

Working Group Standard VII Interim Report #3

Part I: Standard Overview

In our assessment of Standard VII, we recognize the important elements of a well-defined system of governance, the value of a visionary and strategic leader, and the critical importance of administrative organization and composition in service of the University mission. The governance structure and administrative leadership of the university ensures that the mission is the inspiration which underpins the execution and planning of our academic enterprises. A Board of Trustees which guides the implementation of the university mission and oversees its fiduciary responsibilities is vital to the success of Mercyhurst in the present and the future. Recognizing the importance of effective leadership, the university regularly evaluates the performance of the President and the senior administrative team.

Part IA: COVID-19 Response

In the wake of COVID-19, the University implemented a robust plan for handling all aspects of the COVID-19 response. Specifically relating to governance structure and administrative leadership, Dr. Laura Zirkle, vice president for student life was named Pandemic Officer, responsible for leading the University's Critical Incident Response Team. Under Dr. Zirkle's direction, the COVID-19 Task Force was implemented with Ryan Palm, associate vice president for advancement as the COVID-19 Task Force Coordinator. The Task Force's role is to guide the University's policies and initiatives in response to the coronavirus. The Task Force includes administrators, staff, and faculty from nearly every constituency across campus. Prior to the students' return to campus for the Fall 2020 Semester, the Task Force held a mandatory training session for all employees to highlight key components of the plan to bring students back to campus. The Task Force also oversaw the process of 20 staff members who completed a certificate program to be trained as contact tracers and continues to oversee the tracking and implementation of contact tracing.

Additionally, the Chair of the Board of Trustees participated in calls with the COVID-19 Task Force in March in Early April. There were also three special Executive Committee of the Board meetings in April, May and August to discuss decisions being impacted by COVID-19. Full Board meetings in June and August were also held in which COVID-19 strategies were discussed.

Part II: Review of Evidence

Standard VII-1 ... a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each constituency, including governing body, administration, faculty, staff and students;

Potential evidence:

- Shared Governance Model
- Board of Trustees Committee Charters
- Conflict of Interest Policy

Employee Handbook 1.3.2, 1.3.3
University Bylaws
University Council Bylaws
Faculty Senate Bylaws
Staff Senate Bylaws
MSG Constitution 2019-2020
MSG Bylaws and Standing Rules
President's Cabinet Membership Profile
Governance Committee of the Board Executive Summary 2/3/2020
Academic Affairs Agenda 9/24/2019

Summary of evidence:

The University has a shared governance model that identifies the governing bodies of the institution. Each governing body has a set of bylaws that articulate each groups roles and responsibilities. Each set of bylaws are updated on an ongoing basis or annually. In addition, all the bylaws are reviewed annually by the Governance Committee of the Board of Trustees. The last review happened at the February 3, 2020 meeting of the committee and is documented in the executive summary of that meeting. Also, the Board Committee Charters clearly outline the mission, responsibilities and membership of each committee of the Board of Trustees governing structure. Review and approval of the committee charter is on the agenda of each committee fall meeting. (see example Academic Affairs Agenda 9/24/2019) To ensure accountability the University has a Code of Ethics and Conduct (1.3.2), as well as the subsequent Whistleblower's Policy (1.3.3) in the Employee Handbook that pertains to all employees; it provides a mechanism for reporting ethical concerns in person, in writing, or via a phone message. This addresses the need for accountability and transparency for all employees.

Summary of compliance:

The University has a clear governance structure and a robust set of bylaws that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each constituency. While each governing body has access and clear transparency on their roles the University could make the Shared Governance Model more widely available to all employees and students. This could be accomplished by utilizing the Mercyhurst HUB (internal portal).

