Faculty members at Loyola University New Orleans recognize the challenges that Hurricane Katrina has created for our institution and the City of New Orleans. We understand the recruitment, retention, and financial challenges that we are facing for the next several years. We have worked in good faith and with extra effort to meet the needs of students, staff, colleagues, and the larger community. Many of us have also worked hard to have open and honest communication with the President and Provost hoping that we can effectively bridge what is perceived as a growing “disconnect” between faculty members and administrators over the past year.

This document is written in the spirit of continuing an open dialogue with faculty colleagues across the institution about issues that clearly concern a growing number of us. It’s our hope that the President and Provost will view our efforts to build stronger relationships across colleges as a starting point from which we may start an ongoing and productive dialogue about what it means to govern together for the greater good of Loyola.

We applaud the President’s statement, in his April 21 Chronicle of Higher Education article, that “university decisions involve students, faculty members, administrators” and others. We also applaud his acknowledgement, in his letter to the Loyola community of May 22 that the “university is a constellation of communities: faculty, staff, students, alumni and administration,” and that “no one element comprises the whole of the university.” We are concerned, however, that decision-making processes at Loyola do not reflect this stated point of view.

Faculty members from across colleges remain committed to shared governance and reject the pattern of behavior delineated below from all administrators associated with the Offices of the President and Provost since last fall. While we have diverse opinions about the Pathways Plan, the points made in this document represent much larger issues, grounded in our basic academic values and our ideals as a community of scholars and learners. These values and ideals have shaped the shared history and culture that we cherish at Loyola.

We believe that the following pattern of objectionable behaviors undermines our identity as a “constellation of communities” and threatens our institutional mission:

- Lack of Leadership in Articulating a Clear Vision for the Future;
- Lack of Collegiality and the Absence of Meaningful Community Input;
- Lack of Ongoing and Effective Communication; and
- Lack of Competence in the Discharge of Duties.

_Lack of Leadership in Articulating and Building Support for a Vision Connected to the Mission of Loyola._ At this time, it is not clear that planning for the future is being mission driven. No vision has been articulated to support the Pathways Plan and no explanation has been offered to illustrate how cutting programs, closing City College, dividing the College of Arts and Sciences, and establishing new Schools and Colleges will better position us for a stronger future. In fact, at least one Board of Trustee member has publicly stated that the reason for splitting Arts and Sciences is that “it is ungovernable.” Not only does this reason lack any relationship to mission, it violates the most basic premise of faculty self-governance upon which universities are built.
Lack of Collegiality and Absence of Meaningful Community Input into Planning. A particularly disturbing behavior pattern of the President and Provost and members of their administrative staffs is exclusion of faculty members, deans, and often vice-presidents from the planning process. Many faculty members as well as deans and vice presidents have decades of leadership experience at Loyola as well specialized knowledge to contribute to planning. Given the relative lack of administrative experience of the leadership team operating the university, it is hard understand why such knowledge and experience would be ignored at this time of crisis in the university’s history.

The President’s Planning Task Force, convened spring 2006 is a case in point: charged with making recommendations to the Board Planning Committee, the task force was composed of elected senate faculty representatives, deans, vice presidents, a representative from the staff senate, and SGA representatives; however, the group only met three times and did not share any substantive data or ideas for restructuring. The task force merely responded to drafts of very broad goal statements (e.g., “Excel in educating students as whole persons,” “Support high quality faculty, staff, and administrators”). For this reason, the task force appears to have been little more than a ruse for the leadership team to claim involvement and input from faculty and lower- and mid-level administrators in formulating the plan.

SCAP’s work on program review criteria for discontinuance of programs is another example of faculty effort and recommendations dismissed. Charged by the Provost with developing such criteria, SCAP worked from January to late March and sent their criteria to the Senate for approval and/or modification. The Senate refused to approve them. Instead of consulting with the Senate about modifications to the criteria, the Provost simply threw out SCAP’s recommendations and applied other criteria. Despite the administration’s failure to work with the faculty on program review, the President has cited the work of SCAP and the Senate on the criteria as proof of faculty participation in the program review process.

In short, planning is being conducted by a small group of senior administrators who only talk with and listen to each other. The scant regard that this administration shows toward anyone outside Marquette Hall constitutes a real lack of respect for the faculty and has led to low faculty morale. It is not surprising that this lack of respect has led to calls for passive resistance of key administrative initiatives.

Lack of Ongoing and Effective Communication. Post-Katrina planning has been put in place without a mechanism to facilitate clear and consistent communication between administrators and faculty members. This lack of communication has left the faculty in the dark about directions in which the administration plans to take the university in the future.

