State appropriations for the remainder of FY 2020 were reduced by \$3.9 million. The State has chosen to extend the 2020 fiscal year through September 2020, further impacting cash flow into the University's FY 2021 first quarter. In May 2020, Fitch downgraded the University's credit rating, with a negative outlook, due to reduction in state operating support and the effects of the pandemic in the Fall of 2020 (A.016).

However, the University received funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in the amount of \$8,337,070. Of which, \$4,168,535 was distributed directly to students impacted by COVID-19, and \$4,168,535 allocated for institutional use for COVID-19 related expenses. The institutional portion of the CARES Act mitigated the loss in Revenue for student housing and meals from the Spring term, and \$500,000 of the CARES Act funds has been earmarked to offset the occupancy differential in housing revenue for the upcoming Fall term.

The University was awarded \$593,154 from MSI – DHSI & PPOHA (Minority Serving Institutions -- Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions & Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans) to offset pandemic-related costs incurred. The University administration has applied for additional funding opportunities to aid in recovery efforts and fortify operational costs in uncertain times.

The FY 2021 budget model was built on conservative enrollment projections. With this understanding, the President and CFO tasked each department with reducing their budgets by 20%. Other cost reduction initiatives were also implemented including freezing unnecessary travel and discretionary spending, pausing hiring of non-essential personnel, reducing student assistant and contract/part-time employee allocations, reducing adjunct/overload budget, and reducing overtime. In addition, the University implemented furloughs for all employees, saving \$3.6 Million. The FY 2021 Operating Budget also reflects a 3.5% increase in tuition and fees. The FY 2021 Capital Budget totals to \$13,473,847 consisting largely of debt service, critical deferred maintenance projects carried over from prior years, and \$3.1 Million in new projects.

The President provided an update to the Board of Trustees in August 2020, referencing increased funding not only from the State Baseline Support, but from the State Fringe Support, NJ Office of Management and Budget Support, and Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Support totaling an additional \$3.57 Million in revenue net of a \$2.3 Million shortage from lower Fall 2020 enrollment. Conversely, changes in expenses, namely a lower than projected salary and fringe savings from the furlough programs, increase costs. Overall, the FY 2020 Operating Budget is projected to be net positive with a small surplus of \$723,906 (A.017).

The FY 2021 Operating Budget continues to be updated as the State releases additional funds to institutions in order to make their appropriation levels whole from the March 2020 reductions prompted by COVID-19. The State also continues to make funds available from federal resources and stimulus loan programs in anticipation of current and future operational needs. As of August 14, 2020, an additional \$6.9 Million was allocated to NJCU. As NJCU had already assumed that it would receive \$3 Million from this funding source, NJCU is working collaboratively with faculty and staff to efficiently incorporate the incremental \$3.9 Million into the existing FY2021 Revenue and Expense Model.

Enrollment Update

As of this writing, the drop/add period for Fall 2020 has completed; data cleaning and attendance verification are in process for an October 1, 2020 census date. Based on current estimates (see Table A-1), both undergraduate and graduate headcount is down from Fall 2019. One-year retention of first-time full time freshmen is estimated to be 78%, up from 73% in the previous year. Six-year graduation rate is estimated to be 37%, compared to 41% in 2019.

Table A-1, Fall Headcount and Selected Progression Statistics, with 2020 Estimates

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Change 20 - 19
Undergraduate Headcount Total	6317	6663	6508	6237	6137	5892	-4%
New Freshman students (FT and PT)	819	988	991	968	1008	1128	+12%
New Transfer students (FT and PT)	960	971	816	753	692	634	-8%
Graduate Headcount Total	1920	1841	1774	1754	1812	1718	-5%
One-year retention, FT freshmen	74%	77%	78%	73%	73%	78%	+5%
Six-year graduation, FT freshmen	29%	32%	33%	39%	41%	37%	-4%

DISTANCE EDUCATION AND OTHER SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES

NJCU updates regarding substantive changes include:

- NJCU was approved for distance education prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, so the temporary transition to remote instruction did not require a substantive change.
- On September 1, 2020, NJCU submitted a substantive change request to reclassify the instructional site at the Joffrey Ballet School in New York City from an instructional site to an additional location. This request is in conjunction with the launch of the BFA Dance program. Contingent upon MSCHÉ approval, the dance studio courses will be taught at the Joffrey commencing Spring 2021. It is anticipated that this will be a temporary need. Upon completion of the construction of the Center for Music, Dance, and Theatre (CMDT) on the main campus, Dance instruction will be migrated to the CMDT. *Reference in Self-Study: pg. 80.*

OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCY STATUS CHANGES

This is not applicable to NJCU.

EVIDENCE

- A.001 Strategic plan framework
- A.002 Strategic plan development timeline
- A.003 Civility Task Force presentation
- A.004 Senate resolution regarding faculty handbook, excerpt from February 2020 minutes
- A.005 Senate resolution regarding administrator retention, excerpt from February 2020 minutes

- A.006 Internal audit plan, updated May 2020
- A.007 Senate resolution regarding general education, except from April 20, 2020 minutes
- A.008 Fundamentals of Online Teaching syllabus
- A.009 Shared Governance Task Force presentation
- A.010 Biographies of Board members, updated membership
- A.011 COVID-19 webpage, screenshot
- A.012 Spring 2020 communication regarding grading options
- A.013 NJCU pandemic recovery plan
- A.014 Fall 2020 modes of Instruction
- A.015 University organizational charts
- A.016 Fitch ratings statement, May 2020
- A.017 FY 2021 operating and capital budget updates, August 2020