Standard VII-2a ... a legally constituted governing body that:

serves the public interest, ensures that that the institution clearly states and fulfills its mission and goals, has fiduciary responsibility for the institution, and is ultimately accountable for the academic quality, planning, and fiscal well-being of the institution;

Potential evidence:

Mercyhurst Charter October 5, 1928
Board of Trustees By-Laws – define the scope and responsibilities of the Board
Mission Self-Study report for MCHE April 2020

Minutes of Academic Affairs Committee meetings which precede each full Board meeting

Minutes of Academic Buildings and Grounds Committee meetings which precede each full Board meeting

Minutes of Student Life Committee meetings which precede each full Board meeting
Board of Trustee Minutes February 2018

Summary of evidence:

Mercyhurst University is a legally constituted governing body that serves that has faithfully served the public interest since it first opened its doors to 23 students on September 20, 1926. The Mercyhurst (then College) was granted its Charter October 5, 1928. The Mercyhurst Board of Trustees is charged with overseeing the implementation of the University's mission and has fiduciary responsibility for sustaining and promoting the fiscal health of the University. Additionally, The Board is responsible for oversight of the academic quality and integrity of the University. The responsibilities of the Board are outlined in detail in the Mercyhurst University Board of Trustee By-laws.

The Mercyhurst Mission Statement and Core Values guide the overarching activities of the University in the classroom, student life, and the administration of university business. A recent self-study completed for the Mercy Conference of Higher Education outlines the many ways in which the mission and core values permeate the life of the university: its students, employees, alumni and benefactors.

The Board meets at least three times each year. Each meeting is preceded by the meetings of several subcommittees. These subcommittee meetings assure an in-depth examination of the University's operations. This process serves to keep the full Board apprised of the detailed information each member requires to fully and responsibly contribute to strategic decisions. For example, a campus tour with members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the Student Life Committee resulted in consideration and subsequent approval for the construction of two new state of the art residence facilities in the past eleven years: Warde Hall opened in 2010 and Ryan Hall opened in 2018. Additionally, the Academic Affairs subcommittee reviewed and ultimately approved a dramatic renewal of the University Core Requirements resulting in the implementation of the REACH program. Comprised of several representatives of the business world, Board members bring an invested, caring scrutiny to the financial health of the institution. Subcommittees include Budget and Finance, Endowment, and Audit. Two recent examples of the Board's careful investment and care for Mercyhurst employees and the institution involve health insurance and retirement. Erie was caught in the Highmark UPMC health insurance squabble. The Board solicited employee feedback about what was most important to them in selecting a new plan. Balancing institutional cost and employee cost, the Board proposed an insurance program that satisfied the wide majority of employees. Another example, mostly out of the awareness of employees, involved oversight of the University retirement investment. A review directed by the Board resulted in a change of investment strategy which benefitted both the University and the employees.

Summary of compliance:

The University has a committee structure of the Board of Trustees with a clear set of charters that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each committee. Each of these committees oversee all areas of the university from academics to mission to financial health.

Standard VII-2b ... has sufficient independence and expertise to ensure the integrity of the institution. Members must have primary responsibility to the accredited institution and now allow political, financial, or other influences to interfere with their governing responsibilities;

Potential evidence:

The Code of Ethics, Employee Handbook

Summary of evidence:

The Code of Evidence in the Employee Handbook describes potential conflicts of interest and how employees should disclose these conflicts.

Summary compliance:

The Employee Handbook is available on The HUB and is used by all staff and administrators at the University. The Code of Ethics and Conduct (1.3.2), as well as the subsequent Whistleblower's Policy (1.3.3), pertains to all employees; it provides a mechanism for reporting ethical concerns in person, in writing, or via a phone message. This policy addresses the need for accountability and transparency for all employees.

Standard VII-2c ... ensures that neither the governing body nor its individual members interferes in the day-to-day operations of the institution

Potential evidence:

"Trustee Responsibilities" published by the Association of Governing Boards
Communication from the President/Provost 2015

(Is this in the employee handbook? – we may need to find this)

Summary of evidence:

The Mercyhurst Board adheres to the principles of good practice as outlined by the Association of Governing Boards. A copy is provided to each Board member at the beginning of each academic year.

Summary of compliance:

Board members understand that their role is oversight of fiduciary and mission responsibilities. The Board Chair and the University President communicate regularly. There is no evidence of interference or unwelcome involvement by the Board. Further, the current President instituted a policy whereby employees may not communicate directly with Trustees. Concerns must be addressed through the President, the Provost, or the Faculty Senate President who are all members of the Board of Trustees. This is intended to discourage improper Board interference.

