



FELICIAN
UNIVERSITY
The Franciscan University of New Jersey



Self-Study Design

Prepared for the
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
January 30, 2026



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I.) Institutional Overview

History

One of only three institutions of higher education in the United States established by the Order of Felician Sisters, Felician University was founded in Lodi, New Jersey, on July 5, 1923. Initially known as Immaculate Conception Normal School, with a mission of training teachers, the institution evolved into a teaching college in May 1935, approved by and affiliated with the Catholic University of America. The school was reorganized as a junior college in 1941, and on March 26, 1942, was incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey as Immaculate Conception Junior College.

In December 1963, the New Jersey State Department of Education granted the College the power to confer, in its own name, the Associate of Arts degree. In 1964, the school began admitting laywomen, and a year later, assumed supervision of a two-year Nursing program begun by Saint Mary's Hospital in East Orange, NJ. In 1967, the school changed its name to Felician College and, in addition to Nursing, began offering a four-year degree program in Elementary Teacher Education. Additional program growth followed in a number of academic disciplines and continuing education. In 1986, the College became coeducational.

Under the leadership of Sister Theresa Mary Martin, president of Felician College from 1984 through 2012, program offerings broadened to include weekend classes, off-campus instructional sites, partnerships with other institutions, as well as degrees in various fields including the Natural Sciences and Humanities. Recognizing the need for student support services, Felician subsequently opened a Childcare Center, a Center for Learning, and a Nursing Resource Center. In 1995, Felician College received permission from the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education to offer graduate programs, starting with the Master of Science degree in Nursing (MSN), followed by additional offerings at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including an accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program, expansion of degree and certification options in the Education field and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) program. Felician College's growth continued with the purchase of an additional campus located in Rutherford, New Jersey in 1997. In 2004, the Office for Mission Integration was established to promote the continuance of the Felician Franciscan identity and heritage of the College in all aspects of the collegiate experience.

Following Sister Theresa Mary Martin's retirement, Dr. Anne Prisco assumed the presidency of Felician College in July 2012. That fall, the College's divisions were reorganized as schools (the Schools of Arts and Sciences, Business and Information Sciences, Education and Nursing). In Spring of 2013, Iviswold Castle opened on the Rutherford campus after a 14-year renovation, housing the Office of the President

as well as other essential college offices and meeting spaces. Concurrently, work began on what came to be known as “Education Commons” on the Rutherford campus, a project that incorporated a high-tech ELibrary, Nursing Resource Center, and classrooms. Likewise, a variety of new academic programs were launched, including undergraduate programs in Communications and Criminal Justice, as well as graduate offerings in Counseling Psychology and doctoral programs in Nursing (DNP), Business Administration (DBA) and Counseling Psychology (PsyD). On September 24, 2015, Felician College received approval from the New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education to change its name to Felician University. At this point, the institution had transformed from a junior college in 1941 into an institution that offered a myriad of quality programs at all academic levels.

In June 2021, retired United States Navy admiral James W. Crawford III assumed the presidency of Felician University. Although the COVID-19 pandemic presented multiple challenges in 2020 and early 2021, instruction continued, exclusively online and in hybrid formats in full compliance with the New Jersey governor’s Executive Orders. In 2021, the Standing COVID Committee was formed of faculty and key staff members to assess the ongoing situation, propose and implement appropriate policies and practices, and communicate with the Felician community. In-person classes and activities resumed in the fall of 2021.

During this period, the University enjoyed growth and expansion in a variety of areas. In addition to the completion of a Wellness and Recreation Center (WaRC) on the Rutherford campus, the University received several notable grants and awards, including a \$4.46 million Department of Education Hispanic Serving Institutions STEM and articulation programs grant titled, “*Fostering Inclusive Excellence for STEM Achievement*” (*FIESTA*), to foster student success, retention and graduation rates among Latinx and low-income students in STEM and a \$10 million appropriation from the State of New Jersey aimed at helping improve student engagement. The institution was also the recipient of a \$2.3 million Project FELICE grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce for the purchase and distribution of learning technology to all Felician students. In March of 2023, the institution joined the Presidents for Latino Student Success network, sponsored by “Excelencia in Education.” The university became recognized for its diversity as an HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution) and an MSI (Minority Serving Institution), having underrepresented students comprise more than half of the student population.

In April 2023, Dr. Mildred Mihlon was appointed as interim president, later to become Felician University’s seventh president in February 2024. President Mihlon has embarked on an ambitious plan of revitalization and growth since moving into the role. Under her leadership, the University has enjoyed significant expansion of its academic programming, as well as enrollment growth to pre-pandemic levels. In September 2023, successful cross-institutional efforts resulted in another significant grant award for the University, a \$3 million Department of Education Title V-Developing Hispanic Serving Institutions Grant that established multi-lingual student success centers on both University campuses.

Since its last review, Felician University has undertaken a number of major initiatives designed to advance the University’s strategic direction, educational foundations, reputation in the community, and its understanding of student and institutional outcomes.

Foremost among these has been Felician’s focus on advancing institutional effectiveness, student success, academic quality, and operational sustainability during its 2022–2025 Strategic Planning cycle. In addition to deepening its Catholic Franciscan identity by embedding mission education into onboarding, professional development, and campus programming, initiatives such as Mission and

Heritage Week, interfaith dialogue, and expanded service opportunities engaged students and employees in living the University's core values. The revitalization of the Blessed Mary Angela Institute and the creation of the Values Integration Council further formalized the integration of mission and values across academic and operational areas. Mission-focused communications broadened institutional reach and increased digital engagement.

Other focal points have included the advancement of academic quality and innovation through a comprehensive academic portfolio review, the embedding of experiential learning across all programs, and the successful launch of new graduate and professional programs—including degrees in Cybersecurity, Data Science, Occupational Therapy, and a doctoral program in Educational Leadership. The redesigned General Education curriculum strengthened holistic student development, while expanded enrollment partnerships supported the creation of new micro-credential offerings, expanded online learning opportunities and degree completion pathways for adult and international students.

Student success and retention improved through a variety of university-wide initiatives. First-year retention increased by 10%, supported by a redesigned New Student Orientation with a 91% participation rate. Peer mentor programming, the Falcon Impact Early Alert System, expanded wellness services, and the Campus Groups engagement platform strengthened integrated student support. Likewise, career readiness was elevated through new job fairs, curriculum-integrated career content, and improved First Destination survey outcomes results.

