

Thinking Critically, Acting Justly

**Quality Enhancement Plan
Loyola University
New Orleans**

DRAFT: 01/12/06

[University Seal]

Executive Summary

(TO BE ADDED UPON COMPLETION OF DRAFT)

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Thinking Critically, Acting Justly

Quality Enhancement Plan for Loyola University New Orleans

The Quality Enhancement Plan of Loyola University New Orleans is designed around the theme, “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly”. This theme is consistent with the university’s mission (Appendix A) and the Jesuit character of the university (Appendix B). It responds to the SACS mandate for enhancement of student learning (Appendix C). The QEP has wide-spread support as its design and development has involved the entire Loyola University New Orleans community with input from faculty, staff, students, and administrators. A history of the QEP process follows the discussion of the plan. The QEP also responds to the current situation in the city of New Orleans which experienced catastrophic damage from Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005.

In order to understand the design clearly, it is important to define some of the terms used throughout the plan. The QEP Team undertook a detailed study of these elements and produced a series of consensus statements that were approved by the SACS Leadership Team:

CONSENSUS STATEMENT ON THE INTEGRATION OF THINKING CRITICALLY AND ACTING JUSTLY

Loyola University’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) theme of “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” explicitly links critical thinking and acting justly as integrated activities, each enhancing the other. The QEP Team seeks initiatives for Loyola’s Quality Enhancement Plan that focus on the role of critical thinking in the fostering of social justice and the role of acting justly in encouraging critical thinking. Thus, critical thinking may lead to acting justly, and acting justly may spur critical thinking. To facilitate the formation of initiatives, the QEP Team offers the following descriptions of critical thinking and acting justly.

CONSENSUS STATEMENT REGARDING CRITICAL THINKING AND THE IDEAL CRITICAL THINKER

“We understand critical thinking [CT] to be purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based. CT is essential as a tool of inquiry. As such, CT is a liberating force in education and a powerful resource in one’s personal and civic life. While not synonymous with good thinking, CT is a pervasive and self-rectifying human phenomenon. The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the

subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit. Thus, educating good critical thinkers means working toward this ideal. It combines developing CT skills with nurturing those dispositions which consistently yield useful insights and which are the basis of a rational and democratic society.”

[The QEP Team accepts the above paragraph defining critical thinking as explained in the executive summary of Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for the Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction (“The Delphi Report”) published in 1990 by the American Philosophical Association:
http://www.insightassessment.com/pdf_files/DEXadobe.PDF]

CONSENSUS STATEMENT REGARDING ACTING JUSTLY

Loyola University New Orleans as a Jesuit and Catholic institution of higher education is dedicated to preparing students to lead meaningful lives by providing an academically rigorous, values-based education geared toward the creation of a more just world. Justice within this context is based upon a rich tradition of Catholic social thought. This tradition, with its positive regard for the dignity of the human person and its concern with the common good, calls for critical thought and reflection on those actions and structures in society that systematically exclude or disadvantage any group in a way that deprives them of basic rights and needs. This tradition also explicitly recognizes our individual and collective responsibility both to understand and work toward social change as we pursue the service of faith and the promotion of justice.

[This description was drawn from a number of Jesuit documents, especially the decrees of General Congregations 32 and 34 and Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach's address "The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in Jesuit Higher Education," at Santa Clara University on October 6, 2000.]

Once these guiding statements were in place, the QEP team, with help from the entire Loyola community, developed the plan that follows. The Quality Enhance Plan has three large initiatives: (1) Student Leadership, (2) First Year Experiences, and (3) Faculty and Staff Development. Each initiative has specific action plans, a timeline, budget, assessment plan, and dedicated resources. The details of these initiatives follow.

Initiative 1

Thinking Critically, Acting Justly: Student Leadership

The Center for Student Leadership Development

The Center for Student Leadership Development (CSLD) was created approximately 20 years ago. Its mission is to provide programs and services for students that emphasize (a) personal assessment to enhance academic and student life, (b) understanding and analyzing organizational structures, and (c) social action in service to others.

The existing activities of the CSLD related to the QEP topic (including types of activities and numbers of students involved) are as follows:

1. Presidents' and Advisors Luncheon – 200 students and advisors attend this luncheon featuring a keynote speaker to begin the academic year.
2. Student Leadership Conference – a one-day conference for student leaders from throughout the Gulf Coast. Attendance in 2005 was 380.
3. Annual Student Leadership Banquet – CSLD sponsors the Top Ten Senior Men & Women Awards, the Spirit of Loyola Awards and the Mary Ann Resing Flynn Scholarship.
4. Common Ground Retreat – a retreat for 30 top student leaders, focusing on creating community and bridging the gap among the major student organizations on campus.
5. Leaders of the Pack Retreat – offers 100 students an opportunity to build unity as organizations and as individual leaders.
6. Student Development Transcript – the official document approved by the university to record involvement in student activities, leadership, honors and service.
7. Workshops/Seminars – CSLD members provide individual workshops for student organizations upon request.
8. Academic coursework – Outlined in the interdisciplinary minor proposal below.

Using CSLD as a basis, CSLD will expand their programs to include the coordination of the following **five** part “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly: Student Leadership” initiative.

A. Emerging Leaders Program

The Center for Student Leadership Development created the Emerging Leaders Program in 1985. Students, primarily first-year students, who enroll in the Organizational Leadership course (SPST – A215) may opt to become an Emerging Leader. In addition to successful completion of the course, students must attend a requisite number of leadership workshops (at the discretion of the instructor) and start a Student Development Transcript. Students successfully completing the requirements are recognized at the Student Affairs Leadership Awards banquet in the spring semester.

The CSLD proposes to re-invigorate the Emerging Leaders program by linking it more closely to the QEP initiatives. CSLD looks to coordinate and expand upon the number of campus leadership workshops and retreats currently offered and market them to students in the living/learning communities established as part of the Freshman Year Experience and to incorporate them into on-going training programs for student staff. Themes included in the QEP such as servant leadership, transformative and reflective leadership will be presented and explored in more detail throughout both the courses and workshops. The Emerging Leaders program will serve as the foundation for transforming the QEP topic “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” from instruction into action. Other QEP student leadership initiatives will build from this foundation.

B. “Loyola Rebuilds”

“Loyola Rebuilds” is a new and innovative initiative designed to provide support for students who have demonstrated leadership skills and/or potential and a commitment to issues of social justice. Student will be charged with developing and organizing work on approved activities associated with the rebuilding of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Issues of social justice will be at the heart of the rebuilding taking place over the next five years in the city. Students will experience these issues and the solutions that are being implemented in their work with various community groups.

Students must be selected to participate in this program. CSLD will design the selection process and criteria. Upon selection, students will be required to commit to pursuing and completing a local social justice service project in a position of leadership and may enroll in SPST A499, Special Studies Independent Study. Under faculty and/or staff supervision, each student will be required to design and execute a rebuilding project. Funding will be available for pre-approved rebuilding plans.

In this initiative students will use their critical thinking skills as they evaluate the efforts to rebuild New Orleans, work with other students to organize and implement projects in support of social justice activities, and develop methods for selecting projects with high potential for success. They will go beyond the discussion of social justice issues and learn what it actually means to “act justly” in service to others. We expect these student leaders to graduate from Loyola prepared to lead in the organizations they join or create with a strong, internalized understanding of what it means to think critically and act justly. These experiences will have a strong impact on the rest of their lives.

C. Student Leadership Projects Funding Board

CSLD will oversee establishment of a funding board designed to identify and support student originated activities dealing with student leadership and the QEP topic. Both graduate and undergraduate student organizations and classes within departments will be eligible for funding.

This funding board, a sub-committee of CSLD, will evaluate requests from student organizations and academic departments that seek financial support for their own learning initiatives linking leadership, critical thinking and social justice, such as workshops, seminars, and conferences.

Given the impact of Hurricane Katrina, it is expected that some of these initiatives will involve specific efforts not covered elsewhere. Students will also be encouraged to develop their own unique projects to address unexpected needs that arise over the five year period.

D. “Just Desserts”: A Speaker Series

“Just Desserts” A Speakers Series is a new initiative to be sponsored by the CSLD. This series will serve as an on-going training program for student staff in leadership positions, student organization leaders, and other interested students. On campus and off speakers will present speeches, seminars and workshops linking leadership development with critical thinking skills and issues of social justice. These sessions will be held in the early evening and refreshments (desserts) will be available.

E. Law Clinic for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees

In response to the problems associated with Hurricane Katrina, the Law Clinic of the School of Law has worked with displaced and disadvantaged victims of the hurricane. This initiative will give students an opportunity to think critically about the issues facing the people of New Orleans as a result of the disaster and also to further social justice ideals by representing those who might not otherwise have a voice in the legal system.

While the Law Clinic has been a part of the School of Law for a number of years, this initiative is a new one which has been put in place as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The Law Clinic is a fully functioning legal clinic which allows third year law students the opportunity to represent indigent clients under the supervision of experienced attorneys. Student practitioners not only have the chance to experience firsthand what representing clients is like, but they also have an opportunity to further the Jesuit ideals of scholarship and service at Loyola by providing legal representation to the needy.

Evidence of a Demonstrated Need for Proposal Related to Student Learning

Research has consistently shown that students learn more effectively when actively engaged in the learning process and in groups of their peers. Both the “Loyola Rebuilds” initiative and the student funding board initiative seek to engage students on both these levels by working in groups to plan an event, formulating their own outcomes, and designing activities to achieve those outcomes. These activities are in themselves learning experiences and will create more opportunities to affect the lives of others. By providing funding for some projects and for group leadership in some efforts, we will motivate students to explore the linkages between leadership and social justice as they serve others. The Law Clinic for Hurricane Katrina evacuees is another example of student engagement in the learning process. It is experiential learning at its finest.

Howe, Neil and Strauss, William, *Millenials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (2000).
www.millenialsrising.com

A CSLD assessment, conducted in spring 2005, concluded that student staff members in many Student Affairs departments would benefit from on-going training. It is likely true that student staff from other areas of the university would also benefit from on-going training. Current

training programs, while adequate to train students to perform their jobs, often do not allow for sufficient time to present an examination of the more philosophical aspects of leadership or for personal reflection and evaluation on an on-going basis. The “Just Desserts” initiative will help provide such ideas and reflection for all student staff members in a community setting.

