

Chapter 2. Mission, Goals, and Integrity (Standards 1 and 6)

Overview of Charge

The working group charged with Standards 1 and 6 began their inquiry with general discussions about the College-Institute's mission, goals, and integrity. They identified documents to find and analyze, including the mission statement, public relations statements, curriculum committee meeting minutes, and handbooks for students, faculty, staff, and governors. This chapter is a synthesis of the group's analysis of these and other documents, in combination with notes from interviews with administrators from all four campuses. This group began with their research questions and integrated the evidence for compliance with the fundamental elements into their discussion of the questions (cf. editors' note³).

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

Discussion of Research Questions and Compliance

Research Question 1.1

How are the institution's operations consistent with its mission and goals?

The Mission Statement of HUC-JIR is a two-part document ("mission" and "purpose") that appears in a prominent and accessible place on the website (S1_01e). Specific statements of goals include professional training, higher learning, scholarship, and fostering a diverse community (S1_01b). It is clear that the mission and goals relate to external as well as internal contexts and constituencies (S1_02).

While this statement is highly inclusive of all the activities currently offered at the institution (satisfying S1_01a), it includes some areas currently emphasized much less than others. This conclusion is acknowledged by the most recent Academic Vision Statement drafted by the VPAA. For example, the College-Institute does not devote as many resources to developing lay leaders as to professionals. Furthermore, ongoing alumni education may be a desideratum, but it is not an area into which substantial resources are currently being invested.

As documented in the 2002 MSCHE NY Self-Study (page 15), "HUC-JIR developed its most recent statement of purpose and mission in 1997-98, during a coordinated, institution-wide process that included representation from each of the four campuses." At that time, the president appointed a working group comprised of members of the faculty, administration, and Board of Governors. The Board approved the statement in February, 1998.

Students, faculty, staff, administrators, and governors have ready access to the mission statement, as it appears in all handbooks and is the first item listed under "About HUC-JIR" on the website. The statement is reviewed and discussed during periods of transition, such as the strategic planning process in 2004-06 (S1_01a and S1_01e; also see Standard 6: Integrity,

³Unlike the remaining *inductive* chapters where a fundamental element is introduced, supporting evidence provided and conclusions reached, this chapter is written *deductively*. When a standard is addressed, compliance is first asserted and then the supporting evidence is provided. Since this approach did not bias the working group against making recommendations, the editors decided to preserve the group's process while being especially vigilant about the quality of supporting data.

below). In June, 2012 the Governance Committee of the Board called for an updated Governance Survey of Board Members, which includes the full mission and purpose statements plus three questions on their current relevance, accuracy, and usefulness (S1_01c). Answers to this survey distributed in August, 2012 will guide the College-Institute's current strategic planning update (also mentioned in the survey and in the July, 2012 Governance Committee minutes), which is being guided by a new Strategic Planning Oversight Task Force and will be completed in time for discussion during the spring 2013 Board meeting (satisfying S1_01d).

The mission and purpose guide faculty, administration, staff, and governing bodies in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation (see Chapter 3), program and curriculum development, and definition of program outcomes (see Chapter 7). Institutional goals that stem from the Mission and Purpose Statement have been set out in a variety of documents over the last years, some relating to administrative, some to academic, and some to financial goals. Most prominent among these documents are the New Way Forward, Academic Vision, Faculty Plan, 2006 Strategic Plan, and Strategic Plan Update Report 2012.

The Faculty Handbook demonstrates HUC-JIR's commitment to its mission, especially its focus on academic excellence. The mission statement, presented in the handbook, includes the following: "Advancing the critical study of Jewish culture and related disciplines in accordance with the highest standards of modern academic scholarship." The handbook also makes these goals clear to new and continuing faculty members, for example, by stating the following: "The faculty seeks to observe in a candidate a habit of scholarship, which promises to be a life-long pursuit. A faculty member is expected to demonstrate a habit of scholarship by publishing works that contribute significantly to her/his field of study, in a format that coheres with the specific field." In compliance with S1_01, these expectations are in line with the mission, and they are enforced through the regular process of faculty review and promotion. Evidence of faculty compliance is detailed in Chapter 6 and in Faculty Productivity and Credentials.