Lack of Competence in the Discharge of Duties Associated with the Office of the Provost. A few examples of ineffectiveness and inefficiency include the following:

- The equivocation and lack of clear communication about plans to honor or not to honor the contracts of extraordinary faculty members in the spring 2006 semester.

- The Spring II survey debacle that did not offer useful data to chairs and/or deans for planning purposes. Because the survey was poorly planned and executed by the Provost’s office, chairs had no support in coordinating offerings over the two five-week and the ten-week session. To get the courses they need many students have had to take as many as three courses in a single five-week session and an additional one in one of the other sessions. In addition, many believe that they must take 12 hours to keep their
financial aid. *This course load has been impossible for many students.* Their academic work is suffering, they are experiencing major stress, and many are speaking of leaving Loyola because of this disastrous Spring II semester.

- The absence of a reasonable implementation strategy for changes outlined in the Pathways Plan. Many of the changes are scheduled to go into effect August 1, which at this writing is but six weeks away, yet the staff in the Provost’s Office is still grappling with the most basic issues involved in implementation. When tough questions or unintended consequences emerge, the Provost’s Office bounces responsibility for answers back to the faculty and deans. In short, the administration has centralized decision making and decentralized responsibility and accountability for its decisions. For example, widespread confusion exists about which students will be able to finish degrees in terminated programs. The Pathways webpage states that juniors and seniors will be able complete their majors. Recently, the message has changed: only juniors and seniors who can complete their degrees by May 2007 will be able to finish. The definition of “junior” has become slippery, and this slipperiness characterizes much of the information coming out of Marquette.

- The bypassing of deans, area coordinators, and chairs on major implementation issues of the plan. Members of the Provost’s Office have violated proper channels by going around deans and chairs and meeting with individual faculty to discuss and negotiate parts of the plan that have a direct impact on those faculty. These discussions have included hints of possible resources to follow if cooperation is secured. Faculty members across colleges must reject these attempts to co-opt faculty members by bypassing elected faculty leaders and deans.

**Concern about the President’s Inattention to Differential Cuts and the Negative Effects that the Performance of the Provost and His Staff is Having on His Presidency.**

Although the Pathways plan has resulted in layoffs of numerous part-time, extraordinary, tenure-track, and tenured faculty members, no positions have been cut in the President’s Office or the Provost’s Office.

1. One former Assistant Provost has been given the job of “Special Assistant to the President,” and his duties have not been communicated to the university community.

2. The Provost has retained two Assistant Provosts, one of whom was hired just weeks before the storm.

3. The administration has announced plans to create a new position, Vice President for Mission and Identity whose duties will include service to Holy Name Parish.

4. The administration has announced plans to create another position, Director of the QEP.

5. Rather than leaving the Vice President for Student Affairs/Associate Provost position vacant for another year and appointing an interim from that division’s staff, the administration has recently hired a new Vice President in that area.
6. Having eliminated City College, in part at least for financial reasons, the administration has created a new college and appointed an Interim Dean, who will be supported by clerical staff. Obviously, no dollars will be saved here.

**The Problems Associated with Pathways: Process Issues, Invalid Data, and Weak Rationale.**
The Loyola University New Orleans Faculty Handbook states that proposals for program or department discontinuances are to be evaluated by the Standing Committee for Academic Planning (SCAP) applying criteria approved by the Senate. While the Board of Trustees makes final decisions on program discontinuances, SCAP is charged with advising the Board, the President, and the University Senate on these matters. (P 9.8)

**Process Issues/Violations with Regards to the SCAP:**

1. SCAP was not given the opportunity to evaluate and did not evaluate the Pathways proposal using criteria approved by the Senate.

2. SCAP was allowed one week to provide feedback on Pathways, and this short time period occurred during Holy Week, when many members had religious and familial obligations on top of the intensive committee work.

3. The data provided to SCAP was not nearly sufficient to evaluate the proposed program cuts. Only partial financial and statistical data were provided to support the decisions in Pathways. SCAP was told that any recommended changes to the plan had to be offset dollar for dollar by other cuts. As no estimates of savings expected from the cuts were provided to SCAP, this was an impossible charge.

4. In the spirit of understanding of the University’s difficult situation, SCAP took this work very seriously and made some important recommendations to improve Pathways. These recommendations were largely ignored!

5. SCAP was neither informed of nor shown the revision of the Pathways Plan until the revised plan was approved by the Board on May 19, 2006.