Relationship to the QEP Topic

“We define leadership as a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change to benefit the common good.” (p.21) *Exploring Leadership, for College Students Who Want to Make a Difference*, Susan R. Komives, Nance Lucas and Timothy R. McMahon

In *Exploring Leadership, for College Students Who Want to Make a Difference*, the author’s state, “Leadership development is greatly enhanced when you understand how important relationships are in leadership, that is, when you see the relational foundation of the leadership process. Three basic principles are involved: knowing, being and doing.” (p.5). The authors explain Knowing, “You must know – yourself, how change occurs, and how others views things differently than you do” (Critical Thinking), Being, ~~and~~ “You must be ethical, principled, open, caring, and inclusive”, and Doing, “You must act in socially responsible ways, consistently and congruently, as a participant in a community and on your commitments and passions.” (Acting Justly)

If these are true statements, then the relationship of “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” with the development of leaders is critical to the success of a student attending Loyola University New Orleans.

Enhancement of Student Learning

In an essay entitled “Bringing Leadership Lessons from the Past into the Future,” James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner of Santa Clara University state, “Despite all the advances on technology, after all the irrational exuberance over the Internet has come and gone, we’ll learn again what we already know—leadership is a relationship. Sometimes the relationship is one-to-many. Sometimes it’s one-to-one. But regardless of whether the number is one or one thousand, leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow” (p. 84).

They go on to say that “At Santa Clara University, we take as our mission the education of leadership with competence, conscience and compassion. Nothing particularly unique about the competence piece, but our attempts to make people more conscientious and compassionate require an exploration both of the interior territory and our relationship with others. Conscience informs and develops the ethical and moral dimension inherent in all human beings, regardless of their religious or cultural background. Compassion nurtures the human framework of leadership; it is making a difference in the world and in the lives of others. As Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order explained: “To know and not to do, is to not know.” (p. 88)

Bennis, Walter, Spreitzer, Gretchen M. and Cummings, Thomas G. (2001). *The Future of Leadership: Today's Top Leadership Thinkers Speak to Tomorrow's Leaders*. Jossey-Bass.

Impact on Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff throughout the university will have opportunities to work with leaders in the “Loyola Rebuilds” initiative in a variety of capacities; as instructors, as mentors to their work off campus, and as supervisors to their work on campus. In addition, the student leaders in this initiative will be selected by a committee representing a wide range of on-campus constituencies. This proposal also suggests collaboration with the committee charged with developing the “Loyola Rebuilds” program and the Division of Institutional Advancement and the University Grants Office. To ensure long-range financial sustainability of the program, the proposal would include exploring grant opportunities as well as a ‘matching’ program with individual community members each sponsoring one student leader.

CSLD has committed to work toward realizing the initiatives in support of the goals of the QEP. To do so will require the participation of faculty, staff and students from outside the Division of Student Affairs. CSLD will develop a revised committee and sub-committee structure to include a wider range of membership and participation in achieving these objectives.

Faculty and staff can benefit from participation in all these student leadership activities by linking it with their own objectives in courses and with student staff. The faculty involved in these activities will also be participating in the faculty development in critical thinking and acting justly portions of the QEP which will inform them of methods for working with students in these areas.

Targeted Students

Students will be recruited to enroll in the Emerging Leaders program through the Admissions process and the Preview and Catch the Action orientation program.

Students will be recruited for the “Loyola Rebuilds” initiative from students completing the Emerging Leaders program, students enrolled in or completing the Living/Learning Communities and student organizations throughout the university. In addition, recommendations from faculty and staff will be solicited. Students will be required to apply for the program and will be selected for the program by a sub-committee of the CSLD.

For the “Just Desserts” initiative, individual departments will determine which, if any, sessions will be required of student staff. In addition, student organization leaders will be targeted, as will students participating in programs such as the living/learning communities.

In the Law Clinic for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees, third year law students will be targeted to work with the evacuees in shelters in Baton Rouge and Houston.

Fostering Collaboration

The CSLD sub-committee that will select projects submitted to the Student Leadership Projects Funding Board will be comprised of both faculty and staff from many areas of the university. Faculty and staff will also be recruited to serve as advisors and supervisors to the “Loyola Rebuilds” student leaders as they complete their work. In addition, the faculty and staff in these initiatives will work together to formulate an on-going training program to institutionalize the student learning taking place along with the leadership skills and knowledge of social justice concerns. Speakers for the Emerging Leaders program and “Just Desserts” series will be sought from throughout the University.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Implementation

Students enrolled in the Emerging Leaders program will be taught, monitored and evaluated by the course instructor.

Student leaders from the “Loyola Rebuilds” initiative will be required to submit, and gain approval for, an individualized plan for their service to the community and self-directed learning as leaders. They will also be required to submit periodic reports reflecting on their experiences and skill development. The program director, in consultation with faculty and staff participating in the program, will evaluate each leader’s progress and provide feedback to the student.

The Student Leadership Projects Funding Board will develop program goals and desired outcomes, criteria for funding, and a monitoring and evaluation process.

All “Just Desserts” sessions will include review of attendance and program session evaluations.

The Law Clinic for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees will be evaluated for the number of evacuees that are served during the time the initiative is in place. Students will submit reports on their work for evaluation by faculty members who head up these projects.

Monitoring and Assessment of Student-Learning Outcomes

Specific outcomes and assessments will be developed by the individuals responsible for administering the program.

Requests for funding will demand this information as an eligibility requirement for funding.

Implementation Plan

Three “Just Desserts” sessions will be presented in spring, 2006. Topics scheduled to date include: A Train the Trainer session for student organization advisors and a multicultural awareness session. Additional topics and sessions are under consideration.

Resources Needed for Implementation

Funding for the initiatives listed here will be \$3,000 per year or \$15,000 over the 5 year period.

Initiative 2

Thinking Critically, Acting Justly: First-Year Experiences

An effective program of First-Year Experiences (FYE) offers the university the opportunity to orient incoming students to the mission of the institution and the values of the Loyola community while preparing new students for successful learning and the demands of college life. Loyola has recognized this opportunity and begun to organize its resources for this crucial moment in a student's study at the university. However, the efforts vary across colleges and from year to year. This initiative mandates institutionalization of one facet of the first year experience, the common reading program, across colleges. It also provides funding for college-specific efforts to develop or enhance learning community initiatives for students in each of the undergraduate day colleges.

The current activities related to FYE include the Common Reading Initiative, the Meet-the-Author event, and the integration of the FYE theme into selected courses and the implementation of multiple co-curricular events throughout the academic year. A description of the types of activities implemented to date is provided below as well as a plan to expand and institutionalize our efforts within the context of the QEP topic to enhance the critical thinking of students about issues of justice as they relate to pressing social issues as well as Loyola's institutional identity as a Jesuit and Catholic university.

First-Year Common Reading Program and Meet-the-Author Event

The focus of the Common Reading Program will be to choose selections designed to engage students with topics of pressing social significance while allowing clear linkages to be made to institutional mission and identity. Students across colleges will have the opportunity to engage in a variety of curricula and co-curricula activities related to the themes emerging in the Common Reading. The purpose of these activities is to incorporate students into the academic culture of the university while providing them with an opportunity to interact with peers from diverse backgrounds within the context of the QEP theme of "thinking critically and acting justly."

During the 2006-07 academic year, all incoming first-year students in the Colleges will share an FYE Common Book. The book selections will be reflective of the QEP "thinking critically, acting justly" topic. The reading will be complimented by lectures, which expand upon the themes and give rise to complex reflection of issues facing our students. A book signing and Meet-the-Author presentations will be planned.

In addition to the public presentation, it is anticipated that the FYE speakers will also spend time with students from multiple courses where they generate discussion surrounding the academic themes emerging from the FYE topic. For example, in 2003 Kozol's, author of *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*, classroom presentation highlighted effective solutions to some of the persistent problems facing inner-city schools and communities. In addition, he also led a discussion with community leaders at a luncheon focused on mobilizing people and resources for positive social change. The community event was co-sponsored by

A&S, the Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans, Inc., and the Lindy Boggs National Center for Community Literacy, and Entergy Corporation.

Selected FYE Curricular Linkages

First-Year Seminars. Multiple faculty members have built their common curriculum or major courses around the FYE theme. In general, these first-year seminars have been limited to 20 students and involve interdisciplinary instruction; writing-to-learn assignments; small group work and discussion; and collaboration with peer tutors to enhance critical thinking skills as well as mastery of disciplinary content. This strategy of limiting the first-year sections to 20 students also supports an action item under goal one of the Academic Affairs Strategic Agenda which calls for “increasing the percentage of classes under 20” in order to support the overall goal of “offering innovative, high-quality curricula and co-curricula programs...”

The courses will include student affairs professionals as co-instructors in recognition that education and student development also take place outside the walls of the classroom and that non-academic issues such as poor personal choices can dramatically affect in-class learning and performance.

Incorporation of the FYE Common Book into Courses. Over time, selected faculty members have incorporated the Common Reading into their existing courses during the academic year. For example, in 2004 the FYE book was incorporated into approximately 17 sections of English 122 as well as other selected courses across disciplines (e.g., history, sociology, psychology, religious studies, philosophy, communications, etc.) It is estimated that approximately 60 percent of first year students experience the integration of the Common Reading in at least one of their courses. By expanding the FYE experience to all first-year students across colleges and programs the goal is to institutionalize the FYE experience to 90% of the students.

Selected FYE Co-Curricular Linkages

The following is a sample of FYE On-Campus Exhibits and Special Events:

- The Brown vs. Board of Education Traveling Exhibit subtitled, *In Pursuit of Freedom & Equality: Kansas and the African American Public School Experience, 1855-1955*, was displayed in the J. Edgar and Louise S. Monroe Library in 2004 to recognize the linkage between this landmark decision and *Savage Inequalities* as the FYE reading.
- *Now Let Me Fly* at the Loyola University Theatre (N=160). The A&S Dean's Office sponsored FYE Nights for first-year students to attend the play *Now Let Me Fly* in the Lower Depths Theatre. The play focused on the struggle leading to the Brown decision. Students were recruited through their first-year professors who agreed to lead discussions with students at the conclusion of the play and to incorporate learning activities and reflection opportunities about the performance within the context of their courses.
- The A&S Forum, spearheaded by an A&S faculty committee, held three events geared toward first-year faculty related to the 50th anniversary of the *Brown* decision.
- The College of Business Administration sponsored a lecture by Dr. Robert Cottrol organized by Dr. Capaldi (February 3, 2005). Dr. Cottrol spoke about his newest book entitled, “*Brown v Board of Education: Caste, Culture, and the Constitution.*”

- The Loyola Society for Civic Engagement sponsored a panel discussion on school vouchers as an educational reform to expand the conversations associated with Kozol's visit and the FYE theme of educational inequality.