Research Question 1.2

How does the institution determine whether it is achieving each aspect of its mission? For example, how effectively do stated purposes of scholarship and teaching guide all levels of planning?

In compliance with S1_04, evidence for this question revealed that program directors and other administrators regularly assess the College-Institute's programs, policies, and activities in accordance with the mission. One of the longest standing sources of assessment evidence has been the annual student exit interviews (e.g., see CN Focused Visit Report from 2009 for an analysis of CN exit interviews, YII Chapter from 2009 CN Focused Visit Report, YII Year-end Ratings 2011 and YII Survey Data, YII Growth Survey Results 2009-11, CN Rabbinical School Exit Interviews, NY Rabbinical School Exit Interviews, LA Rabbinical School Exit Interviews⁴). In addition, students and alumni have periodically been surveyed and interviewed about their experiences, and the results have sometimes led to curricular change. Faculty recommendations have also led to reviews and changes, as have meetings about specific elements of the program with stakeholders (for example, see Aronoff Mentoring Program End of Year Report). All curricular changes are made with the support and input of the campus-based curriculum committees, which are made up of administrators, faculty, and students. These committees deliberate about proposals for curricular changes from program directors, and sometimes they do more intensive assessment of specific programs. For example, in 2007-09

⁴The highlighted portions in the last refer to the areas that the Los Angeles Rabbinical School is focusing on during the next two years.

the New York campus curriculum committee conducted an overhaul of the Rabbinical School curricular requirements, based on surveys of students, faculty, and alumni, as well as intensive deliberation (see NY Curriculum Committee Documentation). This was part of a broader assessment of the rabbinical curriculum on all four campuses.

Since the OIRA was founded in 2009, a more comprehensive assessment of learning outcomes has been developed (see Chapter 8). Based on extensive interviews with faculty and administrators, the OIRA created comprehensive assessment forms for each program. Each faculty member has rated at least one project in each course. The OIRA analyzes the data to determine the extent to which the students are achieving the multiple dimensions for each program (see Chapter 8). If some students are not achieving the goals, the faculty decides how to address the weaknesses in the program. The OIRA has made annual presentations to the Cincinnati faculty in all programs with the evidence collected, and faculty members meet to discuss how to better help the students achieve the goals of the programs. Since the other campuses began systematic program assessment later, their data has only recently been analyzed for similar presentations.⁵

Here are a few examples of the many changes that have come about due to program assessment (showing compliance with S1_01d):

- Changes in the YII program based on evaluation forms and exit interviews are detailed in Recent Changes to the YII Program.
- The introduction of a mentoring program in Los Angeles for second- and third-year rabbinical students to support their fieldwork in small congregations based on data gleaned in the LA exit interviews.
- The revision of thesis guidelines in the Rabbinical School and in the School of Jewish Nonprofit Management, as well as the introduction of a capstone paper requirement for joint education-nonprofit students in conjunction with their curriculum guides, also based on the Los Angeles exit interviews mentioned above.
- Based on a 2008 strategic planning process involving interviews, focus groups, surveys, and branding analysis, the School of Jewish Communal Service changed its name to the School of Jewish Nonprofit Management and revamped its curriculum to be more focused on management.
- A recent successful grant proposal for \$5.2 million dollars to enable service-learning in the Rabbinical School on the Cincinnati campus was consistent with the findings from the learning outcomes assessment related to the *Values* dimension. One of the defining characteristics of the program's targeted *Practical* level of commitment to values is "Understand that synagogue cultures need outreach and do structured service outside the Jewish community."⁶
- The introduction of the new Scribeshouse Writing Center on the Cincinnati campus to assist students in improving writing skills (see the link in footnote 6).
- A highlight of this self-study is the progress made in integrating learning across the multiple campuses. Learning outcomes assessment interview results and data were used as the basis for the institution's first all-campus mission statement of the Rabbinical School (see the discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 8 for details).
- An application was submitted by the Director of the Graduate School for a Wabash Center Graduate Programs Teaching Initiative grant "to enable doctoral programs in theology and

⁵See Results of Rabbinical Ratings 2012SP, released shortly before the self-study was finished.

