Department: College of Law

Report Date: 09/11/12

Outcomes assessed:

A) Mission Statement: Please find below ideas on how to demonstrate elements within the mission statement of the law school.

- “In the Jesuit tradition of academic rigor”: In section 3.6 of the SACS principles, graduate programs must show the class curriculum content to be more advanced than the class curriculum at the undergraduate level.

- “Pursuit of justice”: Proper representation for individuals who cannot afford it combined with Legal Research to benefit all will help assess this point of the mission statement.

- “Service to others”: Pro Bono and non-profit legal services offered to help Poverty Law advance

- “The College of Law will educate future members of the Bar to be skilled advocates”: Experiential Learning, CLE, student organizations (Moot court, Trial Ad, SBA) should be listed later in the assessment report to help assess this point of the mission statement which tackles students gaining important legal skills

- “Sensitive counselors-at-law committed to ethical norms in pursuit of dignity for all”: Administration operations, faculty, and different programs will help students become sensitive counselors-at-law.

B) The objectives/goals mentioned in the assessment report submitted on 11/11/11.

The below statements must be specific, observable and measurable in order to demonstrate effectiveness for the school as a whole. Please note the objectives that I believe should be kept for the law school, highlighted in yellow.

1. Previous objective: Prepare graduates for success on the bar exam and to become effective and ethical members of the bar through rigorous law curricula which is continuously reviewed and revised to ensure that the needs of the students are met.

   Proposed objective: Train graduates through a rigorous academic program in the theory and practice of law to qualify them to sit for the bar examination.

2. Previous objective: Increase the entering credentials of the student body by attracting high caliber students through enhanced scholarship offerings while maintaining the size of entering class at the level sufficient to support law school operations.

   Recommendation: This objective should be an objective for the department of Admissions and Financial aid. Entering credentials should not only be LSAT scores but undergraduate GPA and life experiences. For scholarship, please state specific data.
3. Previous objective: Enhance student Academic Support Services to provide additional one-on-one counseling for students considered at risk.

Recommendation: This does not need to be part of the goals of the law school as a whole but rather as an objective for the academic success program.

4. Previous objective: Increase Bar Exam passage rate of law graduates.

Recommendation: This does no longer a true statement. The school cannot guaranty bar passage rates. However, the school can offer a guaranty to qualify to sit for the bar examination.

5. Previous objective: Expand and enhance the Law Clinic to ensure that all law students have the substantial opportunity to participate in pro bono and live client experiences.

**Proposed objective:** Expand and enhance the Law Clinic to ensure that law students have opportunities to participate in pro bono and live client experiences. *(Please note that “all” has been omitted on purpose since not all law students participate in the Clinic programs).*

Recommendation: This objective lines up with the mission statement of the law school. It helps the school show that there are opportunities for students to serve others by giving individuals through the Clinic programs proper legal representation. Please note that the Law Clinic must provide specific data to demonstrate the number of students that participate in programs and the skills they developed through practice of law. Indirect assessment would be advisable through surveying students and their clients to show the set of skills students have learned.

6. Previous objective: reorganize the College of Law administration to promote efficiency and to redesignate the offices of Law Skills and Career Services to focus on experiential learning while integrating their activities with the Law Clinic to ensure that law graduates will have the practical skills necessary to practice law successfully upon graduation.

**Proposed objective:** Maintain an administrative organization that supports adequate training for students to help them become sensitive counselors at law.

Recommendation: The newly proposed objective stated above will help link the administration (different departments and their existence) to the mission statement of the law school and its impact on the students learning outcome. On each department assessment form, you will ask each department to provide direct and indirect assessment data. For direct assessment, each department must show how many students it serves and the types of programs it provides. Surveys from the students interacting with the department staff are part of indirect assessment and will help determine the student learning outcome not just the effectiveness of the staff within the department.

7. Previous objective: Institute programs with local city and parish governments with cost-sharing arrangements to place students in clerk positions in their offices.

Recommendation: This does not need to be part of the law school objective as a whole, but could be part of the department that takes care of instituting programs with local city and parish
governments. That department in turn would have to link those programs to helping students become “sensitive counselors” to demonstrate it is related to the mission statement of the school.

8. Previous objective: Provide performance-based reviews of student actions in live client and courtroom settings

Recommendation: This does not need to be an objective. “Performance-based reviews of students” are a direct assessment tool not an objective. It could be used to assess whether students are becoming “sensitive counselors at law”.

9. Previous objective: Increase the number of international programs offered at the College of Law.

Recommendation: This does not need to be stipulated in the objectives for the law school. Increasing the number of international programs show that the law school is involved in creating different opportunities for students to be more exposed to a globalized world but does not necessarily help the law school comply with SACS accreditation principles. The international programs the law school currently has make the conversation in the classroom more engaging for students and faculty and therefore may help demonstrate students becoming “sensitive counselors-at-law”. It also makes the curriculum content more rigorous than undergraduate classes which help demonstrate “academic rigor”.

10. Previous objective: Increase the number of graduates with a study abroad experience.

Recommendation: Please see the previous objective discussed. Here, also, this objective should be linked to the assessment of international programs which will help demonstrate the same elements previously discussed.

11. Previous objective: Ensure that the College of Law maintains a highly competent and productive faculty to provide the educational experience for the law students.

Proposed objective: Faculty dedicated to help students to become skilled and ethical advocates.

Recommendation: Here student evaluations will become an indirect assessment tool to assess faculty members. The faculty publications will become an added benefit that show academic rigor but will not be a must since not all faculty members publish.