Standard VII-2d ... oversees at the policy level the quality of teaching and learning, the approval of degree programs and the awarding of degrees, the establishment of personnel policies and procedures, the approval of policies and by-laws, and the assurance of strong fiscal management;

Potential evidence:

- Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee Charter
- Board of Trustees Compensation Affairs Committee Charter
- Board of Trustees Governance Committee Charter
- Board of Trustees Budget & Finance Committee Charter
- Board of Trustees Audit Committee Charter
- Board of Trustees Endowment & Investments Committee Charter
- Governance Committee Executive Summary 2/3/2020
- Compensation Committee Executive Summary 2/6/2020
- Budget & Finance Committee Executive Summary 6/1/2020

Summary of evidence:

The University Board of Trustees has a committee structure that oversees the operations of the university. Each board committee has a charter that clearly defines their roles and responsibilities. The Academic Affairs charter clearly states that they provide oversight for the academic-related function of the university including degree programs and tenure. The Compensation Committee reviews and approves changes to personnel policies such as retirement plan policies. An example of this is documented in the Executive Summary of the Compensation Committee 2/6/2020. In addition, all the bylaws are reviewed annually by the Governance Committee of the Board of Trustees. The last review happened at the February 3, 2020 meeting of the committee and is documented in the executive summary of that meeting. The Board of Trustees also has three committees dedicated to the financial health of the institution. Budget & Finance, Audit and Endowment & Investments Committees all are responsible for different aspects of the university's financial management. Their responsibilities are laid out in each of the committee's charters. The Budget & Finance Committee is responsible for approving the operating budget of the university each fiscal year. The approval of the budget appears as a motion on the 6/1/2020 agenda of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Summary of compliance:

The University has a committee structure of the Board of Trustees with a clear set of charters that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each committee. Each of these committees oversee all areas of the university from academics to financial health.

**Standard VII-2e ... a legally constituted governing body that:
plays a basic policy-making role in financial affairs to ensure integrity and strong financial management. This may include a timely review of audited financial statements and/or other documents related to the fiscal viability of the institution;**

Potential evidence:

Annual 990 financial statements
Strategic Planning presentation: 10/21/2019 State of the Industry
Mercyhurst Alumni Magazines (Mercyhurst Ice Center upgrades, Vorshek Athletic Complex plans, Saxon Field upgrades
Board of Trustees minutes February 2018

Summary of evidence:

Like many private religiously affiliated colleges and universities of our size, Mercyhurst is largely tuition and Room and board dependent. Additionally, a smaller than average endowment does not provide resources for operational deficits. Therefore, Mercyhurst is dependent on sound financial management in order to maintain economic stability and a positive relationship with lenders. While deficits are occasionally unavoidable, Mercyhurst has operated positively for the past several years (cf. 990 financial statements). With an eye on declining college student demographics, Mercyhurst, led by the Board, has overseen plans to gradually reduce the difference between the published tuition cost and the net tuition revenue. Additionally, significant funds have been raised, again led by direct Board member engagement, to upgrade tired athletic facilities (cf. MIC upgrades, Vorshek Athletic Complex, Saxon Field). On the challenge side, employees have lived through several years of no salary increase. The Board chair and chair of the Compensation Committee have listened respectfully and compassionately to the salary concerns of employees. COVID and the accompanying financial challenges it presents, exacerbates this challenge.

Summary of compliance:

The University has a committee structure of the Board of Trustees with a clear set of charters that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each committee. The Board is particularly attentive to its fiduciary responsibilities and maintaining the financial well-being of the institution.

Standard VII-2f ... appoints and regularly evaluates the performance of the Chief Executive Officer;**Potential evidence:**

Board of Trustees Compensation Committee Charter
University Bylaws
Directive from Board of Trustees to the Presidential Search Committee
Board of Trustee Minutes June 20, 2015

Summary of evidence:

The University Bylaws state that the Board of Trustees has the responsibility to appoint the President who shall be the University's chief executive officer, and set appropriate terms of employment, including compensation. When the university begins a search for a new President the Board of Trustees appoints a search committee and gives them their charge as a committee as laid out in the official Directive to the Presidential Search Committee document. The Board of Trustees last approved the appointment of a new President on

May 19, 2015. This is documented in the minutes of the June 20, 2015 board meeting. As stated in the Compensation Committee charter the Compensation Committee is responsible for the review the president's performance annually in light of the university's goals and objectives and all other relevant factors and then uses this review as the basis for recommendations on the president's compensation.