⁶See Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati Service Learning Grant and #LON

religion to assess their preparation of Ph.D. and Th.D. students for teaching appointments.” The award was approved in January 2013.

Not all curricular changes have been driven by assessment; some have been the result of program policy changes that resulted from the view of the College-Institute’s mission expressed in the 2006 strategic plan (see also the current strategic plan update). A prime example is the restriction of the School of Graduate Studies’ PhD program in Bible and Ancient Near East in service to the goal of widening the offerings of the School in other areas of study that are strongly supported, especially Rabbinics, History of Biblical Interpretation, Second Temple Judaism, Jewish Thought and Philosophy, and American Jewish History.

With respect to Research Question 1.2, assessment of the College-Institute’s operations is not limited to curriculum. Faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders suggest improvement of other operations, including student handbooks, the procedures for hiring and promoting faculty, and the process by which employee benefits are changed. The first half of Chapter 8 describes the administrative assessment survey and usage of its results.

Examples that assessment evidence includes diverse sources of suggestions for improvement are the following:

- As a result of the gap analysis encouraged by the College-Institute’s MSCHE Liaison Officer, the VPAA organized the Administrative Policies Committee to review administrative policies and procedures for the entire College-Institute. A key result of this extensive review is a unified National Student Academic Handbook reviewed both by all campus faculties and subsequently during several meetings of the large faculty-administration Academic Advisory Council (see Chapter 5 for additional details). It is notable that the entire, highly representative self-study working groups participated in the gap analysis.
- Improvement suggestions regarding procedures for hiring and promotion include a 2012 email from the chair of a faculty search committee to the VPAA. Proposals in that note were added to the plan to revise policies for the following year. Part of this revision process will involve coming up with protocols specific to the Jerusalem campus, which differs significantly from other campuses in the number of adjunct and full professors (see Interim Jerusalem Protocol for Faculty Appointment and A Process for Appointment to Full Professor). Also, in light of the increasing acceptance and even expectation of co-authorship and collaboration, especially in the social sciences, the Academic and Faculty Affairs Committee of the Board of Governors recommended that the VPAA work with faculty to review the promotion expectations and protocols so that they address this changing reality (see below, in this chapter Standard 6, and in Chapter 6). The Faculty Council began this review in December, 2012.
- An example of changes in employee benefits is the addition of an eyesight plan that was requested by a number of faculty and staff members.
- Recent changes in student health insurance policies address student concerns about differences in costs among campuses. The new policy reduces health insuring costs to a level near that of the least expensive campus (the discrepancy is a major factor in the different costs of attendance at each campus documented in the Financial Aid Presentation to the Board of Governors in 2012FA).

In short, in compliance with S1_03 the College-Institute’s operations are very much in line with its mission and goals. The institution regularly assesses the programs as a whole, as well as specific elements of them. Based on data from these assessments, as well as changing realities, modifications in curriculum and policies have been instated, ultimately making the institution more effective at achieving its mission and goals.

Standard 6: Integrity

Discussion of Research Questions and Compliance

Research Question 6.1

How consistent is the institution in (1) communicating its stated policies to students, faculty and staff and (2) adhering to those policies?

The College-Institute has fair and impartial processes, published and widely available, to address student grievances, such as alleged violations of institutional policies. These are available online at HUC-JIR Policies and have been updated periodically. As indicated above, the Academic Advisory Council (AAC) recently approved a unified National Student Academic Handbook, submitted by the VPAA and registrar, and being implemented in the spring semester, 2013. This is available on the same webpage and at <http://huc.edu/registrar>.