In spring 2025, the Felician University community began a structured, collaborative, and data-informed process to create a new three-year strategic plan to guide the institution through its next phase of growth and development. Led by President Mihlon, all academic and administrative units participated in a full-day strategic planning retreat designed to establish shared institutional priorities, strengthened cross-unit communication, and set expectations for the upcoming planning process. Participants collaborated on refining goals, identifying performance indicators, and reviewing progress toward existing objectives. Engagement was high, and the retreat served as the formal launch of the 2025-2028 planning cycle.

The result has been a comprehensive, inclusive, and university-wide effort leading to a new, three-year strategic plan for Felician. Entitled "*Felician Forward: Aspiring Boldly, Empowering Students, Living Our Values, Soaring Together,*" the plan was approved by the Felician University Board of Trustees in 2025. President Mihlon continues to lead the Felician community forward with a comprehensive focus on increasing enrollment and retention, exercising fiscal discipline, offering relevant academic programs, and attracting annual giving, to position the university for future growth and success.

In the fall 2025 semester, Felician approved a revised General Education program designed to enhance student learning and strengthen the university's commitment to providing transformative, mission-centered education. This revision emerged from a comprehensive program review conducted to ensure alignment with Middle States Commission on Higher Education's Standard III and national best practices in higher education. The redesign strengthens the program's coherence and clarity by establishing formal alignment with AAC&U's LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, adopting VALUE rubrics for comprehensive assessment of student learning, enhancing the visibility and articulation of the program's connection to Felician's Franciscan mission, reducing credits to align with state standards, improving transferability, and implementing of a refined systematic review processes including a five-year comprehensive evaluation cycle with continuous course-level assessment. These enhancements position the program to better serve students by providing clear pathways to success, meaningful

assessment of learning outcomes, and a more intentional integration of liberal arts education with the university's distinctive values.

The redesigned General Education Program is threaded throughout the curricula across all schools and at all levels of inquiry and organized around four interconnected pillars that reflect both contemporary educational best practices and Felician University's distinctive Franciscan mission: **The Critical Mind** pillar (reasoning and problem-solving skills); **Global and Intercultural Competence** (understanding of global challenges and appreciation for multiple perspectives); **Ethics, Faith, Spirituality & Well-Being** (values-based decision-making, holistic wellness, and Franciscan principles of service and social justice); and **The Critical Literacies—Communication, Information, and Technology** (essential competencies in written and oral communication, scientific reasoning, quantitative analysis, and technological literacy). Distinctive features that set Felician's program apart include required experiential learning, flexibility in course selection, intentional integration of Franciscan values, interdisciplinary approaches that address complex societal challenges, and a focus on developing lifelong learning skills. The program totals 44-46 credits, including Felician's signature UNIV courses and a three-course writing-intensive requirement, ensuring students develop the intellectual capacities, practical competencies, and ethical foundation needed to succeed professionally while embodying the university's commitment to transformative education rooted in service, justice, and compassion.

Felician has also continued to work collaboratively and build partnerships with both corporate and local businesses, municipalities and organizations seeking to expand the reach of its mission and offer more opportunities for education and engagement in the New Jersey area. Recent partnerships have included affiliations with the towns of Lodi and Rutherford, as well as with the Meadowlands Chamber of Commerce, the Passaic Valley Water Commission, Goya Foods, and numerous local high schools to offer dual enrollment opportunities for New Jersey students. These efforts have helped bolster Felician's reputation as an institution of higher education and have garnered numerous recognitions, including our 15th year as a military friendly school, US News and World Reports' ranking of Felician as a top performer in social mobility, "Best Online Nursing Master's Program" by the Princeton Review and Money Magazine's designation of Felician as one of "America's Best Colleges" based on "value added."

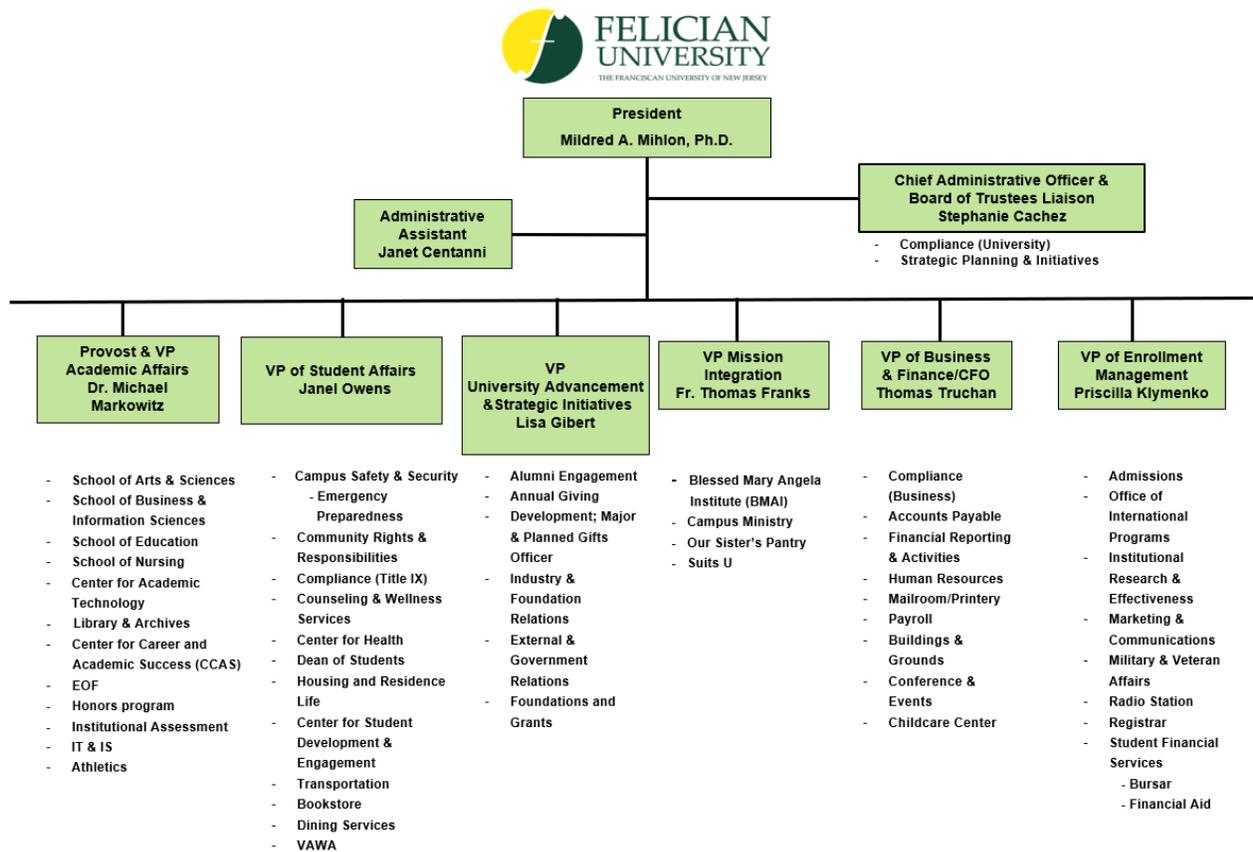
Finally, in the area of assessment, Felician has established a clear and consistent assessment timeline and cycle designed to ensure accountability and continuous improvement across all academic and non-academic departments. This process includes the upkeep, management, and oversight of assessment practices to reflect the most recent institutional changes, routine reviews of both academic and non-academic units, and the systematic follow-up on prior recommendations. Each cycle involves careful selection of targeted outcomes, and the active collection and storage of evidence using the Watermark Planning & Self Study's comprehensive platform, that facilitates the organized and systematic evaluation of that evidence to generate recommendations for the following year. Additionally, routine oversight is conducted by the University's Assessment Counsel by conducting detailed reviews for yearly reporting requirements. By maintaining this structured approach, the university fosters a culture of data-based decision making, ensuring that assessment remains a priority while aligning evolving institutional priorities.