Each year the library has developed a reading list of books from its collection that relate to the FYE book topic. A link to the list is provided on the library web site and books are displayed in the new book area.

The initiatives that follow are designed to institutionalize the Common Book Reading Program and to provide funding for expansion of college-specific programs that will enhance the First Year Experience for students.

Expansion and institutionalization of events associated with the annual FYE academic theme consistent with the QEP topic “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly”

Full implementation of the Common Book Reading will be mandated. Funds will be provided through this initiative for development of college-specific programming to complement the Common Book Reading and to carry out the QEP theme, “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly”. This funding should allow the individual colleges to innovate new approaches to both First-Year Experiences and to the QEP topic. Students will be able to apply these ideas early in their careers. It will also give the colleges latitude in developing ways of institutionalizing First-Year Experiences and the QEP theme.

For example, some plans under consideration for expansion or development to augment the FYE beyond the Common Book Reading Program include:

Community Service Day: One day when all first year students work as group at specific projects to improve the community. This will encourage teamwork as students work toward a common goal while expanding their knowledge of the broader community.

Freshman Team-Building Exercise: Off campus ropes course exercise being planned for College of Business Administration students. This effort will build teamwork and encourage the emergence of leaders within the cohort.

Executive Mentoring Program: This College of Business Administration program pairs groups of eight to ten freshmen with an executive from the local business community to discuss the realities of the work world. Development of a close relationship with a professional in the field of study should assist students in learning about business practice and should lay the groundwork for seeking work after graduation.

Expansion and institutionalization of Learning Communities consistent with the QEP topic “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” across the university

There is a growing interest nationwide and on Loyola's campus to embrace undergraduate education reform in ways that have proven effective in improving student engagement, learning, and persistence. Given the lessons learned over the past two years, the Division of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will work to institutionalize Living-Learning Communities for

incoming students commencing in spring 2006. Learning communities within the context of the QEP means linking at least two courses around an academic theme with the goal of deepening student learning while creating a first-year seminar component as a fourth credit hour to address issues surrounding student transition to college as well as Jesuit mission. Selected goals of this initiative include the following:

- Introducing new students to the academic life of the community in a supportive environment with multiple opportunities to create meaningful connections with faculty, staff, and peers.
- Assisting students in becoming intentional learners as they make the transition from high school to college.
- Promoting critical thinking and the integration of knowledge and experience across disciplines.
- Engaging students in a learning-centered environment based on innovative curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Promoting an understanding of the Jesuit tradition of education with an emphasis on the reflexive nature of action and reflection

Although course level learning outcomes will depend on individual faculty members, it is anticipated that they will explicitly include student learning outcomes identified by numerous higher education associations as being necessary for successful graduates in the 21st century (e.g., enhancing critical thinking, improving oral and written communication skills, integrating and applying knowledge across disciplines, recognizing social responsibilities as they relate to creating a more just social order, etc.)

Although colleges will have flexibility in creating Learning Communities in a way that best meets the needs of students, it is anticipated that students will be co-enrolled in at least two first year courses organized around the FYE academic theme. The enrollment of the linked courses will be limited to facilitate maximum interaction among faculty members and students and the courses will be offered in the same instructional space back-to-back to facilitate team teaching approaches and/or out-of-class experiential learning.

One of the linked courses will have an added one-hour requirement dedicated to a first-year seminar component. The extra hour each week will be utilized by staff from Student Affairs to address many of the transitional issues that often lead to student disengagement and lack of success as well as staff from across campus that will provide sessions on the Jesuit tradition of education.

In short, we will create Living-Learning Communities with a first-year academic seminar component developed, implemented, and assessed in collaboration with staff from Student Affairs and the Jesuit Center. In addition, projects will: a) incorporate a strong advising component (i.e., a faculty member will serve as both instructor and academic advisor for students); b) include significant writing assignments; c) develop oral communication skills through individual and/or group presentations, panel discussions, structured, student-led discussions, etc.; d) include innovative student-centered teaching methods; and e) involve significant out-of-class interaction between faculty, staff, and students.

This initiative will contribute to continued faculty development, successful partnerships between Academic and Student Affairs, and enhanced student engagement, persistence, and success over time.

Evidence of a Demonstrated Need for Proposal Related to Student Learning

Goal three of *The Academic Affairs Strategic Agenda Ten-Year Plan* (1/18/04) states that the university will “Recruit, retain, and graduate high-quality students with the capability to become productive, socially responsible leaders in their communities and society.” An objective under this goal reads: “Implement a comprehensive Freshman-Year Experience by Fall 2004.”

The greatest indication of need related to student learning that all of the initiatives associated with the first college year are intended to address is the first-year to second-year retention rate. If students do not remain at the institution, there is no chance to have a positive impact on student learning. The most recent data available indicate Fall-to-Fall retention figures ranging from 84 to 90 percent across the day division colleges (see Office of Institutional Research Fact Book, 2004-05). These figures are not acceptable given Loyola’s institutional mission and commitment to student success. Further, an average 15 percent attrition rate across colleges does not compare favorably to Loyola’s peer reference group.

In addition to student retention rates, there is research suggesting that student engagement can serve as a useful proxy for student learning. There are a number of questions from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that touch upon areas that reveal opportunities for institutional improvement that will likely be impacted by the proposed FYE initiatives including the following:

Academic and Intellectual Experiences: Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments

Mental Activities: Analyzing basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships. Making judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions.

Educational and Personal Growth: Acquiring a broad general education. Developing a personal code of values and ethics. Contributing to the welfare of your community. Developing a deepened sense of spirituality.

Satisfaction: How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution? If you could start over again, would you go to the same institution you are now attending?

Relationship to the QEP Topic

The university-wide FYE committee that selects the Common Reading and Academic Theme each year has used a number of criteria in narrowing the choice of possible books. Primary among these selection criteria have been books addressing significant social issues that offer an

opportunity to reflect upon our identity and mission as a Jesuit and Catholic institution. In addition, the FYE activities sub-committee (as well as numerous other groups and organizations on campus) also plans diverse activities that allow the critical exploration of targeted issues from multiple perspectives. The selection of a FYE theme related to a pressing social concern that can be easily linked to institutional mission is a strategy that responds directly to the QEP topic of “thinking critically, acting justly.” The initiatives proposed provide additional opportunities for students to reflect critically on various perspectives related to justice within the context of their coursework and co-curricular activities. Further, service learning and other forms of community-based learning is a prominent feature in many of the FYE Learning Community seminars providing additional opportunities for students to actually act and then reflect on their actions related to the FYE social issue/topic.

Enhancement of Student Learning

This initiative calls for support to institutionalize the Common Book Reading Program and development and/or expansion of related college-specific programs related to FYE and the expansion of Learning Communities. Themes for these programs over the next five years will specifically be selected for their relevance to the QEP topic of “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly.” This strategy of using a common academic theme that is integrated throughout the curricular and co-curricular activities of first-year students has been found effective in the higher education literature as well as on Loyola’s campus in increasing student engagement, enhancing relationships with peers and faculty members (especially outside of the classroom), and improving student learning. For example, preliminary data from designated first-year seminar courses involving the active involvement of faculty and students in FYE events indicate improved class attendance, higher class participation rates, better performance on exams, and greater student and faculty satisfaction.

Impact on Faculty and Staff

The institutionalization and expansion of FYE programs will require additional person power to ensure success. To date, it appears that much of the activity associated with FYE committees and sub-committees, the Common Reading initiative, FYE co-curricular activities, first-year faculty development, curricular innovation in the first college year, and assessment of FYE is being supported out of the existing staffing structure and budget of the colleges. These initiatives cannot expand or improve significantly beyond where they are today without additional financial support.

The decentralized approach in this initiative will have elements of the FYE coordinated by someone in the Office of the Provost but will delegate responsibility and accountability for success to the academic units.

Targeted Students

The students targeted by this proposal are all incoming first year students.

Fostering Collaboration

FYE has provided ongoing opportunities for meaningful collaboration across colleges and divisions. For example, all FYE sub-committees are co-chaired by a representative from one of

the colleges and a representative from another area of the university (e.g., Student Affairs, Monroe Library, etc.). Structurally, this has “built-in” leadership opportunities for participating faculty and staff members and requires true collaboration in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all FYE curricular and co-curricular projects.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Implementation

Selected proposal goals include:

Implementing a nationally recognized series of educational, cultural, and social programming including lectures, seminars, exhibits, performances, etc. (adapted from the AA Strategic Agenda) related to the FYE academic theme;

Monitoring attendance and satisfaction of diverse constituent groups at FYE events;

Documenting required student participation in selected events and evaluating student growth in the areas of critical thinking and reflection on the meaning of “acting justly” within the context of the FYE academic theme;

Tracking student responses to related questions on institutional surveys (e.g., Student Satisfaction Inventory [SSI], NSSE, etc.) designed to measure student engagement and satisfaction especially as it relates to innovative educational experiences and/or co-curricular activities targeted in this proposal.

Monitoring and Assessment of Student-Learning Outcomes

Monitoring in-class performance of student learning necessarily resides with individual faculty members. The evaluation of enhanced student learning resulting from out-of-class experiences like the ones proposed here throughout the first college year will require additional administrative support.

Implementation Plan

The Common Book Reading Program will be put in place across the university for all incoming freshmen during the Fall 2006 semester. Faculty and staff will have the Spring and Summer semesters of 2006 to prepare materials for incoming students. The first round of Living Learning Community Projects will be implemented in spring 2006 involving approximately 80 students divided into four cohort groups. Data will be collected during the first semester on successes, weaknesses, etc. so that lessons learned can be incorporated into future program revisions.

Resources Needed for Implementation

This effort will require funding in the amount of \$100,000.

Outcomes and Assessment

Expansion and institutionalization of events associated with the annual FYE academic theme consistent with the QEP topic “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” across the university

Expansion and institutionalization of Learning Communities consistent with the QEP topic “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” across the university

Desired Student Learning Outcomes:

- (1) First year students articulate what differentiates their first year experience compared to their peers at other institutions.
- (2) Students attend university wide events associated with the annual FYE academic theme consistent with the QEP topic.
- (3) Students exhibit a greater capacity for critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the Jesuit tradition of education.