Summary of compliance:

The university has a well-documented process for the appointment and oversight of the Chief Executive Officer of the university. While the President's performance review is not made public, the process appears to work effectively.

Standard VII-2g ... is informed in all its operations by principles of good practice in board governance;

Potential evidence:

- “Trustee Responsibilities” published by the Association of Governing Boards
- University Counsel job description
- Minutes of each fall meeting of the Board of Trustees
- Trustee Confidentiality Agreements – on file President's Office
- Trustee Conflict of Interest Disclosure – on file President's Office

Summary of evidence:

The Mercyhurst Board adheres to the principles of good practice as outlined by the Association of Governing Boards. A copy is provided to each Board member at the beginning of each academic year.

Summary of compliance:

Chief counsel for the University and a member of the president's cabinet, Attorney Meredith Bollheimer, is responsible for the oversight of Board practices and has recommended changes to the Board's operations. For example, all Board subcommittee charters were edited and voted on for approval by the full Board in recent years. Additionally, at the first meeting of each year, each member signs a confidentiality agreement and a Conflict of Interest disclosure. In keeping with best practices, Board members by virtue of their elected position (Faculty Senate President, Mercyhurst Student Government President, and Alumni board President) no longer have a vote in board matters because they represent a constituency. They otherwise remain active members of the Board.

Standard VII-2h...establishes and complies with a written conflict of interest policy designed to ensure the impartiality of the governing body by addressing matters such as payment for services, contractual relationships, employment and family, financial or other interests that could pose or be perceived as conflict of interest.

Potential evidence:

- Employee Handbook, Code of Ethics and Conduct, 1.3.2, 1.3.3*
- University Bylaws, Article VII*

Summary of evidence: Ethical standards in university governance are addressed in the University Bylaws which contain a Conflict of Interest Policy (Article VI), responding to the concern about other influences that might interfere with a Trustee's governing responsibilities. Article VII specifically addresses the conflict of interest concern in this standard as it relates to those involved in governance. The policy addresses potential conflicts of interest and requires disclosure of these to the Board. The University Bylaws are consulted regularly by the Board of Trustees, which reviews and updates them as needed.

Code of Ethics in the Employee Handbook describes potential conflicts of interest and how employees should disclose these conflicts. This Code of Ethics and Conduct (1.3.2), as well as the subsequent Whistleblower's Policy (1.3.3), pertains to all employees; it provides a mechanism for reporting ethical concerns in person, in writing, or via a phone message. This addresses the need for accountability and transparency for all employees. The Employee Handbook is available on the employee hub and is used by all staff and administrators at the university.

Summary of compliance: The Conflict of Interest policy in the University Bylaws which govern the Board of Trustees offers strong evidence of compliance with this standard.

Standard VII-2i ... supports the Chief Executive Officer in maintaining the autonomy of the institution;

Potential evidence:

University Bylaws May 2019

Summary of evidence:

On pages 10-11 of the University Bylaws, Mercyhurst outlines that the President shall be charged with the responsibility and have plenary authority for all acts necessary to implement the decisions of the Trustees.

Summary of compliance:

The Board of Trustees reviews and distributes the University Bylaws each May. The University Bylaws adequately provides evidence that our Chief Executive Officer (the President) has the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.

Standard VII-3a ... a Chief Executive Officer who: is appointed by, evaluated by, and reports to the governing body and shall not chair the governing body;

Potential evidence:

University Bylaws 2019

Summary of evidence:

The Board of Trustees is charged with hiring and evaluating the President, as stating on page 10 of the University Bylaws 2019.

Summary of compliance:

The most recent presidential search was conducted in 2014-2015. The president is evaluated annually by the Compensation Committee of the Board of Trustees. The presidential search committee is comprised of a widely representative group of Trustees, faculty, administrators, and staff. The president's annual evaluation is known only to the Board of Trustees.

Standard VII-3b...A Chief Executive Officer who has appropriate credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization;**Potential evidence:**

President Victor's Curriculum Vitae

Summary of evidence:

When Mercyhurst University sought out candidates for its 12th President, the committee did not have to look far. A former dean of Mercyhurst's Walker School of Business, Michael Victory, was just over the state line, serving as president of Lake Erie College in Painesville, OH. President Victor's CV shows a lifetime of learning, leadership and civic engagement. In addition to his corporate leadership experiences, which have served him well during his tenure as Mercyhurst University president, he's got a lengthy list of board membership dating back to 1994. These memberships illustrate his willingness to help others beyond the gates of Mercyhurst- a trait that is most appreciated by the Sisters of Mercy.