Significant progress has also been made in both academic and non-academic units to ensure clarity of purpose and a focus on institutional effectiveness and student success. Improvements implemented from previous years have been documented through concrete evidence, demonstrating that recommendations from prior assessments have led to appropriate action. Each unit is expected to maintain at least two

observable and measurable outcomes tied directly to its mission, articulated with action verbs and operational end results. Assessment measures and targets are clearly defined, incorporating both direct and indirect evidence, and results are presented in an organized manner with supporting documentation such as tables, charts, and rubrics. This cycle not only verifies whether targets were met but also compares outcomes to previous years, highlighting implications for each unit. Ultimately, the use of assessment data serves as a tool for effectiveness, guiding reflection, identifying key areas for attention, and defining next steps that embody lessons learned through the process.

Collectively, these accomplishments demonstrate Felician University’s commitment to mission-driven education, institutional effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Current Organizational Structure



Enrollment Snapshot and Trends

Felician University’s enrollment has grown steadily over the past three years, increasing from 2,236 students in Fall 2023 and 2,427 students in Fall 2024 to 2,840 students in Fall 2025. This growth—representing a 17% increase year over year and a 27% increase over two years—stands in contrast to broader national enrollment challenges across higher education. Importantly, these gains reflect intentional enrollment planning and coordinated institutional action, rather than short-term or isolated increases.

In Fall 2025, the student population includes 1,959 undergraduate students (69%), 709 graduate students (25%), and 172 non-matriculated students (6%). As shown in Table 1, enrollment growth from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025 is not limited to undergraduate students alone. Rather, the data reflect meaningful growth in graduate and non-matriculated populations, supporting a more diversified and sustainable enrollment profile.

Table 1. Enrollment by Student Type (Fall 2025 and Fall 2024)

Student Type	Fall 2025	% of Total	Fall 2024	% of Total
Undergraduate	1,959	69%	1,793	74%
Graduate	709	25%	557	23%
Non-Matriculated	172	6%	77	3%
Total	2,840	100%	2,427	100%

Source: Fall Census Snapshot Data, October 15.

Table 1 illustrates a shift in enrollment composition, with graduate enrollment increasing by 27% and non-matriculated enrollment more than tripling over the prior year. These trends reflect the expansion of graduate offerings, strengthened partnerships, and increased participation in dual enrollment and other access-oriented programs.

Enrollment by Academic Division

Enrollment growth in Fall 2025 is evident across all academic divisions. As shown in Table 2, Arts & Sciences and Nursing each account for 35% of total enrollment, serving as the University’s primary enrollment anchors. Business and Information Sciences enrolls 16% of students, while Education accounts for 14%, reflecting Felician’s continued emphasis on professional and licensure-based education.

Table 2. Students by Academic Division and Level (Fall 2025)

Academic Division	Undergraduate	Graduate	Non-Matric	Total	% of Total
Arts & Sciences	643	189	168	1,000	35%
Nursing	878	115	0	993	35%
Business & Information Sciences	378	76	0	454	16%
Education	60	329	0	389	14%
Total	1,959	709	172	2,840	100%

Source: Fall 2025 Census Snapshot Data, October 15.

Graduate enrollment is concentrated primarily in Education (46%), while undergraduate enrollment is strongest in Nursing (45%) and Arts & Sciences (33%). This distribution reflects alignment between academic programs, workforce needs, and regional demand, particularly in healthcare and education.

New Student Recruitment, Readmission, and Access Pathways

While enrollment growth reflects multiple contributing factors, new student recruitment remains a central component of Felician’s enrollment strategy. Between Fall 2024 and Fall 2025, the University

experienced a notable increase in new traditional undergraduate first-year students, addressing prior enrollment softness and signaling improved recruitment outcomes.

At the same time, Felician has strengthened efforts to re-engage students who previously stopped out, resulting in increased readmissions at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Supported through proactive outreach, advising, and flexible re-entry pathways, these students represent a mission-consistent source of enrollment growth and degree completion.

Growth in non-matriculated enrollment, as reflected in Table 1, further demonstrates Felician’s focus on early engagement and partnership-based pathways, including dual enrollment, which support both near-term enrollment and longer-term matriculation.