Assessment Measures:

- (1) Students in First-year seminars.....will write a ten-minute paper on what the first-year experience has taught them about their choice of Loyola University New Orleans, and how students believe Loyola’s first-year experience might differ from a first year without such activities and programs. The paper will not be graded, but instead be used for assessment packets, documents, statistics, and public relations.
- (2) Attendance at each event will be taken and the percent of first year students recorded for Year 1 through 5. These percentages will be used for comparison as efforts are made to keep strong levels of participation at these events.
- (3) A sample of students will be evaluated for improvements in their ability to think critically on either an externally developed measure (e.g., the California Test of Critical Thinking) or on assignments developed by faculty members involved in the Learning Communities initiative. Students will also be assessed on their ability to express an understanding of key Jesuit values related to issues of social justice.

BUDGET

Initiative 2: First-Year Experiences

The Common Book Reading, Meet-the-Author Event, Learning Community initiatives, and other educational, cultural, and social programming associated with the FYE theme have been successful in several colleges but have not been implemented throughout the university. Full implementation of the Common Book Reading will be mandated and funds from this initiative will be provided for development of college-specific programming to complement the Common Book Reading and Learning Community concept to carry out the QEP theme, “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly”. This funding should allow the individual colleges to innovate and expand effective approaches to both First-Year Experiences and to the QEP topic allowing colleges latitude in developing ways of institutionalizing FYE and the QEP theme. It is anticipated that funding will be used to supplement college- and divisional-level

resources in a number of areas including: the implementation of co-curricular activities, the creation of linked learning community courses, the hiring of peer assistants to work with first-year students, etc.

FYE Common Book Reading and Co-Curricular Activities

Annual Costs

Support for colleges (\$	
Proportional to student credit hour production by college)	\$ 9,500
Library collection additions on FYE theme	<u>500</u>
Total cost per year	\$ 10,000

FYE Learning Community Initiative

Support for colleges Proportional to student credit hour production by college)	
Total cost per year	\$ 10,000

Total Costs Years 1-5 **\$ 100,000**

Initiative 3

Thinking Critically, Acting Justly: Faculty and Staff Development

Overview: An Integrated Proposal

A crucially important way to develop critical thinking and just action on the part of students is to make sure that the faculty and staff think critically and act justly and incorporate best-practices into their courses and programs for students to develop these same attributes. To this end, we propose to initiate an integrated program to develop those skills on the part of faculty and staff throughout the university. Our overall goal is to develop the faculty and staff as persons who think critically and act justly as educators with a Jesuit vision of education and who provide opportunities for students to develop these skills as well.

The need for faculty development in the areas mentioned above became apparent as the QEP team deliberated about the definitions and understandings of critical thinking and acting justly in light of the Jesuit vision of education. We discovered that there were great discrepancies among the members of the committee (and we thought among the faculty and staff at large) about what exactly we meant when we talked about Jesuit education and the Jesuit vision of higher education. The Jesuit Center on campus does run orientation programs, retreats, discussions, and even brings in speakers, but we thought we needed a focused initiative on Jesuit education as it relates to the QEP topic that could also draw an audience from throughout the university. The faculty development initiative proposed here is comprised of four programs: A seminar/discussion series hosted by the Jesuit Center focusing on the Jesuit mission of higher education, an intensive month-long best-practices seminar for faculty and staff developing new curricula or projects focused on the QEP topic, a program to foster discussion between faculty at the divisional level about advancing critical thinking and just action in their field of study, and a service-learning project to develop reflection skills on the part of faculty in order to help students develop the critical thinking to accompany their acting justly in community service activities.

We plan to develop a program of education on the Jesuit mission in higher education through the Jesuit Center drawing on national and local resources. Once each semester we will hold a presentation and a discussion on a topic of Jesuit education. Once each year we will bring in a national expert on Jesuit education; once each year we will draw on a local Jesuit who teaches at Loyola. To prepare for each event, faculty and staff will receive a short article to read that is related to the evening's topic. The evening will then consist of a brief presentation followed by a discussion of the topic over a light meal.

There is currently a very successful best-practices program in the College of Arts and Science (PIES: Program for Instructional Education and Support) geared toward improving teaching for those faculty working with freshmen. This program involves an intensive month-long seminar for faculty to develop new curricula. We plan to establish a new program at the university level, engaging both faculty and staff, using the basic structure of the PIES project. This new program will engage faculty and staff who are developing new courses or programs in discussions about

best practices in fostering critical thinking and acting justly in the light of the Jesuit vision of education.

Given the nature of the QEP topic, the QEP team felt that there would be a general tendency for a large fraction of faculty and staff to view the project as a series of seminars hosted by the Jesuit Center with little relevance to their own teaching. A program is needed to facilitate discussion between faculty and staff of each division of the university and the involvement of faculty who typically view their own fields of study as separate from the Jesuit character of the institution. To this end, we propose a seminar series within each division of the university which will meet twice each semester. We envision the divisional gatherings generating interest in and participants for the best-practices project mentioned above.

Overall, we envision the Jesuit Mission piece informing the other programs. And we see individual faculty initiatives around the QEP topic of thinking critically, acting justly developing through the divisional gatherings, refined in the best-practices seminar, implemented in the following year, and reported on in seminars in subsequent years.

These three programs (Jesuit Education, the best-practices program, and the divisional conversations) will be coordinated through an advisory committee that will work with the provost's office to plan, implement, and evaluate each component of the integrated program. This committee will also be responsible for making sure that the programs work together and feed into each other.

Finally, we currently have a service learning program that involves a number of students in various courses in active service programs. In a sense they are already acting justly. The program needs to develop the critical thinking and Jesuit vision components. Therefore, we need to develop the reflection component of this program in which students reflect on their experiences of service in order to understand some of the personal, interpersonal, and societal dynamics of their service involvement and the situations they encounter. We envision them developing critical thinking about social situations in the light of the Jesuit vision of education. To accomplish this we will develop a mentoring program in which faculty members experienced in the process of reflection and in helping students reflect will mentor other faculty new to the experience of service learning and reflection.

A. Task Force for Faculty and Staff Development

For the QEP to be successful, it is important for faculty and staff to be engaged in department- and division-level discussions about the Jesuit character of the institution. These discussions should also address what faculty and staff can do to support the QEP and what the university can do to support initiatives that grow from these discussions. This program aims to foster this discussion at the grass-roots level and provide support for home-grown initiatives.

The heart of this program will be a Task Force for Faculty and Staff Development comprised of one faculty member from each of the four divisions within the College of Arts and Sciences, one representative each from the College of Law, Business, Music, and City College, Student

Affairs, one staff representative, one administrative representative, and one representative from the Jesuit Center. This team will be selected on a competitive basis by the QEP team and will be responsible for conducting division-level faculty - staff seminars about opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in the QEP and provide support for faculty and staff with ideas for improving student learning under the plan.

Overall, the task force will address two needs identified by the Dean of the College of Arts and sciences:

- Need to focus heavily on educating faculty and staff about Jesuit vision of education and implications within departments, division, college, etc.
- Need to develop strategies for teaching critical thinking and means of assessing improvement over time both inside and outside of the context of social justice.

Responsibilities of the task force members will include:

- The divisional/college representatives on the Task Force will be responsible for organizing two faculty - staff dialog seminars within their division or college each academic year focusing on fostering faculty and staff involvement in the QEP, especially the university-wide best practices program and identifying resource needs.
- The task force will periodically meet as a whole to review the results of the faculty – staff dialog sessions with the objective of selecting programs for support and identifying opportunities for interdisciplinary initiatives.
- Each year task force will provide funds and faculty - staff stipends to support faculty and development projects aimed at supporting the QEP.

The task force is responsible for collecting assessment data from projects supported through the QEP. The Task Force will be responsible for developing a year-end report which outlines the results of the divisional/college meetings and discusses the success of supported projects based on assessment data provided by faculty and staff supported through the task force.

Timeline:

Spring 2006: Task force is elected for a two-year term.

Aug./Sept. 2006: Task force retreat. Task force members will participate in a retreat with members from the QEP committee and a representative from the Jesuit Center. The retreat is designed to inform task force members about the QEP and discuss the best manner in which educate faculty and staff from their colleges/divisions about the QEP and what faculty and staff members can do to support the plan. A project director will be identified at the retreat. The project director will receive a course release to support efforts in the project.

Sept. – Nov. 2006: Task force members conduct faculty and staff dialog sessions within their division/college to educate faculty and staff within the division/college about the QEP and ways in which the division/college can support the plan. These dialog sessions will include presentations by members of the QEP committee. Task force members will also identify opportunities to support faculty and staff development within the division. While ideas may be synthesized at the faculty – staff dialog session, the task force members should provide means for faculty and staff to submit any ideas they develop after the dialog session. Finally, task force members will seek opportunities for faculty and staff within their division to participate in the university-wide best practices program.

Nov. 2006: The task force meets to discuss the results of the faculty – staff dialog sessions. The objectives for this meeting are to:

- (a) Identify opportunities for faculty and staff from different divisions or colleges to collaborate on projects which support the plan.
- (b) Evaluate the success of the faculty – staff dialog sessions and plan for a second round of sessions in the Spring.

Jan. – Mar. 2007: Task force members conduct a second round of faculty – staff dialog sessions. Once again, faculty and staff will be given the opportunity to learn about and discuss the progress of the QEP including means through which they may participate. If any interdivisional collaboration has been identified, faculty and staff from those other divisions may also be asked to speak about their projects. Once again faculty and staff are asked to identify needs.

Apr. 2007: Task force once again meets to discuss the results of the dialog sessions. Any faculty and staff support needs should be discussed as well. Task force members will continue to search for opportunities for inter-divisional ties. Task force members may consider joint faculty – staff seminars if overlap between faculty and staff interests is sufficient.

May 2007: Project Director prepares a summary report of faculty – staff dialog sessions and any faculty and staff development needs which were addressed through the task force.

Subsequent years will follow the same format. However, as the plan progresses the faculty – staff dialog sessions will focus on the results of programs supported through the QEP. Faculty and staff will learn about the progress of the plan and be continually challenged to identify means through which they may participate. The task force will continue to look for opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in off-campus seminars, conferences, etc. The task force will also continue to support new initiatives as they arise and facilitate inter-divisional relationships.