Student grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably (in compliance with S6_01). The NSAH, for example, states:

A student who feels that a faculty member has violated good teaching practices shall first discuss the matter directly with the faculty member, accompanied by his/her faculty advisor, if applicable. If he or she feels that his or her grievance has not been properly adjudicated, he or she should request a conference with the School Director. If the intervention of the School Director still has not achieved reconciliation, the student may submit to the Dean a letter formally stating the nature of the grievance with specific reference to teaching responsibilities that have not been fulfilled. The student should also provide any materials supportive of the complaint.

Faculty and administrators are aware of these policies and have implemented them when the need has arisen, which is rare. In a survey of all deans and program directors conducted for this Self-Study Report, only one dean (in JR) reported a student grievance in the academic year 2011-12, which had been resolved. Three directors spontaneously mentioned that they do have other complaints but they are handled informally. The Office of the National Registrar maintains files on student complaints and grievances relating to FERPA policy. Campus deans and program directors have files concerning student complaints and grievances relating to academic matters.

The College-Institute's practices for the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of employees are published and publicly available, in compliance with S6_02. Fair and impartial policies can be found in College-Institute's Personnel and Faculty handbooks, and in the section of the website with broadly applicable institution-wide policies. This section offers a significant breadth of general policies that are quite helpful in their scope. These policies cover campus security and crime reporting⁷, FERPA, disabilities, political campaigning, transcript request, sexual assault prevention, and sexual harassment. Naturally, these documents reflect legal differences governing some of these policies between the United States and Israel and even among the three states where the College-Institute has domestic locations. For example, New York requires short-term disability insurance, while the other states do not. In general, the policies are well written and have been reviewed by appropriate personnel (both internally and externally) to ensure their completeness and accuracy.

⁷Also see the HR Annual Security Report compiled in compliance with Clery regulations.

Staff policies and procedures are communicated through the Personnel Handbook. While the handbook is dated October 1, 1999, it contains a number of policies and procedures that have been updated over the past decade. HR directors past and present have worked toward revising the handbook. The Personnel Handbook addresses all non-faculty employees of the College-Institute. While there may be some overlap (for example, in areas where instructional staff may find relevant information in the Faculty Handbook), the Personnel Handbook is the official statement of the school in relation to all non-faculty employees. It represents a set of guidelines rather than a contractual statement and is provided to every new hire as part of the package of employment materials.

The Personnel Handbook lays down an elaborate procedure for the resolution of disputes, concerns, and grievances. The rules are disseminated as a package to all new employees and appear fair and impartial. The policies and guidelines with respect to hiring and termination are extensive and were composed with the benefit of expert advice on these matters. The school's Sexual Harassment Non-Discrimination Policies are clear and establish an environment of equal treatment of various constituencies represented in the staff.

Faculty members are given the Faculty Handbook upon hire, and the officials in charge of their review send it to them again when they are up for promotion. The institution adheres to the review and promotion process. Some faculty members have reported not knowing that the Faculty Handbook (along with other resources) is available on the password-protected Sakai site (under Faculty Resources), so an area for improvement would be to inform faculty members of this set of resources on a regular basis or to make it more easily accessible online. The working group suggested that the Faculty Handbook needs to be updated more regularly. The updates should include changes to the Appendices, such as replacing the 2000 statement of policy for obtaining reimbursements from the Faculty Research and Travel Fund with the new 2008 procedures that superseded it.