Summary of compliance:

On file and available if necessary, the president's CV provides sufficient evidence that Mercyhurst University has found a leader whose credentials and professional experience are consistent with the mission of the university.

Standard VII-3c ... has the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, including developing and implementing institutional plans, staffing the organization, identifying and allocated resources, and directing the institution toward attaining the goals and objectives set forth in its mission;**Potential evidence:**

University Bylaws May 2019

Summary of evidence:

On pages 10-11 of the University Bylaws, Mercyhurst outlines that the President shall be charged with the responsibility and have plenary authority for all acts necessary to implement the decisions of the Board of Trustees.

Summary of compliance:

The Board of Trustees reviews and distributes the University Bylaws each May. The University Bylaws adequately provides evidence that our Chief Executive Officer (the President) has the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.

Standard VII-3d...A Chief Executive Officer who has the assistance of qualified administrators, sufficient in number, to enable the Chief Executive Officer to discharge his/her duties effectively; and is responsible for establishing procedures for assessing the organization's efficiency and effectiveness;

Potential Evidence:

Mercyhurst University's Organizational Chart
Cabinet Membership Profiles

Summary of Evidence:

As part of the change in leadership to Michael Victor, J.D., LL.D., in 2015, a well-defined cabinet was assembled with a charge to create a more effective and efficient administration. As stated in a July, 2015 report to PNC Bank, the new administration would be focused on "professionalism, best practices, data-driven decisions, transparency, shared governance and the Mercy mission."

President Victor now oversees a cabinet of 8 vice presidents whose profiles illustrate the background and qualifications each brings to his/her position. It shows, for example, a commitment to data-driven decision making by hiring Joe Howard, Vice President of Enrollment, who has a background in big data and business analytics in higher education, access and equity and higher education, and public policy. Examples of professionalism and ties to the Mercy mission can be found in each member's profile, whether it be Merry Bollheimer's lending her talents to several area boards or Greg Baker continuing to educate the campus community on the rich history of the Sisters of Mercy and how it relates the university's mission. The same chart shows that under the leadership of Leanne Roberts, Vice President of Academic Affairs, we have successfully reduced the unwieldy 10-school structure of the past to the preferred 4-school structure.

Summary of compliance:

With an active cabinet that meets almost weekly throughout the year, president Victor has surrounded himself with qualified administrators capable of managing their own areas and willing to lend their talents to other areas in the difficult times like those we've faced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Standard VII-4a ... an organizational structure that is clearly documented and that clearly defines reporting relationships

Potential evidence:

University Organizational Chart
Academic Organizational Chart

Summary of evidence:

The University has an overall organizational chart that defines all the President's Cabinet and all the areas that report to each VP. An academic organizational chart is available on the Provost's page on the HUB. It was last updated in May 2019.

Summary of compliance:

The University has a clear organizational structure. While each vice-president has access to the chart and clear transparency on their roles the University could make the organizational chart more widely available to all employees. This could be accomplished by utilizing the Mercyhurst HUB (internal portal).

Standard VII-4b... an appropriate size and with relevant experience to assist the Chief Executive Officer in fulfilling his/her roles and responsibilities;**Potential Evidence:**

Mercyhurst University's Organizational Chart
Cabinet Membership Profiles

Summary of evidence:

Upon further review of the University's Organizational Chart, one would find skilled leadership in each of the 8 vice presidential roles. Reporting to those vice presidents are an equally skilled set of deans, associate deans, associate vice presidents, assistant vice presidents, and directors. Each vice president oversees departments appropriate to their skill set and overall division identity. Dr Leanne Roberts oversees the most departments, but they each have something of value to offer the Office of Academic Affairs. On the other end of the spectrum. The same could be said for the Finance and Administration division, under the leadership of David Myron, the Enrollment division, under the leadership of Joe Howard, and the Student Life division, under the leadership of Dr. Laura Zirkle, each leading 6 to 8 departments.