B. University-Wide Best Practices Program

The current Program for Instructional Effectiveness Support (PIES) resulted from the commitment of the faculty and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to enhance student engagement, learning, and the continuous process of improvement as expressed in the strategic

plan of the College. Each year a number of innovative pilot projects related to a particular academic issue or challenge are funded and evaluated as part of a collective commitment to quality enhancement and improved student learning. For example, the focus of the PIES for the 2005-06 academic year was to encourage faculty members to plan, implement and evaluate initiatives designed to enhance the first-year experiences of incoming students.

Faculty members submit proposals for new pedagogical initiatives and are selected each year to participate based on the merit of their proposals. The PIES was started in the spring of 2003, and in the summer of 2003 the first faculty cohort participated in a month-long program. During the summer program, faculty met to discuss and learn about current pedagogical best practices in fields related to the interests of the faculty involved. Each summer for the past three years, PIES has supported this month-long seminar for faculty as well as seminars during the academic year at which PIES participants discussed the progress of their projects. At this time, a total of 24 projects have been supported which have aimed at improving the first-year experience for Loyola freshmen.

In summer 2005, the PIES program also included four seminars hosted by Fr. Si Hendry from the Jesuit Center aimed at discussing the Jesuit mission of the university. These seminars provided an opportunity for faculty to learn about the tradition of Jesuit education, discuss how their fields relate to the Jesuit vision, and reflect on how their teaching supports the Jesuit ideals of promoting social justice and educating men and women for others.

Under this initiative, the College of Arts and Sciences PIES model would be expanded into a university-wide program. This program would provide stipends for faculty to participate in an intensive series of seminars focusing specifically on best practices for improving student learning and incorporating the Jesuit vision of education. The demonstrated outcomes include enhancing courses, improving instructional effectiveness, and increasing student learning—all of which lead directly or indirectly toward improved critical thinking.

Faculty and staff from across the university would submit proposals for a university-wide best practices program targeted specifically at the QEP, namely linking critical thinking and social justice issues in the classroom and across disciplines.

Evidence of a Demonstrated Need for Proposal Related to Student Learning

Currently the College of Arts and Sciences PIES program is the only coordinated faculty development program at Loyola University directed specifically at improving student learning. University faculties, in general, are hired based on their record of scholarly activity. It is imperative for faculty to have the opportunity to develop their skills in the classroom and become effective teachers.

Relationship to the QEP Topic

Two of the obstacles to instituting our current QEP topic are the lack of knowledge among faculty and staff about the Jesuit character of the university and the lack of opportunities for faculty to learn and discuss current pedagogical best practices for improving students' critical thinking skills in the classroom. This program could address both of these issues. Faculty and

staff would be solicited to submit proposals for pilot projects aimed at supporting the QEP. The program will provide an opportunity for interested faculty and staff to meet and learn from one another and will provide assistance in developing curricula aimed at supporting the QEP.

Enhancement of Student Learning

As with the College of Arts and Sciences PIES program, the request for proposals will require applicants to focus on improving student learning in the classroom and provide plans for assessing the efficacy of their initiative.

Impact on Faculty and Staff

Obviously, this program is specifically designed to have its primary impact on faculty and staff.

Targeted Students

The students who take courses taught by program participants will benefit.

Fostering Collaboration

The College of Arts and Sciences PIES program has been almost exclusively a college initiative. However, university staff members have been invited to present seminars about issues impacting student life, etc. These seminars were wonderful opportunities for the “two halves” of the university to get together to talk about common issues pertaining to student engagement inside and outside of the classroom. Opening the best practices program to faculty and staff from across the university will facilitate discussion between members of the various divisions and colleges about how best to approach the challenge of fostering critical thinking and introducing an awareness of social justice issues into the Loyola experience. Since the program will also draw upon resources from throughout the entire university, this will allow participating faculty and staff to be in dialogue with and to learn from people from the entire university.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Implementation

A program director will be selected by the Provost from among qualified, interested Associate Deans and/or Associate Provosts so there will be no new salary expense required. The program director will coordinate the seminar and ensure that participants execute their projects and submit project summaries. The program will be assessed by collecting feedback and suggestions from participants.

Monitoring and Assessment of Student-Learning Outcomes

Participants will be required to develop plans for assessing the effectiveness of their projects. Indeed, some time during the seminar series will be devoted to discussing best practices in student assessment. Faculty members will be expected to execute their assessment plans and at the end of the year submit a project summary, including assessment data, to the program officer. Half of the faculty stipend will be withheld until the project summary, including assessment data, is submitted.

Implementation Plan

The university-wide best practices initiative proposed here will follow the same timeline as the College of Arts and Sciences PIES program has in previous years. In January of 2007, the first will be released by the project director, and the initiative will be advertised across the university. Proposals will be submitted to the program director. The Faculty and Staff Development Task

Force along with a student representative will aid in selecting projects for funding. Participants will be notified of their acceptance in March of 2007.

Participants in the program will receive a \$2000 stipend and will be expected to participate in the best practices seminars. The participants will co-lead these sessions, which will focus on assigned readings related to effective pedagogical strategies and “best practices” within the context of the QEP topic. Participants will implement their programs during the 2007-2008 academic year and be expected to meet monthly to continue to discuss ongoing concerns. Grant recipients will be publicly recognized for their academic leadership and asked to share their knowledge and experiences with other colleagues across colleges at least twice during the academic year via faculty dialogue sessions. All project summaries will be due to the project director by the end of May 2008.

Resources Needed for Implementation

- (a) Support for publishing and disseminating the request for proposals.
- (b) Stipends (\$2,000) for 12 participants.
- (c) \$500 in funding for each participant for materials, activities, etc. that are directly related to enhancing student engagement and learning.
- (d) Support for the seminar series, including a dedicated seminar room for conducting the seminar as well as a budget for photocopying and supplies for participants.
- (e) Support for four seminars during the academic year for participants to speak about their initiatives.

C. Service Learning Development

Enhancing critical thinking skill and addressing issues of social justice are key components of Loyola’s Service Learning Program. More than twenty faculty members each semester currently incorporate Service Learning activities into their courses either as an option or a requirement. Approximately 400 students participate each semester at more than sixty community sites.

In recent meetings of the Service Learning Advisory Committee, the Service Learning Subcommittee for Faculty Development, the entire Service Learning Advisory Board, and the director of the Office of Service Learning have agreed that the direction the program needs to take is in the area of enhancing the current experiences and developing the process of reflection. This is more important at this time than increasing the number of courses with a Service Learning component. The learning experiences of students can be improved by devising programs aimed at benefiting the three essential entities involved in Service Learning: faculty, students, and community partners. We want faculty to develop their skills in reflecting on experience and helping students reflect on their experiences. We also want to enhance the ability of the administrators and supervisors in the agencies that where students work to develop their own skills in reflection and to help students reflect on their experiences and the experiences of the people they serve. If both these groups develop their abilities to help students reflect, the students will be helped as a result. By learning how to reflect on their experiences, students will develop their abilities to think critically about issues of social justice.

To meet these goals, the service learning program will provide workshops for faculty and community partners in reflection and will designate faculty members who have good reflection skills and experience using them as mentors for less experienced faculty member who want to develop that aspect of their use of service learning in their courses. In addition, the Office of Service Learning will sponsor a forum each semester for students to reflect on their experiences with each other and with faculty and staff from a variety of disciplines and divisions of the university.

Faculty: The academic justification of Service Learning lies primarily in its educational value. In general, faculty members need to help students learn to relate the service learning experience to course content and to help students understand and think critically about the people and the situations they encounter in the process of doing the service.

Thus, what is needed is a comprehensive faculty development effort to help those working in disciplinary areas across the academic spectrum both to understand and to implement Service Learning in the context of education. Reflection is the mechanism that links theory to practice and fosters in-depth development of critical thinking. Unlike other forms of experiential education (such as internships), reflection in a Service Learning context has a multilayered quality: reflection on the service experience results not just in greater mastery of course content but also in an expanded appreciation of the contextual and social significance of the discipline and an enhanced sense of social awareness and responsibility. Faculty development activities will have as a major focus enhancing skills related to the many dimensions of the experience: e.g. course content, personal, interpersonal, societal, spiritual/religious, ethical, and methods of reflecting and analyzing. In addition there will be an emphasis on the Jesuit approach to reflecting on experience.

Because students will be working in the local community with people who are suffering through the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, it is crucial that faculty be able to guide them in reflection on the personal and interpersonal experience and the societal context of what they see and do. In addition, the work in reflection should also assist the faculty as they confront their own experiences and losses with the storm.

Students: Student learning will be enhanced in the individual courses through the instructor's increased skills in reflection. In addition, there will be a forum each semester for students from different courses and disciplines to discuss their experience and be provided opportunities to expand their knowledge and appreciation of societal issues.

Community Partners: In order to maximize student learning, the administrators and supervisors at the agencies where students work should also increase their skills and knowledge. The Office of Service Learning can do this through orientation programs and periodic programs that increase the community partners' knowledge and skills in reflection, analysis, and other aspects of the program.

Evidence of a Demonstrated Need for a Proposal Related to Service Learning:

The Office of Service Learning in its efforts to improve continually has surveyed students, faculty, and community partners who have participated in Service Learning activities. According to the survey results, students find that the service learning experience helps them see connections between course-content and “real-life situations” and helps them understand the course content better. Faculty have also responded positively to items related to student learning, including “The service helped my students see the relevance of the course subject matter.”

Literature also documents the benefits of incorporating Service Learning into college and university curriculum. For example, the Higher Education Research Institute, in its *Executive Summary: How Service Learning Affects Students* (2000), noted that Service Learning participation shows significant positive effects on the following measures: academic performance (GPA, writing skills, **critical thinking skills**), values (**commitment to activism and to promoting racial understanding**), self-efficacy, leadership (leadership activities, self-rated leadership ability, interpersonal skills), choice of a service career, and plans to participate in service after college.

But both critical thinking and awareness of what is just action need more development as does the link between critical thinking and acting justly. Faculty need more skill in helping students reflect on their service learning experiences in addressing areas of justice that stretch beyond just the course content. Reflection needs to be multidimensional and needs to take place in the context of understanding a social experience, respect for the people served, and a framework of values. Thus we need to develop programs that help faculty increase their skills in the area of helping students reflect on their experience.

Relationship to the QEP Topic

Enhancing the knowledge and skills of Service Learning faculty, students, and community partners will result in the students’ ability to think critically about issues of justice which should lead to an increased ability to act justly.