The Faculty Handbook stipulates that procedures for promotion and tenure are based on the criteria of "scholarship, teaching, professional service, and collegiality." Faculty members considered for promotion are required to submit evidence of these four areas in the form of self-studies and copies of articles and books they have written. Students and alumni submit evaluations of the candidate's pedagogy. Outside scholars in the candidate's field submit confidential letters of evaluation. Faculty on the relevant campus and on other campuses write letters and determine whether the candidate has successfully demonstrated excellence in these four areas. The administration and the Board of Governors must approve each promotion. There have been a few instances in which candidates were denied promotion and a few instances in which candidates for promotion were advised to freeze the process for a year or two in order to give them the best chance of prevailing in the process. Confidential documents demonstrating that the procedures have been carefully followed are available in each campus dean's office.

In addition, the College-Institute offers handbooks to members of the institution-wide Board of Governors and to members of the Boards of Overseers for each campus. The Board of Governors Manual includes a statement of mission, details about the roles and responsibilities of governors, and information about the budgetary process. It also includes information about the history of the institution, facts about the four campuses including their faculty and administration, and rosters of the governors. A new Board orientation plan with considerable attention to written material is discussed in Chapter 4. The Jerusalem campus does not have an Overseers Handbook. There are differences in content coverage among the handbooks of the Cincinnati Overseers, the New York Overseers, and the Los Angeles Overseers. The campus

deans might develop a common set of standards for what should be included in the handbooks of all campuses.

The religious nature of the College-Institute makes it imperative to take seriously the notions of ethical practices and respect for individuals (S6_03 and S6_07). To get evidence on the success of the College-Institute's efforts to achieve respect among all constituents, an administrative survey (described in more detail in Chapter 8) posed one of three key question-types around the concept of respect. The idea was that people feel respected when others recognize their needs and roles. In order to accomplish this understanding, each of the thirteen administrative functions defined three developmental levels of what they do. The survey was distributed to all faculty, administrators, staff, and students affiliated with the College-Institute. Raters used the definitions provided by each function to identify what level of development they experienced. The results were that performance on the "respect" questions was highly correlated with performance in the other two areas. Respondents also provided narrative detail explaining their responses. The survey is planned for annual implementation. It is hoped that the data and narratives will lead to improved performance in the three areas identified. The effort to assess respect, itself, indicates an institutional commitment to it. Improved performance over the years will not only provide evidence of the depth of this commitment, but also contribute to it.

The policies articulated in the College-Institute's Student, Personnel, and Faculty Handbooks, and Governors' Manual address issues of conflict of interest and the appearance of such conflict as well as the treatment of all constituencies in an equitable and consistent manner (S6_03). Such policies deal with student discipline, student evaluation, grievances, faculty promotion, tenure, retention and compensation, administrative review, curricular improvement, and institutional governance and management.

Research Question 6.2

How are the needs of all the constituencies of the institution considered in terms of curricular improvement?

By policy, all curricular improvements are approved by the faculty and the VPAA, guaranteeing the input of those constituencies. Thus, the College-Institute's policy documents support the concerns articulated in Research Question 6.2. Also supporting the concern for curriculum improvement meeting the needs of all constituencies are the diverse sources of input on curriculum. These include alumni as individuals or through collective surveys (see Alumni Survey Graphs and Alumni Survey Summary 2011); Reform movement leaders, donors, and members of the Board of Governors (see HUC-JIR special programs donors, and the reports of the standing Committee on Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Board Minutes); students (e.g., those documented in the exit interviews (see above for a list of links), and in their participation in executive committees on various campuses); and formal assessment results (see Chapter 8).

The campus student handbook policies have been applied consistently (S6_04), but the several handbooks had not been fully aligned until the creation of the NSAH, one of the salutary by-products of the current self-study process that has aimed to create better integration of the campuses. Issues addressed include credit transfer, academic hour definition, when an incomplete becomes a fail, policies surrounding plagiarism, auditing, credit by examination, and cross-listed courses. The new Handbook deals with both standardization and the addition of policies needed to address new federal regulations regarding identity verification and foreign students. Finally, the registrar has worked with the faculty to improve the utilization of, and standardize practices regarding, the SIS's grading options.