The Cabinet Member Profiles give evidence of a staff with relevant experience prior to their leadership roles who are comfortable with the standards of professionalism and best practices regularly expressed by President Victor.

Summary of compliance:

Any decision to expand or contract the cabinet's membership or administrative structure should seek input from all constituencies. The University should continue to seek out the most qualified, best-fit employees to fill any vacancies in our administrative ranks. Perhaps even more importantly, the University's president must take a thoughtful, rigorous approach to filling any vacated cabinet seats.

Standard VII-4c ... demonstrating members with credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization and their functional roles;

Potential evidence:

Cabinet Membership Profiles
Mercy Emissary Employee Membership Roster
New Employee Orientation Packet

Summary of evidence:

Essential to any university's operations are administrators with institutional knowledge and an understanding of operations ranging from the frontlines of service to board room policy development. Mercyhurst University's administration is filled with capable employees reporting to highly qualified administrators, some of which have worked their way up from entry-level positions. For example, Jeanette Britt, CIO and Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, began her career as a staff accountant before moving into the IT area as a programmer/analyst. She'd taken positions in several other departments throughout the university before being promoted to CIO. Her professional experiences across campus, from top to bottom, make her a highly effective administrator.

In addition to our experienced administrative leaders, over the course of the last 5 years, Mercyhurst has worked tirelessly to impart the history, wisdom, and critical concerns of the Sisters of Mercy unto university employees who opt for professional and personal growth via the Mercy Emissary program. Instilling the mission into our employees has led to administration focused on making thoughtful, data-driven decisions always with an eye on the university's Mercy mission. To date, more than 100 employees have chosen to be inspired via the Mercy Emissary program.

Summary of compliance:

Mercyhurst continues to hire individuals who have at least the basic qualifications for their intended positions. During the hiring process, the importance of the University's mission is communicated through the job posting, interview, and/or orientation.

Standard VII-4d ... skills, time, assistance, technology, and information systems expertise to perform their duties.

Potential Evidence:

President's Cabinet Profile
IT Services page, Employee Hub
2019 IT Road Show (Hub under IT Services)

Summary of evidence: The President's Cabinet Profile, which lists the members of the cabinet with their degrees, provides evidence of an administration with appropriate training and skills for their positions.

Administrators are supported in their work by IT Services. IT Services provides a technology help desk available to all students and employees, as well as support for the information tools that faculty and administrators use regularly. They offer a Support

Service, where users can submit a “ticket” for repairs or assistance. In 2019, IT Services held an IT Roadshow, where administrative departments could schedule a date and time where the IT Department came to assist the department with any IT issues or questions. Some common questions concerned Office 365/Teams/OneDrive, phones & voicemail, printing & scanning, Colleague/Informer, efficiency and security. The goal of the IT Roadshow was to provide department-specific training on a variety of technologies as well as to identify inefficiencies within departments and work towards providing solutions to those inefficiencies.

Summary of compliance: There is sufficient evidence that administrators have access to adequate support and training for the use of technology and information systems needed to carry out their responsibilities.

Standard VII-4e ... regular engagement with faculty and students in advancing the institution’s goals and objectives

Potential evidence:

- Mercyhurst Faculty Handbook
- University Council Bylaws
- Mercyhurst Student Government Constitution
- MSG Bylaws and Standing Rules

Summary of evidence:

Faculty Engagement: on pages 3-5 in the Faculty Handbook it describes the roles of administration (President, Provost, Deans and Department Chairs). As part of their responsibilities listed in the handbook each administrative branch is responsible for “regularly engaging with faculty and students to provide dynamic leadership and promote cooperation” (for example as listed on page 5 under Department Chair bulleted list of responsibilities). In addition, Mercyhurst has a University Council that is comprised of Administration, Faculty/Staff, and students that meets regularly throughout the academic year. On page 5 of the University Council Bylaws, Mercyhurst outlines all University Standing Committees roles and membership for staff and faculty and students. These subcommittees of the University Council contain pertinent administration for each subcommittee, faculty and staff and students that meet together regularly and present to the full University Council during their full cohort meetings. The purpose of the University Council as listed in its bylaws is, “to provide a setting in which discussion and deliberation will not only reflect the views of all major constituencies, but will also aim toward a blending of these views into policy recommendations that embody the concerns and interests of the University as a whole. This body will also provide the President and the Board of Trustees with the leadership, guidance, assistance, and advice needed from the University community to fulfill its stated purposes and objectives.”