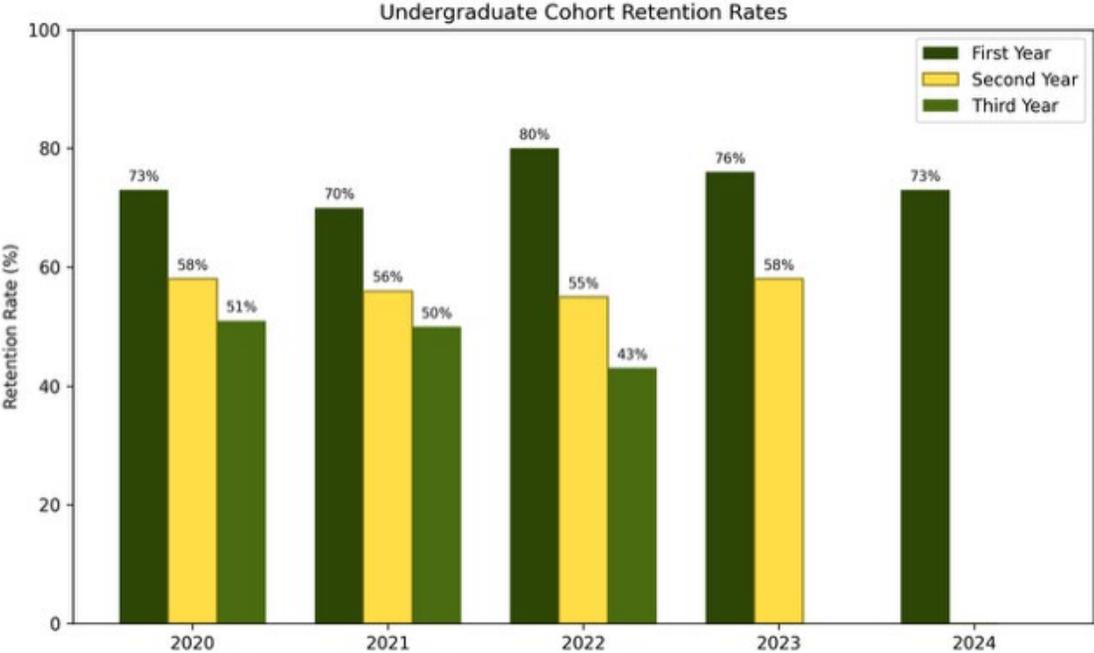
Graduate Enrollment Growth and Strategic Partnerships

Graduate enrollment continues to represent one of Felician University’s most significant growth areas. Over a two-year period, total graduate enrollment increased from 403 students in Fall 2023 to 557 students in Fall 2024 and 709 students in Fall 2025, representing 76% growth. As illustrated in Tables 1 and 2, this growth is concentrated in programs aligned with workforce demand and licensure pathways, particularly in Education, Nursing, and Arts & Sciences.

Graduate enrollment growth has been supported by strong external partnerships, flexible program delivery, and targeted outreach to working professionals. Growth in both new and continuing graduate students suggests strengthening persistence alongside effective recruitment.

Persistence and Retention

While attracting new students is essential, Felician recognizes that retention and persistence are equally critical to sustaining enrollment growth. The following table presents multi-year data that indicate the university’s consistent commitment to first-year retention, alongside continued attention to the more challenging later years of student persistence.



Felician’s coordinated approach, including proactive advising, early alert systems, academic and financial support services, and cross-divisional collaboration support both newly enrolled students and those returning after a stop-out period, contributing to overall enrollment stability.

Conclusion

Overall, Felician’s enrollment growth reflects a comprehensive, mission-aligned, and evidence-based approach that integrates recruitment, graduate expansion, strategic partnerships, readmission initiatives, and retention efforts, positioning the University for continued stability and sustainable growth.

Felician University Mission & Core Values

As noted, Felician University is an independent, co-educational Catholic/Franciscan University founded and sponsored by the Felician Sisters to educate a diverse population of students within the framework of a liberal arts tradition. Its mission is to provide a full complement of learning experiences, reinforced with strong academic and student development programs designed to bring students to their highest potential and prepare them to meet the challenges of the new century with informed minds and understanding hearts. The enduring purpose of Felician University is to promote a love for learning, a desire for God, self-knowledge, service to others, and respect for all creation.

As a Felician Franciscan institution, Felician University holds its core values dear and has served as guideposts to ensure we provide more than just an education. Just as the Franciscan values strengthen the character of students, they likewise strengthen the quality of a Felician education. Grounded in the fundamental beliefs of respect for human dignity, compassion, transformation, solidarity with the people in need, justice, and peace, these ideals challenge students to develop their character as well as their grades. With an emphasis on humility and solidarity with the poor, Felician hopes to transform students’ hearts as well as their minds. The goals of this charism of justice and peace are reflected in the spirit of our Felician Franciscan Core Values:

Respect for Human Dignity: We believe that every person is created by God; therefore, we respect the dignity of every person, regardless of race, religion, or socioeconomic status. We must demonstrate reverence for and commitment to promoting and protecting the dignity of persons at all times.

Compassion: We display an empathetic consciousness of “other” by demonstrating an appreciation of the needs and circumstances of those with whom we share our world. We recognize and affirm the good work and accomplishments of others and provide caring support to those in need of our help.

Transformation: We embrace the transformative process that encourages an open mind and heart, leading to continuous improvement of the person and ministry.

Solidarity with People in Need: We intentionally collaborate to ensure that the needs of the poor and vulnerable are met through advocacy and action.

Justice and Peace: We strive to forge right relationships...to recreate a sustainable environment through responsible use of the resources entrusted to us...to promote the common good...all in pursuit of peace.

Strategic Goals

In fulfillment of its mission and core values, Felician University continues to foster the development of the whole student for the modern world through its newly adopted strategic plan, a three-year plan that identifies four strategic goals reflecting the aspirations of our collective journey together. They are:

Goal One: “Aspire. Advance. Achieve”

- Establish Felician University as a premier institution offering in-demand, future-focused degrees through industry-aligned programs that ensure student success and prepare learners at every stage—undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education—to excel in their careers and create meaningful impact in their communities and the global workforce.

Goal Two: “Empower. Engage. Excel”

- Foster a student-centered, inclusive campus community that prioritizes well-being, academic and career development, while enhancing leadership, commuter engagement, and the integration of Felician Franciscan values into daily student life, ensuring every student’s voice is heard and empowering all students to thrive.

Goal Three: “Value. Voice. Vision.”

- Align Culture with Felician-Franciscan Catholic Values: Integrate the Felician-Franciscan Catholic mission into daily operations and decision-making, ensuring that all practices reflect the core values of respect, dignity, and inclusivity for all members of the university community.

Goal Four: “Sustain. Strengthen. Soar.”