Students are treated equitably, and the policies in the Student Handbook are adhered to. When students are performing poorly in their coursework or field placements, the administration follows the protocols. Students are sent letters informing them of the need for a student tenure committee. Based on the results of the committee's deliberations, students continue with modifications (e.g., academic probation) or are counseled out of the program (see examples of letters from the student tenure review process).

The College-Institute fosters a climate of academic inquiry and engagement supported by policies regarding academic and intellectual freedom (S6_05). For example, the Mission Statement identifies HUC-JIR as "an innovative resource and learning center working with Reform congregations and leaders, the Jewish organizational world and the religious and academic community at large: acknowledging and supporting a diverse community of scholars, students and staff committed to academic freedom and rigor." The College-Institute is infused with a climate of respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration for the range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives. As the Faculty Handbook states, "Students are welcome who meet the College-Institute's standards of scholarship and who, whatever their faith [referring specifically to the School of Graduate Studies], are devoted to the exploration of the Judaic heritage. The College-Institute sees itself as standing for freedom of research, publication, and instruction." Although the Administrative Policies Committee has not yet completed a formal statement of policy regarding the protection of intellectual property rights, it is on their agenda and the College-Institute respects and supports individual faculty members' publishing pursuits (S6_06).

This spirit of integrity pervades the institution's public relations announcements (S6_08), as well as advertisements and recruiting and admissions materials and practices. Many of these can be found in the new brochure that was made available in the summer of 2012, the weekly e-blast archives, the College-Institute's *Chronicle*, and the student blog, which replaced the *Kesher* newsletter. As these documents indicate, HUC-JIR's public statements have become more extensive and focused over the past decade. The e-blasts, sent to constituencies of the school, as well as the press, highlight activities taking place on the campuses, lectures and publications from faculty members, and relevant articles and information that relate to the Reform movement and the larger Jewish community. Press releases are also issued for specific events when deemed appropriate. The constant output appears to be well-tuned to the habits of the current electronic age, and focus on social media has recently increased through a strategic hire, who creates daily posts on Facebook and Twitter that periodically feature video links. These have grown the number of HUC-JIR friends and followers substantially over the past two years. Additionally, a major redesign of the College-Institute's website is currently in progress.

Required and elective courses are sufficiently available to allow students to graduate within the published program length (S6_09). When budget cuts have led to reductions in course offerings, alternative arrangements have been made, such as the use of cross-campus distance learning to compensate for faculty reductions, as discussed in the *Instruction* section of Chapter 6. Students have direct access to the academic catalogues for all programs in electronic format on the website (S6_10 and S6_11). The Information Systems Department has archived copies of prior catalogues (S6_12). The last printed catalogue (2001-04) is available in the libraries and also on the website (S6_10).

Changes and issues affecting institutional mission, goals, sites, programs, operations, and other material changes are disclosed accurately and in a timely manner to the institution's community on www.huc.edu and to MSCHE (S6_13). The College-Institute also accurately reports and keeps current with the OIRA Annual Reporting Timeline including annual data reporting to IPEDS and to MSCHE for the Institutional Profile of the College Institute and for the

accreditation details mentioned in the MSCHE Statement of Accreditation Status, such as the self-study and periodic review report, the team report, and the Commission's action. Information on institution-wide assessments, including recent graduation, retention, and certification rates is available to prospective students (see Retention and Completion Rates, fulfilling S6_15). The very high value of these rates has long been typical of the institution.