Enhancement of Student Learning

This proposal enhances student learning to the extent that it supports a new initiative within the QEP by educating faculty and staff about “Thinking Critically, Acting Justly” as it applies to the service learning experience. The education accomplished by the reflection on the experience of service learning supported by the faculty and staff as they work with students will be of higher quality because of their participation in this initiative.

Impact on Faculty and Staff

Faculty who were interested in developing a service learning aspect to their course can work with the Office of Service Learning and can apply for a mentor. We would rather work from interested faculty than attempt to require courses or departments to implement a service learning

component. Faculty and staff who participate will benefit from greater skills in reflection and will thus be able to help their students more.

Targeted Students

Students who self-select into courses that have service learning options or requirements will benefit from this program. As more faculty start using service learning and reflection, more students will be able to enroll in their courses.

Fostering Collaboration

Currently, the Service Learning Program collaborates with several entities on campus, including the Jesuit Center with social justice and reflection issues and events, LUCAP with community sites and other program aspects, the student Justice Council in co-sponsoring university-wide events, the FYE initiative, and the Social Justice Scholars program. In addition, representation on the Service learning Advisory Committee includes the SGA president, LUCAP students and advisor, Social Justice Scholars, the director of the Jesuit Center, faculty from all colleges, staff and administrators, as well as community partners. The proposal will serve to enhance greatly the existing collaborations.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Implementation

Since the inception of the Service Learning Program, assessment has played a key role in its continuous improvement. Participating faculty, students, and community partners complete surveys each semester. In addition faculty will assess the student learning that has occurred as a result of the service learning experience.

Monitoring and Assessment of Student-Learning Outcomes

Selected faculty will work together with the Director of Service Learning and a sub-committee of the Service Learning Advisory Board to adjust the surveys to measure the effects of the enhanced student reflection. Faculty will measure the student learning of course content that occurs as a result of the service learning experience. Other outcomes will be assessed in the student survey.

Implementation Plan

Activities for faculty, students, and community partners will occur each year. The Director of the Office of Service Learning will be the individual responsible for the activities proposed. Mentoring will start in Year 1 with four faculty members, chosen by the Director of the Office of Service Learning, serving as mentors to other faculty who wish to develop the reflection component of their students' service learning experience. The Office of Service Learning will offer a seminar/workshop each semester for all faculty involved in service learning and a forum each semester for students to discuss their work and reflect on the experience.

Resources Needed for Implementation

The Office of Service Learning will fund the faculty – staff seminars/workshops and the student fora. Because of the extra work required of the faculty mentors, the mentoring program will require a stipend of \$800 each year for each of the four faculty members serving as mentors that year. That comes to \$3,200 per year of \$16,000 for the five years of the program.

Budget - Initiative 3

	1 YEAR	5 YEARS	
University-Wide Best Practices Program:	30,000	120,000¹	
Stipends for participants: @ 2,000)	24,000	96,000	(12
materials (12 @ 500)	6,000	24,000	
seminars during the year ²	-----	-----	
Ongoing Events:	7,000	21,000³	
Jesuit Mission Events:			
National expert ⁴ :	-----	-----	
local Jesuit:	1,000	3,000	
Divisional Events:	6,000	18,000	
(4 @ \$1,500)			
Advisory Committee:	-----	-----	
(No stipend, no cost)			
Service Learning:	3,200	16,000	
Workshops ⁵	-----	-----	
For faculty/community partners			
Stipends for Mentors: (4 @ \$800)	3,200	16,000	
Total Yearly Costs:			
Year 1:		10,200	
Year 2:		40,200	
Year 3:		40,200	
Year 4:		33,200	
Year 5:		33,200	
TOTAL COST:		157,000	

¹ This cost is for 4 years. There is no University-Wide Best Practices Program in the first year of the QEP.

² Cost for these will be paid by the operating budget of the Provost's office.

³ These Costs are calculated for three years. This program will run for the first three years of the QEP.

⁴ Cost for bringing in an outside speaker once a year and for food, printing, and other expenses for the event will be about \$2,500 per year or \$7,500 for three years. Costs will be paid from the operating expenses of the Jesuit Center.

⁵ Cost for these workshops will be \$1,000 per year or \$5,000 for five years. Costs will be paid out of the operating budget of the Office of Service Learning.

Total Budget for the Quality Enhancement Plan

Initiative 1: Faculty and Staff Development	\$	157,000
Initiative 2: First-Year Experiences		100,000
Initiative 3: Student Leadership		15,000
TOTAL COST OF THE FIVE-YEAR QEP	\$	272,000

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment for the QEP

(IN PROGRESS)

History of the QEP Process at Loyola

The Design Team

In the spring of 2004, Loyola University appointed a QEP Design Team composed of faculty, staff, and student representatives (see Appendix A) to recommend a QEP process. The Design Team proposed that “The entire LUNO community should participate in an open process that honors all constituents in developing the QEP and that stresses civility and understanding.” Further, it recommended that a group representative of the entire university community should manage the development process to assure that the QEP would meet the requirements of the SACS Mandate concerning the nature and purpose of the Quality Enhancement Plan and the meaning of student learning in the context of the QEP.

The Design Team also suggested the following about the QEP focus:

- The QEP focus must reflect the mission of the institution, and each division or unit needs to understand how that focus affects it.
- The QEP will stress individual attention and concern about students and as such may have different implementation strategies for different groups of students.
- The QEP will enhance student learning with a commitment to academic integrity and rigor, and value-laden liberal education stressing a balance of being grounded in ethics, cultural diversity, and intellectual diversity.
- Selection of the QEP focus should include consideration of both undergraduate and graduate students.
- The QEP should ensure continuity with the university, divisional, and college strategic plans.
- The QEP assessment process should be integrated into the university’s ongoing process of assessment.

The University QEP Team

In September of 2004, a University QEP Team was appointed. Reflecting the recommendations of the Design Team, its membership included faculty, staff, student, alumni, and Board of Trustee representatives (Appendix). Meeting weekly throughout the fall, the team oversaw a campus-wide process to inform the university community about the nature of a QEP and to solicit proposals for a topic to serve as the focus of Loyola’s plan. In support of these goals, the team developed a web site, met with all major institutional planning committees as well as the Student Government Association, and hosted two open luncheon discussions to which all faculty, staff, and students were invited. At the same time, the University QEP Team developed selection criteria for the choice of a topic (see Appendix C). All these efforts yielded 24 proposals of possible topics from across the university. The proposals were posted on the QEP web site, as were responses to them from the campus. Following an open forum to discuss the proposals, the University QEP Team recommended the three receiving the highest scores based upon the previously approved selection criteria along with three general topics that had gained support.

In February 2005, the SACS Leadership Team announced that it had decided to address all three proposals. Two of them would be melded into a focus for the institution's QEP: "Thinking Critically, Acting Justly." The other proposal, which focused on a review of the university's core curriculum, would be the subject of a university task force. On February 3, 2005, President Kevin Wildes, S.J., spoke at length to explain the choice of topic to the university community:

Clearly this moment in Loyola's history offers us the challenge of bold action. Having reviewed carefully both the three proposals and three general themes recommended by the QEP Team in December, the SACS Leadership Team has determined, and the Cabinet has concurred, that the university should move forward with two long-term initiatives to enhance student learning. Together, these two initiatives offer an opportunity to synthesize many of the suggestions contained in the recommendations.

The first of these long-term initiatives, our QEP for SACS, will be focused in such a way as to ensure our success in meeting reaffirmation standards, most importantly achieving and documenting student learning outcomes within the required five years. To improve student learning, the QEP will include specific activities and resources to enhance the curricular and co-curricular instructional skills of faculty and staff. These skills will help us achieve, concurrently, the second learning initiative: to completely examine and reshape our approach to general education. The process of achieving this second goal will be structured in such a way as to permit due deliberation by the faculty.

The working title for our SACS-mandated QEP will be "Thinking Critically, Acting Justly." This title tries to convey succinctly the common threads expressed, albeit in different ways, in two of the above proposals as well as in the general theme of educating students as whole persons. "Thinking Critically, Acting Justly" will challenge us to focus on supporting initiatives related to goals that faculty and staff in programs throughout the university share for student learning. The topic is directly related to the guiding Jesuit ideals of Loyola University. Under this theme, we can enhance academic programs and co-curricular activities in ways consistent with our character as a Catholic, Jesuit university. Rigorous critical thinking is a hallmark of our academic programs and one that we must continually develop, as indicated in quite a few of the proposals submitted to the QEP Team. "Acting justly" focuses attention on ways we develop our students to be men and women for others, such as our concerns for social justice, practical ethics, and experiential learning. Again, several submitted proposals and also discussion of them at the Soup and Substance events attest to widespread interest in enhancing this aspect of learning at Loyola.

Three weeks later, on February 24, the QEP Team hosted an open luncheon discussion for faculty, staff, and students on the QEP topic. As a basis for the discussion, the authors of the two proposals from which it was drawn composed a paragraph that synthesized the main points of their proposals:

Thinking Critically, Acting Justly

This theme is centered on the Jesuit ideal of educating the whole person. It visualizes a curriculum that is transformative and humanistic, one that promotes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual development of the student. It combines a rigorous intellectual training with a deep reflection on fundamental values, preparing Loyola's graduates to assume leadership roles in society and to become women and men for others. The theme is organized around two focal points. *Thinking critically* involves a multidisciplinary approach to develop the critical thinking skills of students, enabling them to analyze problems, think creatively, and express themselves clearly and coherently. The exercise of critical thinking, however, requires an appropriate context. The theme also intends a deep inquiry into all facets of human culture, including the ideas and values that have shaped human history. It also recognizes the need for a dialogue between faith and reason. This transforms our students from local to global citizens. *Acting justly* operationalizes a central tenet of Jesuit education, namely, that education involves the promotion of justice. Students are invited to view themselves not as isolated individuals but as members of a community. The *magis*—striving for something more—carries an obligation for Loyola's graduates to move beyond self-interest towards a concern for the poor and disenfranchised. An education for justice, however, requires a careful reflection on moral and spiritual values. Action in the world cannot be divorced from intellectual thought. Through coursework and extracurricular activities students are given opportunities to reflect about the purpose and meaning of their lives, and about their hopes and aspirations for their futures.

The discussion revealed wide support for the general thrust of the topic but also made clear the need for definitions of its basic elements. The QEP Team then undertook a detailed study of these elements and produced a series of consensus statements that were eventually approved by the SACS Leadership Team. These statements can be found on the first page of the plan.