- Achieve financial sustainability through strategic fundraising, strong donor relationships, and revenue diversification. By optimizing fiscal management and investing in campus improvements, Felician will strengthen financial stability and foster a dynamic learning environment for students and faculty.¹

The development and approval of the new strategic plan also provided the opportunity for Felician to assess and revise its key institutional learning outcomes (ILO’s), a Commission suggestion following the University’s last Self-Study. Using the new strategic priorities as a guide, the institution refined its expected learning outcomes to reflect Felician’s commitment to the educational success of its students through an emphasis on the following:

¹ The complete strategic plan may be found by accessing the following link: ([Strategic Plan | Felician University of New Jersey](#))

1. Think Critically and Pursue Truth Across Disciplines

Apply methods of analysis and critical evaluation to issues, ideas, and artifacts from multiple perspectives and disciplines.

- ◆ *Mission Connection*: Supports the development of “informed minds” and a “love for learning.”
- ◆ *Value Alignment*: Encourages *transformation* and the *persistent pursuit of truth and competence*.

2. Engage Globally and Embrace Cultural Diversity

Understand and analyze global systems and cultural contexts to appreciate differences and respond to shared challenges with empathy and insight.

- ◆ *Mission Connection*: Prepares students “to meet the challenges of the new century” with understanding hearts.
- ◆ *Value Alignment*: Embodies *compassion, justice and peace*, and *solidarity with people in need*.

3. Act Ethically and Reflect Spiritually

Cultivate ethical decision-making and self-awareness rooted in the Catholic Franciscan tradition, promoting integrity, faith, and care for creation.

- ◆ *Mission Connection*: Promotes a “desire for God,” “self-knowledge,” and “respect for all creation.”
- ◆ *Value Alignment*: Reflects *respect for human dignity, spiritual reflection*, and the call to *service*.

4. Communicate Effectively and Apply Core Literacies

Demonstrate proficiency in communication, quantitative reasoning, scientific thinking, technology, and information literacy across the liberal arts and professional disciplines.

- ◆ *Mission Connection*: Delivers a “full complement of learning experiences” to help students reach their potential.
- ◆ *Value Alignment*: Supports *competence* and continuous *transformation* through intellectual growth.

5. Integrate Learning for Lifelong Growth and Meaningful Contribution

Synthesize academic, co-curricular, and experiential learning to foster personal development, professional readiness, and a lifelong commitment to learning and service.

- ◆ *Mission Connection*: Prepares students “to meet the challenges of the new century” and encourages “service to others.”
- ◆ *Value Alignment*: Advances *transformation, compassion, and justice and peace* in action.

Student Population Served

Felician University serves primarily students residing in the State of New Jersey, with 87% of the student body in-state, 9% residing in other US states, and 4% international students. Our New Jersey residents come from the counties closest to the school, with 23% from Bergen County, 13% from Essex County, and 11% from Passaic County. Most out-of-state students come from NY (49%) and Pennsylvania, a distant third (10%).

Felician University hosts a diverse student body, with the following breakdown by ethnicity:

- 2 or more races 2%
- Asian 5%
- Black/African American 16%
- Hispanic 40%
- Non-Resident/Alien 6%
- Race Unknown 2%
- White 28%

The age range of our student body varies widely, reflected in the age distribution noted below:

- 17-20 yr 36%
- 21-25 yr 34%
- 26-30 yr 10%
- 31-40 yr 11%
- 41-50 yr 6%
- 51-60 yr 3%
- 61yr+ 1%

Felician's student body displays a clear gender split, with 72% female students and 28% male.

*All data taken from Fall 2024 Enrollment Snapshot: 10/15/2024

Key Academic Programs, Initiatives and Program Growth

As of fall 2025, Felician's largest undergraduate programs are currently Nursing (n=710), Biology (n=167), Business Administration (n=117), Psychology (n=96), and Criminal Justice (n=84).²

Through an inclusive campus-wide effort, the University completed a comprehensive revision of its General Education curriculum, which launched in fall 2025. The new program maintains Felician's commitment to its liberal arts heritage, while meeting the needs of 21st Century students through a reduced, streamlined curriculum, improved course selection flexibility and a comprehensive focus on career preparedness. To ensure the long-term success of the program, the University has also established a standing General Education Committee charged with maintaining both the educational rigor of the curriculum and the ongoing assessment of its effectiveness.

² Felician's full array of academic programming can be found in the University's undergraduate and graduate catalogs (<https://felician.edu/academics/catalogs/>)

In addition to the new General Education program, Felician has also successfully launched a significant number of new academic programs at all degree levels since 2022. These include:

- Bachelor of Science in Finance
- Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences
- Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies
- Master of Science in Cybersecurity
- Master of Science in Data Science
- Master of Occupational Therapy
- Master of Science in Nursing/ Psychological-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational and Organizational Leadership

II.) Institutional Priorities to be Addressed in the Self-Study

Given its comprehensive scope and impact, the four over-arching goals of the University’s new strategic plan will serve to guide the institutional priorities to be addressed through the Self-Study. These priorities are:

- 1.) PRIORITY ONE: Aspire. Advance. Achieve
- 2.) PRIORITY TWO: Empower. Engage. Excel
- 3.) PRIORITY THREE: Value. Voice. Vision
- 4.) PRIORITY FOUR: Sustain. Strengthen. Soar

	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
MSCHE Standards				
I.) Mission & Goals	X	X	X	X
II.) Ethics & Integrity		X	X	X
III.) Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	X	X		
IV.) Support of the Student Learning Experience	X	X		
V.) Educational Effectiveness Assessment	X	X		
VI.) Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	X			X

VII.) Governance, Leadership, and Administration	X			X
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III.) Intended Outcomes of the Self-Study

- Demonstrate how Felician University currently meets the Commission’s *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Fourteenth Edition)* and provides evidence by Standard in alignment with the *Evidence Expectations by Standard*.
- Leverage periodic assessment through each standard, using assessment results for continuous improvement and innovation to ensure levels of quality for constituents and the attainment of the institution’s priorities, mission, and goals.
- Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process, including analysis of long-range data, including disaggregated data, to ensure students are appropriately served and institutional mission and goals are met.
- Demonstrate the University’s ongoing commitment to fiscal strength, growth, and sustainability.