Throughout the financial crisis that rocked the College-Institute in 2008-9 (see also Chapter 3), changes and issues affecting the community were disclosed in an accurate and timely way (S6_14). The lines of communication remained open and frequent. Over this difficult period, March 2009-Nov 2009, as a recovery plan was being developed and put into place, letters and communication from the President's Office were essential and frequent (letter to HUC Staff; Board Update from J. Geller; NWF Update for Reform Community; David Ellenson Letter to HUC Alumni; David Ellenson Letter to HUC Community). Letters were sent out in March, April, and November 2009 and in January 2010. The president described the details of the plan, how it met and promoted the mission of the College-Institute, and the vision going forward. Not only were all constituencies of the College-Institute and sister organizations kept informed of the plan called "the New Way Forward" (NWF), but representative faculty and students were included in the working groups that explored the feasibility of the plan prior to its adoption by the Board. Over the ensuing years as the program has been implemented, the Board and the Faculty Council have remained updated. HUC-JIR has a longstanding practice of transparent reporting to its constituent bodies: faculty, staff, alumni, as well as sister organizations of the worldwide Reform Movement (URJ, CCAR, World Union for Progressive Judaism, WUPJ) on an annual, monthly, and sometimes weekly basis. The Board of Governors has authorized a new standing Communications Committee, which includes student and faculty participation.

In compliance with S6_14 this Self-Study Report has been made accessible for input from all faculty, senior administrators, Board members, and student government representatives. There are a small percentage of documents that have been password-protected to be viewed only by the Board, executive officers, self-study co-chairs, and the evaluation team. This Self-Study Report is accessible with a password from the open front page of wiki.huc.edu, which also includes extensive institutional information including assessment tools and summarized results (S6_16).

The College-Institute fulfills all applicable requirements of the Commission, including reporting (S6_17). The faculty and administration engage in frequent assessment of the integrity evidenced in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented. Such integrity assessment occurs both driven by the accreditation process and independent of it. It often results in changes in policies and operations. Formal assessment is documented in the 2009 Board Survey detailed in the Focused Visit Report to NCAHLC (discussed in Chapter 4), the 2012 Board Survey and the Administrative Survey mentioned above, which has been used by the Administrative Policies Committee (S6_18). In addition, extensive informal assessment occurs through the normal committee structure of the College-Institute and leads to discussions that ultimately affect policy. Thus, the work on the National Student Academic Handbook entailed extensive informal data-gathering and deliberation among the registrar, VPAA, local faculties, and the AAC.

There have been times when the policies on the books have been ambiguous when it comes to a specific situation. For example, a promotion process involves review of the candidate's dossier not only by outside scholars but also by scholars on other campuses of HUC-JIR. A question arose as to whether it was acceptable to use reviewers only from one campus due to a dearth of scholars in that field on the other campuses. When questions like this arise, the VPAA makes a decision based on his interpretation of the spirit of the regulations.

Similarly, the changing realities of academia sometimes lead to policy changes. Mentioned above (Standard 1) is the recommendation of the Academic and Faculty Affairs Committee of the Board of Governors that the VPAA work with faculty to review the promotion expectations and protocols so that they address the fact that co-authorship and collaboration are increasingly accepted and even expected, particularly in the social sciences. The committee does not want to make exceptions: it wants the protocols to reflect the current state of the field.

Suggestions for Improvement for Standards 1 and 6

For the most part, this working group's analysis paints an overall positive picture of the mission, goals, and integrity of Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion. Even so, there is always room for improvement. The working group's suggestions, in the order in which they appear in the chapter, are:

1. Offer more education for alumni and lay leaders, as mentioned in the statement of mission and purpose, or adjust the statement.
2. The VPAA should follow through on his plan to revise the protocols for faculty promotion in line with the suggestions from faculty and relevant committees.
3. Make policies and protocols more easily accessible online, incorporating the Faculty Handbook onto the HR page, and consider incorporating both the Faculty and Personnel Handbooks onto the "Policies" page that already includes the NSAH. Continue to review and update them regularly.
4. Update the Faculty Handbook more regularly, including changes to the Appendices.
5. Create a handbook for members of the Jerusalem Board of Overseers, finish the revision of the Cincinnati Overseers Handbook, and develop a common set of standards for what should be included in the handbooks of all campuses.
6. Create a policy regarding the protection of intellectual property rights.
7. In public relations activities, incorporate more streamed video and social media.