**Invalid Data Related to the Pathways Plan**

The data posted on the Provost’s website was described by President Wildes in his letter of March 17, 2006 as “all the data that will be used to guide decision-making.” In fact, the Faculty Senate found this data to be grossly incomplete. (See [http://loyno.edu/facultyandstaff/universitysenate/](http://loyno.edu/facultyandstaff/universitysenate/). Click on Review Criteria and the Program Criteria Data Matrix Links)

Additionally, SCAP members found many errors in the data while they were reviewing the Pathways proposal during Easter Break. They discovered many others after SCAP had approved its original recommendation to the Board, the President, and the Senate. This was part of the motivation for SCAP to meet again on May 9 and 10 and to write a strong statement outlining the errors and warning against the misuse of the data to justify decisions related to the Pathways Plan. See [http://loyno.edu/facultyandstaff/universitysenate/](http://loyno.edu/facultyandstaff/universitysenate/) click on the Summary of UPT link).
The complete set of inaccuracies is too numerous to list here, so we will only mention a few:

1. The number of majors and minors were miscounted in many cases, for example, in Computer Science, Education, Physics and Communications.

2. All indications were that the programs proposed for elimination in Communications were in fact viable programs that made substantial net dollars. Later, additional data was provided by the Provost’s Office to counter this, but this data was also found to be either incorrect or misleading.

3. Education, Computer Science and Physics were presented as losing substantial dollars when in fact they operate in the black.

4. Errors in coding in the Delaware Study were found in at least one subject (Communications). The coding was based on Communications programs that are very different from ours. These faulty comparisons made our program look extremely expensive.

If the process had been better applied and more open, and if the Deans had been consulted, we could have discovered and corrected many of these errors. Instead we have a very frustrated and mistrustful faculty that is wondering if the errors were actually intentional.

*Weak Rationale Offered to Justify Pathways Plan*

Initially we were told that the main purpose of Pathways was to avoid a major financial crisis by anticipating a smaller Loyola in the near future. In practice, we encounter a different plan that includes other aspects that in fact do not save money but cost substantial dollars. The President has failed to present a clear vision for the plan. The Provost has failed to engage and empower deans and faculty members who are essential to the future success of the institution. It will remain very difficult to achieve any of our institutional aspirations under the current conditions given the growing sense of despair over the pattern of behavior associated with our key administrative leaders.

The University Senate strongly supports the facts outlined in this document because we take seriously our collective faculty responsibility to strenuously resist when evidence suggests that thoughtful consideration should lead to other patterns of behavior and decisions. A shared vision and sense of ownership cannot be mandated. People cannot be forced to comply out of fear.

At this time, we call on President Wildes and Provost Harris to enter into a productive discussion with faculty leaders about these issues so that we can begin to work TOGETHER more productively for the good of the institution. We stand ready to discuss perceived problematic faculty behavior from the perspective of our administrators. We are also prepared to work toward developing consensus regarding the appropriate roles for faculty members and administrators in the decision making processes of the institution. We believe that coming to agreement regarding principles of shared governance will help create a culture of trust that is critical to building a stronger Loyola for the future.
Pathways timeline:

**Feb.-March 2006** SCAP works on a document titled “Program Review Criteria.”

**March 28** SCAP votes to send the “Program Review Criteria” to the Faculty Senate for approval and/or modification.

**April 6** The “Program Review Criteria” is presented to the Senate. The Senate forms a subcommittee to look at the criteria.

**April 7** Data to be used in program review process is posted on the Provost website.
April 10 Original Pathways Plan is posted online.

April 11 SCAP forms a subcommittee to look at Pathways and give a recommendation to the full council. The subcommittee is charged to come back with a report in a week. The committee is told that if it recommends reinstating a program proposed for termination that it has to come up with offsetting dollars.

April 13-14-15 (Easter Break) The SCAP subcommittee meets. Using incomplete (and later found mistaken) data, the subcommittee crafts a response to Pathways with four substantial changes. The “Program Review Criteria” is not used for lack of data and time.

April 18 SCAP approves the subcommittee recommendations and expresses the need to meet again to provide more input to the President and the Board.

April 19 UPT meets. The SCAP report is presented to UPT. UPT expresses concerns about the plan and the SCAP report. The data used is reported incomplete and flawed.

April 20 The Senate meets. The subcommittee studying the “Program Review Criteria” reports that data posted is not enough to evaluate Pathways using the “Program Review Criteria.” The SCAP report is presented to the Senate. The UPT concerns are presented to the Senate.

April 21 The Senate Executive Committee meets with a Board subcommittee and express serious concerns about Pathways, its rationale and vision and the supporting data.

May 9 and 10 SCAP meets again to make further recommendations on Pathways and express concerns on data accuracy and on the rationale for the plan.

May 11 Senate meets and takes and unofficial straw vote of no confidence on the Provost office.

May 12 Arts and Sciences faculty meet and vote no confidence on the Provost, the Associate Provosts and a Special Aid to the President.

May 19 President presents to the Board and amendment Pathways plan with only minor corrections. The Board approves the Pathways plan. The new plan is presented to the Loyola community after its final Board approval.