IV.) Organizational Structure of the Steering Committee and Working Groups

Felician University’s Self-Study Steering Committee was formed following participation by key senior leaders in the Middle States Commission on Higher Education 2023 Annual Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In consultation with the president, representatives from administration, faculty and staff were invited to serve on the committee. A dedicated effort was made to have fair representation from across campus and to ensure the Self-Study process is collaborative and transparent. Two co-chairs guide the Steering Committee, and each committee member serves as the co-chair for a separate standard. This is intended to ensure the best workflow, organization, and communication possible as decisions are made and shared across each working group. The committee is comprised as follows:

Self-Study Steering Committee Co-Chairs:

- Dr. Michael Markowitz, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Jeffery C. Blanchard, Dean of Student Success, Retention, and Assessment

Steering Committee Members:

- **Standard One:**
 - Fr. Thomas Franks, Vice President for Mission Integration
 - Virginia Topolski, Director of Human Resources
- **Standard Two:**
 - Roxana Hayda, Assistant Director of Human Resources/Employee Relations
 - Priscilla Klymenko, Vice President for Enrollment Management

- **Standard Three:**
 - Dr. Christine Mihal, Dean, School of Nursing
 - Dr. Tara Kent, Dean, School of Arts and Sciences

- **Standard Four:**
 - Janel Owens, Vice President of Student Affairs
 - Cynthia Montalvo, Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management

- **Standard Five:**
 - Dr. Theresa Fanelli, Director of Assessment, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
 - Dr. Deanna Valente, Dean, Center for Academic Technology, Information Technology, Information Systems and Learning and Development

- **Standard Six:**
 - Tom Truchan, Vice President of Finance and CFO
 - Meggan O’Neill, Director, Facilities

- **Standard Seven:**
 - Stephanie Cachez, Chief Administrative Officer and Board of Trustees Liaison
 - Diane DePadova, Assistant Director, Human Resources, Employee Benefits

Working Group Membership and Lines of Inquiry

Standard I – Mission & Goals		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Fr. Thomas Franks	Vice President for Mission integration
Co-Chair	Virginia Topolski	Director of Human Resources
Member	Dr. Robert Doyle	Director of M.A. in Religious Studies, Associate Professor of Religious Studies
Member	Dr. Jose Montalvo	Associate Professor, Natural Science
Member	Dr. Mara Zukowski	Director of the Blessed Mary Angela Institute

Lines of Inquiry: Standard I

1. How well does Felician University’s Strategic Plan, Institutional Learning Outcomes, and Student Success Initiatives reflect the University’s mission and core values? Do strategies align with student success and scholarly activity to promote internal and external impact?
2. How well do we assess our mission and goals, making the results readily available to stakeholders, and use these results to guide Felician University improvement? Are these processes systematic, inclusive, and transparent?

3. How well do the allocation of resources, budgetary support and planning align with Felician’s mission? How are internal and external resources used to fulfill and expand Felician’s mission?
4. How well do we ensure that Felician’s mission and goals adequately address its current student population? Do the mission, vision and goals adapt to shifting demographics in student population?

Standard II – Ethics & Integrity		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Roxana Hayda	Assistant Director of Human Resources/Employee Relations
Co-Chair	Priscilla Klymenko	Vice President for Enrollment Management
Member	Jodi Shelly	Director of Library Services
Member	Dr. Lavina Sequeira	Associate Professor, Associate Dean of Humanities
Member	Marybeth O’Flanagan	Associate Director of Registration and Records
Member	Dr. Alfredo Castro	Associate Professor, Natural Sciences
Member	Dr. Maha Younes	Associate Professor, Psychology

Lines of Inquiry: Standard II

1. To what extent do the policies, practices, and structures of Felician University support commitment to ethics, academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and one’s intellectual property rights, and how effectively are the University’s policies, procedures, and programs in these areas assessed?
2. To what extent are the policies and procedures for grievance and advancing ethical conduct effectively communicated, promoting an environment in which students, faculty, and staff feel that Felician is committed to upholding its core values?
3. How well does Felician promote and develop an environment of respect, diversity, and inclusion through its practices, including: hiring, promotion, evaluation, and professional development as a whole?
4. How effectively does Felician ensure transparent and ethical communication surrounding admissions practices, student funding options, and all government and commission laws and regulations?

Standard III – Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Dr. Christine Mihal	Dean, School of Nursing
Co-Chair	Dr. Tara Kent	Dean, School of Arts and Sciences
Member	Dr. Brian Connors	Dean, School of Education
Member	Dr. Marilu Marcillo	Dean, School of Business

Member	Professor John Blevis	Assistant Professor, Natural Sciences
Member	Dr. David Perricone	Associate Professor, Business
Member	Dr. Marissa Cruise	Assistant Professor, Nursing
Member	Dr. Janice Rama	Assistant Professor, Nursing

Lines of Inquiry: Standard III

1. To what extent does the design and delivery of educational programs promote and support the learning of all students in alignment with institutional priorities?
2. How effectively does the University incorporate and respond to workforce trends, licensure requirements, and stakeholder input to ensure relevance and student preparation for post-graduate success?
3. How well does Felician University ensure that academic programs, regardless of modality or location, are coherent, appropriately rigorous, and aligned with clearly articulated learning outcomes, assessing and using evidence to inform curriculum improvement and program enhancement?
4. How effectively does the general education program promote the development of essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, and quantitative reasoning?

Standard IV – Support of the Student Experience		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Janel Owens	Vice President of Student Affairs
Co-Chair	Cynthia Montalvo	Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management
Member	Mehtap Ferrazzano	Assistant Vice President for Student Life
Member	Emily Espin	Associate Director of Academic Partnership Enrollment, Enrollment Management
Member	Emmanuel Pierre-Louis	Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
Member	Simone Flowers-Taylor	Director, Community Rights and Responsibilities
Member	Dr. Michelle Reeves	Assistant Professor, Nursing
Member	Meghan Pierce	Instructor, Assistant Director NRSC/Parsippany

Lines of Inquiry: Standard IV

1. To what extent do our admissions philosophy and practices reflect our mission and effectively promote ethical, equitable access for a diverse student body? How do we evaluate their fairness, impact, and overall effectiveness over time?
2. How effectively do our financial aid policies and processes support transparency, accessibility, and responsiveness to student needs, particularly for financially disadvantaged

students? In what ways do these practices contribute to student retention, satisfaction, and success?

3. How well do we monitor, support, and improve student retention, progression, and graduation — especially for underrepresented or at-risk populations? How effectively are we using data to inform interventions and improve outcomes?
4. How effectively do we design and promote inclusive, high-impact co-curricular opportunities that contribute to students’ academic, social, and professional development? How well do we assess the value and reach of these opportunities?