Student Engagement: the MSG Constitution, page 13, states that members of MSG will be appointed to be representatives on All-University Committees which provides the opportunity for consistent engagement between faculty and students across several domains of the Mercyhurst community. This Constitution was most recently updated in

August of 2019. Students government representatives participated as members of the University Council and its subcommittees allowing them to regularly work with administration and faculty to advance the University's plans, goals and objectives.

Article VI of the University Council bylaws states, "The University Council shall meet, at minimum, twice a semester during the academic year".

Summary of compliance:

Faculty Engagement: the faculty handbook is updated yearly with help from faculty senate committees in conjunction with the Office of Academic Affairs to ensure that all are working together to meet the institutions goals and objectives and in line with the strategic plan for the University. The provost, deans and department chairs work regularly together with faculty through college wide directors' meetings with their dean, department chairs running regular, monthly department meetings and faculty working with administration through faculty senate and University Council. The University Council Bylaws adequately provide evidence that there is regular engagement with faculty and students on University Standing Committees and full University Council by meeting regularly throughout the academic year in regard to advancing the institution's goals and objectives.

Student Engagement: the MSG Constitution plainly states and ensures that members will be appointed to All-University Committees. Additionally, student government representatives meet via Microsoft Teams with the deans of each of the four colleges each semester. There are also regularly held meetings between student government representatives and university administration, in addition to university and contracted services. These meetings give the students the opportunity to voice questions and feedback regarding the student experience on campus.

Standard VII-4f ... procedures for evaluating administrative units and for using assessment data to enhance

AND

Standard VII-5 ... periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.

Potential evidence:

Mercyhurst Faculty Handbook
University Bylaws

Summary of evidence:

On page 9 in the Faculty Handbook there is a description for the subcommittee of the Faculty Senate; The Administrator Evaluation Committee (AEC) which serves to "implement evaluation by the faculty of the Office of the Provost, including the provost, deans of the four colleges and associate deans of the four colleges. Each member of the

Office of Provost will be evaluated in the second year of service and every three years afterward. The members of the faculty senate Administrator Evaluation Committee use a schedule that is passed from previous chairs to new so that each year the appropriate administrators are evaluated". When the middle states subcommittee asked the AEC about the process we were told, "We use an online instrument with survey-based questions. The evaluation is distributed with the help of the Director of Assessment or other relevant staff from the Office of Assessment and will elicit quantifiable and qualitative data." Each year the membership of that committee changes, but the process and schedule for when each administrator is evaluated is pass along to the new members. The survey is sent to full time faculty to complete on the designated faculty-based administrator.

All full-time non-faculty employees (staff and administration) used to be evaluated via a uniform process until 2016. These evaluations usually happened in April and were used in part to determine merit raises within an administrative unit. As regular merit-based raises stopped happening, the system-wide evaluation process that ran through Human Resources stopped. The Human Resource Department has begun the process to reinstate system-wide evaluations for all full-time staff and administrative employees beginning in June 2021. These evaluations will be used to assist with raise allocation if there is a raise pool but will also just generally support the good practice of having yearly evaluations for employee assessment and growth.

For evaluation of the president, on pages 3-4 of the University Bylaws, Mercyhurst outlines the Board Authority and Responsibility. The section outlines that the Board supports the President and annually assesses his or her performance.

Summary of compliance:

Administrative evaluations are done by the faculty and are delivered to their supervisor. "The results are sent by the Director of Assessment directly to the individual and the individual's immediate supervisor. The results and data are confidential from all others. The faculty administrator evaluation committee then assumes that a meeting between the administrator and direct supervisor is scheduled for review.

It is unclear how the results of this survey are used by the administrator. Follow up and/or a summary of how the results are used or changes the administrator should make is something that we may want to consider to "close the loop" of assessment. Assessing the data to enhance activity and efficiency of these positions is required per the standard wording, and we believe that the process for evaluating them is clear, but how the information is used after the evaluation data is sent to them is uncertain.

For evaluating non-faculty based administrative positions there current is not an active process as it was not regularly used the past couple of years when raises were not given. The Human Resource department has stated that this process will be running again starting in June 2021.