Having established a foundation of goals toward which the university community might strive through its QEP to enhance student learning about the most distinctive elements of Loyola's mission, the QEP Team then turned to the structure of the plan that would guide the institution's efforts to achieve those goals. The group quickly determined that a number of ongoing programs ought to address the QEP topic. In addition, recognizing the necessity for individuals and units across campus to plan their own responses to the topic, the team devised a five-year plan of annual funding awards to innovative initiatives. Among the benefits of this approach was the opportunity for careful reflection and planning before submission of a proposal. To facilitate that reflection, the QEP Team also decided to dedicate the 2005-2006 academic year to a university-wide orientation about the QEP topic and plan. The team identified the QEP structure to the university in a paragraph:

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) on "Thinking Critically, Acting Justly" includes efforts to enhance student learning through existing programs (such as service learning and student leadership) and innovative initiatives proposed by programs or individuals. The mission of Jesuit higher education informs the QEP. Therefore, all initiatives take this mission as their foundation and build upon Loyola's efforts over the last century to

realize it. Education about this mission is the first task of implementing the QEP. The QEP Team has identified five ongoing areas of importance to the success of the QEP: (1) The Jesuit Vision of Education, (2) Supporting Faculty/Staff Development in Implementing the QEP, (3) Service Learning, (4) Student Leadership, and (5) First-Year Experiences. These areas will be addressed and assessed through individual five-year plans as part of the Loyola QEP. To foster innovative initiatives, a series of opportunities to examine aspects of Loyola's QEP theme will be offered to the university community during the 2005-2006 school year. Five annual rounds of support for innovative initiatives will be funded, beginning with initiatives commencing in 2006-2007.

In prelude to the implementation of the QEP, Father Kevin Wildes, SJ, President of Loyola University New Orleans, spoke in the Convocation of Faculty and Staff on August 23, 2005, about the importance and focus of the QEP.

At the convocation last spring, I spoke about social justice. Clearly the language of justice is part of our educational mission. Our University Mission speaks of the development and use of knowledge "for a more just world" and that a Loyola education that will "benefit the larger community." We have an opportunity in the QEP to take stock of how well we are doing. I also believe that we have a moment in our history as we search for new leadership in Student Affairs to more carefully examine what we are teaching outside the classroom in the ways our students live with one another in a community.

As I argued last year, justice and ethics are areas where there will be differing, and sometimes conflicting views, of how they are interpreted. To say that Jesuit education –a Loyola education– is committed to justice and ethics is not to say that we are committed to a particular set of answers or a particular ideology. (To do so would be to make us a school for propaganda, not a university.) We are committed to the questions of justice and the good life. We are a place where these can be discussed and argued freely and with civility. We are committed to educating women and men to a particular habit of mind that asks the questions of justice and ethics. We are committed to educating minds that ask these questions, and lives that live out of the habit of the questions rather than pat answers. I see our QEP project as an opportunity to examine these aspects of our educational enterprise and look for ways to do them better. To my knowledge, this type of evaluation has not been done at another Jesuit university.

In addition to the work on the QEP, a restructuring of the university put Students Affairs under the supervision of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Father Wildes expressed his hope that this restructuring will result in a positive experience for our students.

I have decided to re-title the Student Affairs position as Vice President for Student Affairs and Associate Provost. The person in this position will report to Provost Harris on a daily basis. The person in this position will be a member of the President's Cabinet. I will continue to be the chief operating officer of the University. My hope is that this realignment will lead to a greater integration of Academic and Student Affairs and an even more positive experience for our students.

This restructuring reflects a permanent commitment to learning based education. It is another step toward successful implementation of educating the whole person. The pursuit of academic excellence cannot be separated from the personal development of the student at Loyola. This reorganization brings the life of the student outside the classroom under the authority of the university's chief academic officer and acknowledges (just as our QEP topic, "Thinking Critically, Acting Justly," emphasizes) that we view the total experience of students at Loyola as contributing to their education. It is a bold statement of the institution's commitment to focus its resources on every available opportunity to enhance student learning. This restructuring is an initiative that, while outside the actual QEP, demonstrates that we are going beyond the boundaries of QEP in our efforts to enhance student learning at Loyola.

The final QEP plan would have been reviewed by the university community and revised as necessary during the fall of 2005, culminating in approval by the Loyola University Board of Trustees prior to submission to the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools if nature had not intervened. However some changes were necessary to keep the plan moving forward. In the following section, the effect of Hurricane Katrina on Loyola University New Orleans and the QEP is detailed.

The Effect of Hurricane Katrina on Loyola University New Orleans and the QEP

In the early morning of August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina moved into the city of New Orleans. It left behind a city devastated by flooding, wind damage, loss of property, and, worst of all, loss of many lives. This event has forever changed the way the citizens of New Orleans will live their lives in the future.

All our students, faculty and staff have been affected in one way or another by the storm. Many are without homes and belongings. However, we stand determined to persevere in the face of hardship to rebuild this great city and to keep our institution moving forward. The theme of the QEP is clearly perfect for the rebuilding effort we face. As an important institution in the fabric of the city, we will work tirelessly to build a better city from the devastation. Our students will learn on multiple levels what "Thinking Critically, Acting Justly" really means as they work within the community to bring about change that will benefit the university, as well as the city and all its inhabitants.

Some structural and administrative changes were necessary to meet the timelines originally mandated for the QEP. The fall, 2005, semester was cancelled due to the hurricane and spring semester, 2005, is a semester filled with activities required to get students and faculty involved with rebuilding the community. Therefore, full implementation of the plan will not begin until the fall, 2006, semester. In addition, because faculty and staff were scattered all over the country in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, it was impossible to reconvene the QEP Team to complete the plan until November. They were contacted by electronic mail for review and comments on the plan once communications systems were reestablished. Those comments were incorporated in the written plan whenever possible. During the time period from August 29 until November

21, the plan was reviewed and approved by the Council of Deans which was meeting regularly to oversee other university business during this crisis.

Once the university was occupied again, the plan was turned back over to the University QEP Team for final development and recommendation to the SACS Leadership Committee and the Board of Trustees. Although team members had to work against the clock to get the plan submitted on time, they continued to include the returning Loyola community in finalizing the plan.

The QEP organization structure throughout the process has included development of the following entities.

QEP Management Structure And Support

Time 0: SACS Leadership Team

Term: 2003-2011

Although the reaffirmation of accreditation is a presidential responsibility, the SACS Leadership Team was established to support the Office of the President in the process. Team members offer advice and assist the Office of the President in overseeing the whole reaffirmation of accreditation process.

Time 1: QEP Design Team

Term: 2003 spring semester

The QEP Design Team was appointed in the spring of 2004 by Interim President William Byron to recommend to the SACS Leadership Team a process for the development of Loyola's Quality Enhancement Plan.

Time 2: QEP Team

Term: 2004-2005 academic year

In September of 2004, a University QEP Team was appointed by Provost Walter Harris, Jr. Reflecting the recommendations of the Design Team, its membership included faculty, staff, student, alumni, and Board of Trustee representatives (see Appendix A). Meeting weekly throughout the fall, the team oversaw a campus-wide process to inform the university community about the nature of a QEP and to solicit proposals for a topic to serve as the focus of Loyola's plan. Once the topic was selected, the team led the university community in designing and developing the overall plan.

Time 3: QEP Implementation & Oversight Team

Term: 2006-2011

In the spring semester of 2006, a University QEP Implementation & Oversight Team will be appointed by Provost Walter Harris, Jr. This team will be charged with oversight of the QEP initiatives to be implemented during the five-year QEP period. In addition, the

Implementation Team will be charged with conducting an audit of QEP efforts each year during the QEP and making recommendations to the SACS Leadership Team for changes or corrections in parts of the plan that are not yielding expected benefits.

It is expected that changes in membership on this team will occur due to sabbaticals, retirements, or other factors. The Provost will replace members of this team as circumstances require. While every attempt will be made to have representation of most constituencies within the university on this team, the number of team members will be kept to no more than ten members at any given time to insure timely and effective decision-making. Given the fact that there will be changes in membership over time, it is expected that a large number of constituencies will be represented at some time during the five-year period.

Appendix A: Loyola University Mission Statement

Loyola University New Orleans, a Jesuit and Catholic institution of higher education, welcomes students of diverse backgrounds and prepares them to lead meaningful lives with and for others; to pursue truth, wisdom, and virtue; and to work for a more just world. Inspired by Ignatius of Loyola's vision of finding God in all things, the university is grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, while also offering opportunities for professional studies in undergraduate and selected graduate programs. Through teaching, research, creative activities, and service, the faculty, in cooperation with the staff, strives to educate the whole student and to benefit the larger community.

Approved by Loyola University New Orleans Board of Trustees (March 5, 2004)

Appendix B: The Jesuit Mission in Higher Education

The Jesuit approach to education integrated the systematic approach to education of the University of Paris, the critical thinking approach of scientific education, and the formational influences of the humanistic schools of the Renaissance. Ignatius' genius often consisted in integrating and organizing things he learned from others. But I think the best way to understand the distinctive characteristics of Jesuit education comes from Ignatius' own spirituality that shaped the spirituality of the Society of Jesus.

Ignatius' spirituality emphasizes the fact that God has a personal concern for and a personal hope for each person. Jesuit schools emphasize a *personal concern for and respect for each student* and they try to provide an atmosphere in which that can take place. Just as Ignatian spirituality incorporates the whole person, intellect, emotions, imagination, etc., Jesuit schools dedicate themselves to the *growth of the whole person*, academically and intellectually, but also socially, morally, spiritually, and personally.

Since a cornerstone of Ignatian spirituality is finding God in all things, a hallmark of Jesuit education is the *affirmation of the goodness of the world*, of all creation. Since everything can be a means of encountering and knowing God, the study of anything can be a means of encountering, knowing, and serving God. Jesuit schools have always found their base in the *liberal arts*, which foster the growth of the whole person and which provide a broad understanding of the human experience. Early Jesuits found the study of the *natural sciences* as a way of understanding the world remarkably consistent with and encouraged by their spirituality. And they got involved in *art* and *music* as a way to express their own spirit and their affirmation of the world.

At Manresa, Ignatius learned to sort through the interior movement in his own heart, discovering which to listen to and follow and which to reject in his attempt to live out his dedication to God with integrity. In the academic world of the University of Paris this translated into *critical thinking*, learning to sort through ideas and arguments, discovering which to affirm and which to reject. As a consequence, Jesuit schools have also emphasized developing critical thinking, but *critical thinking in the context of a conceptual framework and a value system*, on the part of students.