Standard V – Educational Effectiveness Assessment		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Dr. Theresa Fanelli	Director of Assessment, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice
Co-Chair	Dr. Deanna Valente	Dean, Center for Academic Technology, Information Technology, Information Systems and Learning and Development
Member	Dr. Samantha Mattheiss	Assistant Professor of Psychology
Member	Jennifer Kostic	Associate Dean, Strategic Planning and Student Success
Member	Geraldine Perret	Assistant Dean, Career & Experiential Learning, Center for Career and Academic Success
Member	Dr. David Turi	Associate Dean and Professor, School of Business
Member	Dr. Gina Sarabella	Assistant Professor, Education
Member	Dr. Kimberly Burrows	Assistant Professor, Nursing
Member	Dr. Wendy Watson	Assistant Professor, Nursing

Lines of Inquiry: Standard V

1. How does Felician University ensure consistent implementation of uniform measurement systems for assessing student learning outcomes across academic and administrative units, and how are these aligned with university strategic planning?
2. What evidence demonstrates Felician University’s systematic and sustained implementation of student learning outcome assessments at the course, program, and university levels, and how do these relate to evidence-based changes in educational goals?
3. How does Felician University communicate its assessment processes, procedures, and results to administration, stakeholders, and the community, and what oversight mechanisms ensure regular review of these policies and practices?
4. What methods does Felician University use to evaluate long-term student success in employment or graduate school related to their field of study, and how is faculty/staff training supported to ensure compliance with assessment practices while fostering a positive assessment climate?

Standard VI – Planning, Resources, & Institutional Improvement		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Tom Truchan	Vice President of Finance and CFO
Co-Chair	Meggan O’Neill	Director, Facilities
Member	Skyler Hennessy	Administrative Assistant, Facilities
Member	Shalini Patel	Controller, Finance
Member	Joel Superville	Event and Sales Coordinator

Lines of Inquiry: Standard VI

1. How clearly does Felician University present, assess, and use results for planning and resource allocation on an annual basis to help guide its decision making and align with its overall mission?
2. How effective is the Felician University budget process in the areas of inclusive decision-making, facilitation of financial management, planning financial development, documenting financial resources, and ensuring student-centered improvements?
3. Does the university effectively plan and budget for facilities, infrastructure, and technology needs in a way that includes sustainability and deferred maintenance needs?
4. How effective is the institutional assessment of planning, resource allocation, and budgeting processes?

Standard VII – Governance, Leadership, & Administration		
	Name	Title
Co-Chair	Stephanie Cachez	Chief Administrative Officer and Board of Trustees Liaison
Co-Chair	Diane DePadova	Assistant Director, Human Resources, Employee Benefits
Member	Dr. Robert Doyle	Professor of Religious Studies, President of Faculty Senate
Member	Becky DeVita	Associate Dean, Center for Academic Technology
Member	Kathy Prieto	Director of Financial Aid, Student Financial Services
Member	Dr. Carleen Graham	Associate Professor, Nursing

Lines of Inquiry: Standard VII

1. How well does the University articulate its governance structure? Are governance structures transparent, and do they clearly outline the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of each University constituency?
2. To what extent do the Felician University governing bodies serve the mission of the institution and the interests of the public at large?

3. What processes are in place to facilitate assessment and evaluation of the University's Chief Executive Officer (i.e., the President) and, by extension, senior leadership? Do the members of the institutional leadership possess appropriate credentials and experiences to administer the University in a mission-consonant, academically sound and financially responsible manner?
4. How well does the University document its practices and communicate its organizational structure as well as the responsibilities of its leadership and administration teams, supporting federal compliance expectations related to institutional transparency and record maintenance?

V.) Guidelines for Reporting

The Self-Study co-chairs and the Steering Committee are responsible for the Self-Study report, with each group overseeing the portion of the Self-Study related to its specific standard. The product of each Working Group's efforts will be summarized in the final report to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In fact, the majority of the final Self-Study report will be composed of Working Group reports. In addition to editorial standards, Working Groups have been directed to conform to specific formatting guidelines to provide consistency in the structure of each chapter. The goal for each Working Group is a concise, content-rich report that is no more than 25 single-spaced pages in length. Each Working Group will be asked to assign one person as the primary writer of the draft chapter. The final version will be reviewed and approved by the Self-Study co-chairs and the University president.

VI.) Organization of the Final Self-Study

The work of each of the seven Working Groups will be merged into Felician's Self-Study report. The final report will consolidate the methodologies, data, findings, and recommendations of the Working Groups. Each working group will provide its reports and/or other deliverables in collaboration with the Steering Committee in accordance with the template below and the timeline established in section VII. Each group's report should conform to the following format:

- **Executive Summary**
- **Introduction:** A general overview of the lines of inquiry and how the Working Groups addressed the criteria of each standard in light of the institutional priorities at hand and the areas involved.
- **Methodology:** A discussion of the data compiled and analyzed by the Working Group, the procedures used to gather information needed to address the lines of inquiry.
- **Analysis:** A detailed narrative on how the institution adheres to the relevant Standard based on the Working Group's analysis of evidence, data, and any other documentation.
- **Institutional Strengths:** A presentation of the evidence-supported strengths of the institution, including successes, innovation, or other developments.

- **Recommendation(s):** identification of major suggestions to address within the standard. The goal is to provide recommendations, strategies, and a rationale for potential impact.

VII.) Self-Study Timeline

Felician University would like to have its Middle States Self-Study evaluation visit in the Fall of 2027. Below is an overall timeline of the process thus far and significant milestones in preparation for the Site Team’s visit.

- **Fall 2024:** Participation in the MSCHE Self-Study Institute
- **February 2025:** Selection of Project Co-Chairs, Steering Committee and Work Groups
- **Summer 2025:** Submission of the Self-Study Design Draft (August 1, 2025)
- **Summer/Fall 2025:** Campus Visit by MSCHE Vice-President
- **Winter 2026:** Approval of the Self-Study Design (January 30, 2026)
- **Spring 2026:** Data Collection, Development of Initial Drafts of the Self-Study Report
- **Fall 2026:** Completion of the Initial Draft of Full Self-Study Report
- **Spring 2027:** Finalization of the Self-Study Report, Submission to MSCHE
- **Fall 2027:** MSCHE Site Team Visit
- **Spring 2028:** Final Decision by the Full Commission

VIII.) Communication Plan

Felician University has prepared a broad communications plan aimed at ensuring all constituencies are informed of the Self-Study process, are aware of the updates as they occur, and can remain connected to the work of each of the standards in various ways.