12. Previous objective: Ensure that the Law Library maintains a collection sufficient to support the scholarly research of the law faculties and the research and study needs of the student body.

Recommendation: This objective should be part of the assessment form of the library. The library needs to have more opportunities to interact with students. Please see my other assessment comments regarding the library. There is a requirement from SACS in section 3.8 that tackles elements that the library needs to show.

13. Previous objective: Ensure that the College of Law maintains a highly competent and productive staff to support the law faculty, administration and students.
Recommendation: There is no need to list this as an objective since it was already discussed by the newly proposed objective above “Maintain an administrative organization that supports adequate training for students to help them become sensitive counselors at law”.

14. Previous objective: Increase alumni contributions in number and amount and increase the active involvement by alumni with the College of Law.

Recommendation: This is an added benefit but no longer is a guaranty with today’s difficult economic conditions. It does not highlight any element in the mission statement therefore it does not need to be listed.

15. Previous objective: Increase the number of employers interviewing on-campus.

Recommendation: This can be part of the career services objectives. By providing more career opportunities for students through interviews on campus, it will show that the school is helping students better their chances to become counselors-at-law. Because of the tightening of the job market it is impossible for a school to guaranty a job at graduation. The school should refrain from making any statements regarding getting job positions, rather increasing the chances of getting a position through providing a good, solid education (“academic rigor”). That education can be linked to the academic rigor that the Jesuit tradition pursuits as stated in the mission statement of the law school.

16. Previous objective: Increase the number of out-of-state employers interviewing on-campus.

Recommendation: Same as above. This needs to be part of the career services department, not the law school assessment objective. Again, since the career services center is undergoing a transition in its operations, the new leadership may decide on a different set of objectives for its department. The career services center should be reassessed in one semester to ensure a solid set of objectives that line up with the school’s mission statement.

17. Previous objective: Law graduates who complete the law curriculum will have the knowledge and understanding of substantive law, legal theory and procedure to successfully pass the state bar exam in their desired jurisdiction.

Recommendation: This objective is already addressed under the newly proposed objective above in the following statement: “Train graduates through a rigorous academic program (six (Full Time) or eight (Part-Time) semester program) in the theory and practice of law to qualify them to sit for the bar examination.”

18. Previous objective: Law graduates will have the competency and professional skills of legal analysis, critical thinking, legal research and written and oral communication to compete nationally for positions in the legal field.

Recommendation: This can go under career services objectives if the new leadership choses it as one of their goals.

19. Previous objective: Law graduates will have the competency to exercise professional judgment consistent with the values of the legal profession.
Recommendation: The above mentioned objective “Faculty dedicated to help students to become skilled and ethical advocates” already mentions that students will become skilled and ethical advocates.

20. Previous objective: Law students will have the practical skills necessary to be able to engage in the practice of law successfully upon graduation.

Recommendation: This is part of the Law school assessment but is also a part of the objectives of career services and skills.

21. Previous objective: Law graduates will possess the knowledge and understanding of the values of ethical responsibilities, justice, fairness, professionalism and the responsibility to ensure that adequate legal services are provided to those who cannot afford to pay for them.

Recommendation: This falls onto the faculty to instill in students during their classes. Professional ethics and norms are taught as part of the curriculum. It is already reviewed and discussed with an objective listed previously above: “Faculty dedicated to help students to become skilled and ethical advocates.” This is also part of the Law Clinic to demonstrate since not all students have opportunities to provide legal services to those who cannot afford them but rather only the students who participate in the Law Clinic programs.

22. Previous objective: Law graduates in their professional legal careers will espouse the Jesuit values of serving as men and women for others.

Recommendations: The Jesuit values need to be specific values that can be measurable in order to be able to assess and gather specific data. Professional skills are measurable. Question: What professional skills go hand in hand with the Jesuit values that the school wants to instill in its students? Answering that question will help us determine what skills to survey and measure.

In summary, below are the objectives for the law school:

- Train graduates through a rigorous academic program in the theory and practice of law to qualify them to sit for the bar examination.

- Expand and enhance the Law Clinic to ensure that law students have opportunities to participate in pro bono and live client experiences.

- Maintain an administrative organization that supports adequate training for students to help them become sensitive counselors-at-law.

- Maintain a Faculty dedicated to help students become skilled and ethical advocates.

- Law students will have the practical skills necessary to be able to engage in the practice of law successfully upon graduation.
Assessment Tools used:

- Example of Direct assessment that can be done:

Please state the number of cases undertaken at the center, and some statistics about the cases. Categorize them according to the type of law and which type of students got involved. Some are for serving the poor, state the income level and survey their difficulty level financially. Then test to see what level of income, male, female, kids and match them with their outcomes with each of their legal cases. Test to see how many students were involved in each case, how many hours of service each case took. Evaluate in dollar amount what each cost would been if it were not pro-bono and match it with the outcome of each case. If resources used were paid by donations that the center gets, then link the result of the case to that donation amount.

Publish student test from each seminar to evaluate student learning.

- Example of Indirect assessment that can be done:

State how many 1L, 2L, and 3L students got involved and survey them to see how it benefited them in their career. Get involved with them when they become public interest lawyers. Publish their name on a free list of lawyers that are willing to serve the poor. Possibly have them come back and serve some hours for CLE hours. (ties in with the goals of the center listed in their assessment form)
Survey possibly the clients that were served. Asked them about their experience and what difference it made in their life to be properly represented. (this part ties in with the goals stated in the mission statement for the College of Law)

**Tools recommended for assessment:**

Surveys from all parties involved: students, clients, and staff. Tie up the questions of the surveys with the goals of the center to demonstrate how serving the poor benefits students learning.