Ignatius valued action. As a "contemplative in action," He saw himself called to work with Jesus to bring the world back to God. Similarly, he and the early Jesuits wanted students to be *active in their own education*. Jesuit schools encouraged student projects, presentations, and debates, play and performances, anything that encouraged students to appropriate knowledge for themselves and to think things through and reason things out for themselves. But activity alone is not educative. Since Ignatius learned so much by reflecting on his own experience, and since reflection on experience is one of the key notes of Ignatian spirituality, Jesuit education has traditionally emphasized *reflection on experience* as a key learning technique. Jesuit education involves reflection on numerous types of experience: on the types of learning experience mentioned earlier in this paragraph, on the experience of serving others, on the needs and dynamics of society, and on one's faith and values and their meaning for one's life.

Since *companionship* was important for Ignatius' spirituality, a sense of *community* became important for Jesuit education. Ignatius' idea was that students, faculty, and staff form a learning community with a lot of personal interaction and mutual concern. In many ways, learning takes place in an environment of interpersonal relationships. This, along with the care for the person mentioned above, opens the way for a genuine sharing of people's lives and visions. Community and communication also takes place between the Jesuit schools. As in Ignatius' time, people who hold similar jobs in various Jesuit schools still communicate with each other and often meet together regularly to share ideas, talk about what works and what doesn't, and discuss ways of structuring their areas of responsibility to enhance the Jesuit character of their schools.

Ignatius had the attitude of wanting to help people. The Society of Jesus exists to help and serve people, to do what is most needed. *Service to others* characterizes Jesuit education. Whether it is through a specific service project geared to help those who lack basic necessities or whether it is through the attitude with which one teaches, works, or studies, Jesuit schools believe that we need to serve others. In terms of service projects, Jesuits always remember that their schools are educational institutions rather than social service agencies, so the key values in service are the development of compassion, the formation of an attitude of service, and the reflection on the experience of service and the experience of the poor.

Ignatius always wanted students and teachers in his schools to be *aware of their social environment, the world around them, and the needs of that world*. He wanted people to know how the world works, so it would make sense to him for students to study law, business, sociology and other social sciences. But he was not so interested in people simply functioning well within the world, but in people serving God through the world. That involved improving the world so that people are better helped and served. It involved "doing what is most needed" to help. As part of the process of reflecting on experience, Jesuit schools have emphasized reflecting on the experience of service, the experience of the social environment, and the needs of the world to discover what is most needed.

In 1973, Pedro Arrupe, S.J., at the time the superior general of the Society of Jesus, gave an address to a group of European alumni at Valencia, Spain. In his talk, he stated that the greatest need in our world was the need for social justice, and the kind of person the world needed was what he called "men for others," persons who were selflessly concerned about the most needy in our world. Since then, Jesuit schools have adopted his phrase as "*men and women with and for others*" and have set as a goal of Jesuit education the formation and development of such persons. In 1978, the 32nd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus articulated as the contemporary mission of the Jesuit Order, the "*service of faith and the promotion of justice.*" This dual mission becomes operative in every Jesuit's life and work and in every apostolic work undertaken by the order. Whatever the Jesuit institution, whether it be a parish, a retreat house, a high school, or a college or university, it is characterized by the service of faith and the promotion of justice.

Jesuit schools operate within a history and a tradition of Jesuit education, dating back to 1548. They also operate within a history and a tradition of Catholic education, dating back even further. But they are also universities which operate as universities. As Jesuit and Catholic

schools, they operate with an *overall vision*. As universities they respect the free search for knowledge and wisdom. While respecting that search, they do focus their attention on helping their students understand what it is to be a person in society and in a world. To that extent they have always emphasized the study of philosophy. They have also focused their attention on helping their students understand what it is to be a person and a world before God. To that extent, they have emphasized the study of theology. There is a contemporary tension between having an overall vision and respecting the free search for knowledge and wisdom. What matters at this moment in the debate is finding a way to respect the terms “Jesuit,” “Catholic,” and “university.”

Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., the current superior general of the Jesuits, articulated that in a speech on “The Place of Justice in Jesuit Higher Education,” in Santa Clara, California, in October of 2000:

In the words of General Congregation 34, a Jesuit university must be faithful to both the noun "university" and to the adjective "Jesuit." To be a university requires dedication "to research, teaching and the various forms of service that correspond to its cultural mission." To be Jesuit "requires that the university act in harmony with the demands of the service of faith and promotion of justice found in Decree 4 of General Congregation 32."ⁱ

Overall, Ignatius was concerned about what kind of persons the graduates of Jesuit schools became. Fr. Kolvenbach re-emphasized that in his Santa Clara talk

But the measure of Jesuit universities is not what our students do but who they become and the adult Christian responsibility they will exercise in the future towards their neighbor and their world. For now, the activities they engage in, even with much good effect, are for their formation. This does not make the university a training camp for social activists. Rather, the students need close involvement with the poor and the marginal now, in order to learn about reality and become adults of solidarity in the future.ⁱⁱ (p. 7 and 8)

Ignatius wanted people to see the world as a gift from God. He wanted people to see, as he saw, that everything we are and have—our memory, intellect, will, energy, freedom, talents, and abilities—was a gift from God to be shared freely with God and others. As a response to being given so much, he wanted people to be generous. For him, these were the two most important virtues, gratitude and generosity. For him they made a person magnanimous or “great-souled.” In the tradition of Ignatius, Jesuits want the graduates of our schools to become men and women who are *grateful and generous*, who are “*great-souled*,” who have the *wisdom* to understand themselves and the world, who are *mindful of the needy*, and who have the *knowledge and skill* and the *compassion and courage to do what is most needed in our world*.

*

¹ GC34, D.17, nn.6,7. in . Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., THE SERVICE OF FAITH AND THE PROMOTION OF JUSTICE IN AMERICAN JESUIT HIGHER EDUCATION. Santa Clara University, October 6, 2000. p. 11.

²Kolvenbach, *op. cit.* pp.7-8.

Appendix C: SACS Mandate

The Nature and Purpose of the Quality Enhancement Plan

The *Principles of Accreditation* attests to the commitment of the Commission on Colleges to the enhancement of the quality of higher education and to the proposition that student learning is at the heart of the mission of all institutions of higher learning. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a component of the accreditation process that reflects and affirms both of these commitments. Developing a QEP as a part of the reaffirmation process is an opportunity and an impetus for the institution to enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue or issues the institution considers important to improving student learning.

The QEP describes a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue(s) related to enhancing student learning. The QEP should complement the institution's ongoing integrated institution-wide planning and evaluation process and is not intended to supplant or replace the processes described in Core Requirement Five and Comprehensive Standard Sixteen. On the contrary, the topic or issue identified for the QEP may very well evolve from these existing processes, as well as from other issues stemming from the institution's internal reaffirmation review.

While many aspects of the accreditation process focus on the past and the present, the QEP is “forward-looking” and thus transforms the process into an ongoing activity rather than an episodic event. Core Requirement Twelve requires an institution to have a *plan* for increasing the effectiveness of some aspect of its educational program relating to student learning. The plan launches a process that can move the institution into a future characterized by creative, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences for students.

The Meaning of Student Learning in the Context of the QEP

Student learning is defined broadly in the context of the QEP and may address a wide range of topics or issues. Student learning may include changes in students' knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values that may be attributable to the collegiate experience. Examples of topics or issues include, but are not limited to, enhancing the academic climate for student learning, strengthening the general studies curriculum, developing creative approaches to experiential learning, enhancing critical thinking skills, introducing innovative teaching and learning strategies, increasing student engagement in learning, and exploring imaginative ways to use technology in the curriculum. In all cases, the goals and evaluation strategies must be clearly linked to improving the quality of student learning.

From *Handbook for Reaffirmation of Accreditation* (Commission on Colleges, 2003)

Appendix D: The QEP Design Team

The QEP Design Team was appointed in the spring of 2004 by Interim President William Byron to recommend to the SACS Leadership Team a process for the development of Loyola's Quality Enhancement Plan.

John Cornwell, Provost's Office

John Biguenet, English

Barbara Fleischer, City College

Bea Forlano, SGA President

Si Hendry, S.J., Jesuit Center

Laurie Joyner, Arts and Sciences

Edward Kvet, Music

Jac McCracken, Music

Julia McSherry, Institutional Advancement

Isabel Medina, Law School

Deborah Poole, University Library

Michael Saliba, Business Administration

John Sears, Administrative Senate

Karen Shields, Student Affairs

Deborah Zimmerman, Business and Finance

Appendix E: The University QEP Team

<u>Name/email address</u>	<u>Extn.</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
John Biguenet biguenet@loyno.edu	2474	Chairperson
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Katie Codina kmcodina@loyno.edu	5819	Student Government Association
David Estes estes@loyno.edu	2476	Provost's Liaison (non-voting)
Alicia Hansen ahansen@loyno.edu	7155	University Libraries
Si Hendry sihendry@loyno.edu	2304	Jesuit Center
Brenda Joyner bjoyner@loyno.edu	7978	Business Administration
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James Bradley, S.J. jbradle@loyno.edu	2741	Board of Trustees

Appendix F: Selection Criteria for Loyola University's Quality Enhancement Plan

- The QEP clearly fosters the mission of Loyola University and is congruent with strategic planning.
- The QEP operationalizes the Jesuit identity of the University.
- The potential benefit of the QEP to students is clear and compelling.
- The QEP's distinctiveness has the potential to increase the national visibility of Loyola University.
- The scope of the QEP is broad enough to include, at a minimum, all undergraduates at some point in their Loyola experience.
- Broad consensus around the QEP is demonstrated from the stakeholders (i.e., trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni & alumnae) who will be directly affected by the project.
- Projected cost of the QEP is justified by the potential for significant enhancement of student learning.
- The proposed QEP is amenable to assessment and has measurable outcomes.
- The QEP balances creativity and risk-taking such that the probability of success is high.
- The QEP is a long-term, enhancement project that demonstrates Loyola's commitment to student learning.

[Approved by University QEP Team, SACS Leadership Team, and President's Cabinet]

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ⁱ GC34, D.17, nn.6,7. in . Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., THE SERVICE OF FAITH AND THE PROMOTION OF JUSTICE IN AMERICAN JESUIT HIGHER EDUCATION. Santa Clara University, October 6, 2000. p. 11.

ⁱⁱKolvenbach, *op. cit.* pp.7-8.