Audience	Communication Method	Timing
Steering Committee	Email to inform of full standard-by-standard committees	Fall 2024

Board of Trustees	Presentation to inform the BOT of Felician's previous accreditation and the upcoming accreditation process	Spring 2025
Steering Committee	Meetings held with the entire committee as well as individual meetings with each set of standard co-chairs	Spring 2025
Working Groups	Meetings held with co-chairs to review progress and discuss next steps	Spring 2025
Faculty & Staff	Updates provided at all Open Forums provided by President Mihlon	Quarterly beginning in Spring 2025.
Executive Staff	Share Self-Study Design Draft	July 2025
All campus	Various communications to inform campus and related constituents of the upcoming Middle States Self-Study. To provide information about the Self-Study process and timeline. Share with campus names of Steering Committee members, chairs, and working groups.	Fall 2025
Faculty & Staff		
Students		
All campus	Share Self-Study Design with community, providing preliminary agenda for upcoming MSCHE liaison visit.	Fall 2025
All campus & constituents	Development of website to share an overview of Self-Study project, timeline, updates, and communications.	Fall 2025
Board of Trustees	Regular updates at all BOT meetings	Quarterly beginning Fall 2025
All campus	Provide regular, targeted updates to campus by standard across various media	Monthly: Fall 2026 – Spring 2027
All campus	Share Self-Study draft with campus and solicit feedback.	Fall 2026
All campus	Share the final version of the Self-Study with campus.	Spring 2027

All campus	Provide final Self-Study Visit agenda	Spring 2027
All campus	Host MSCHE Self-Study Site Visit	Fall 2027

IX.) Evaluation Team Profile

Felician University respectfully requests that the Middle States Commission on Higher Education consider the following suggestions when preparing an accreditation evaluation team for the University:

- The chairperson should be a president of a small, private, faith-based, liberal arts university with experience in working with a culturally diverse university.
- In general, team members should:
 - Possess expertise and sensitivity related to diverse student populations
 - Serve in active positions in the university sector with experience in faith-based institutions of higher education.
 - Have a thorough understanding of the unique issues associated with privately funded institutions.
- Specifically, the team should have at least one member with expertise in:
 - Institutional and Student learning outcomes assessment
 - General Education
 - Multi-site environments
 - Instructional and Information Technology
 - Finance and institutional management
- The tables below present lists of peer, aspirational, and competitor academic institutions in the Middle States region that are similar to Felician in size, breadth of programming, and mission focus. The University requests team members who are familiar with these types of academic institutions.

Peer Institutions	
1	Carlow University
2	University of Mount Saint Vincent
3	Gwynedd-Mercy University
4	Immaculata University
5	Neumann University
6	Saint Bonaventure University
7	Saint Francis University

Aspirational Institutions	
1	Assumption University
2	DeSales University
3	Pace University
4	Sacred Heart University
5	University of New Haven
6	University of Scranton
7	Villanova University

Competitor Institutions	
1	Centenary University
2	Fairleigh Dickinson
3	Kean University
4	Montclair State University
5	Ramapo College
6	Stockton University
7	William Paterson University

X.) Strategy for Addressing Annual Institutional Update Indicators and Metrics

Felician University’s Self-Study process and report will provide a comprehensive and integrated analysis of Annual Institutional Update (AIU) information to illustrate the institution’s progress and standing in four key assessment areas. Regarding student achievement, the report will document if Felician’s graduation rate at 150% of the normal time is below 40%. Second, the annual enrollment metric will be reported through current and previous year AIU data comparisons to determine if the University’s FTE figure has fluctuated more or less than 15%; third, Felician's financial health will be assessed through a reporting of the of key financial metrics (i.e., ending net assets, the composite financial index [CFI] and changes in overall net assets). Finally, AIU data showing the University's compliance with federal financial responsibility requirements mandated under Title IV, as well as other required federal metrics, will be presented and discussed thoroughly throughout the self-study report.

Leading up to the evaluation team visit, the Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs (Felician University’s ALO) and the Vice-President for Finance and Administration will regularly monitor and communicate AIU metrics broadly to the campus community through the University’s newly formed Institutional Effectiveness Committee, providing up-to-date, accurate data to inform the institution of progress and opportunities for midcourse interventions, if necessary.

The University’s institutional research team and the Director of Institutional Assessment will routinely monitor key metrics and provide outcomes data to facilitate Felician’s efforts to continuously engage in analysis and planning, thus ensuring the key AIU metrics remain above the thresholds established by the

University's strategic priorities and those of the Commission. In the event of any deviations from prescribed metric ranges, the University will craft and implement appropriate action plans to bring the relevant metric(s) into compliance.

XI.) Strategy for Managing the Evidence Inventory

Collection and archiving strategies for the Evidence Inventory will be managed by the Steering Committee co-chairs, with the assistance of a dedicated administrative assistant in the Office of the Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Secure folders have been established in Microsoft Teams, with dedicated folders for each standard. All Steering Committee and Work Group Members have access to these folders, with submissions monitored and documented by the dedicated administrative assistant. The committee's co-chairs hold regular meetings with each Work Group to discuss progress and address any evidence-related questions or concerns that arise.

Once the working groups have completed their work, the Steering Committee co-chairs will review the lists and determine if there are gaps in the evidence inventory. The co-chairs will work with the Steering Committee to fill the gaps and/or provide recommendations as a part of the Self-Study process to address the gaps. For the final version of the Self-Study report, a document list will be created for the external reviewers to facilitate their reading of the report. Additionally, abbreviated evidence inventory lists for each chapter of the Self-Study will be created to allow the external reviewers to easily identify the evidence relevant to each chapter. The final evidence inventory will be uploaded to the MSCHE institutional portal by the Steering Committee co-chairs.

XII.) Strategy for Identifying Self-Study Site Visits to be Conducted

In building the Site Team's on-campus itinerary, Felician University will confer with the team chair to ensure ample time on the University's two main campuses (Rutherford and Lodi, New Jersey), as well as to schedule a visit for one or more team members to the Parsippany, New Jersey instructional site, home to Felician's accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.