



ASSESSMENT REPORT/PLAN

College/Division: College of Social Sciences

Academic Year: 2010-2011

Department/Center/Office: Jesuit Social Research Institute

Submission Date: November 10, 2011

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Jesuit Social Research Institute works to transform the Gulf South through action research, analysis, education, and advocacy on the core issues of poverty, race, and migration. The Institute is a collaboration of Loyola University New Orleans and the Society of Jesus rooted in *the faith that does justice*.

OBJECTIVES/GOALS:

Research and analysis

The institute conducts, gathers, and publishes research on social and economic conditions of the poor, migrant, and ethnic communities in the Gulf South, including factors affecting the movement of migrants and immigrants into and across the region. This research is focused through the lens of Catholic social thought and core Jesuit values—the service of faith, promotion of justice, dialogue with world religions and cultures. Current action-research projects focus on: payday loans in Louisiana; the death penalty in Louisiana; responding to state anti-immigrant legislation in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama; and a responsible shareholder initiative, with a coalition of religious investors, to have the two largest private prison corporations in the United States adopt and implement Human Rights policies and practices to better protect the persons in their custody, many of whom are in the South.

Education

Institute staff and collaborators disseminate this research and analysis and education on Institute core issues and Catholic Social Teaching through a variety of means, including:

- [Publications](#) such as our [JustSouth Quarterly](#) and [JustSouth E-newsletter](#), [web pages](#) (re-designed in an intense process as of July 2011), workbooks, monographs, pamphlets, articles in popular and academic journals, op-ed pieces, newsletters, testimonies before civil authorities, presentations at conferences, etc.;
- Workshops, classes and seminars offered through Loyola University, as well as regional, national and international conferences and symposia;
- Presentations for high school and university faculty and students as well as Catholic and other faith-based workers, leaders, clergy, religious, and community organizers;
- Facilitation and networking services aimed at building the capacity of church and community based organizations; and
- Opportunities for social analysis and theological reflection for faculty, staff, and students participating in immersion experiences from a variety of educational institutions.

Advocacy

Institute staff, collaborators, and stakeholders engage in [advocacy](#) on social and economic issues through providing testimony to legislative bodies, meeting with legislators and staff members of the region, and conducting public events such as hearings and press conferences. JSRI offers assistance to other advocates by providing background research for testimony and undertaking campaigns promoting values such as the common good and the preferential option for the poor, and by integrating public ethics into the fostering of public policy. The [JustSouth Quarterly](#) and [JustSouth E-newsletter](#) include a focus on current legislative and administrative issues and initiatives dealing with [poverty](#), [race](#), and [migration](#) in the region, the nation, and in sending countries.

ASSESSMENT (What assessment tools are you using and how do they address the objective/goals cited above?):

Assessment within JSRI is conducted in a variety of ways. Some events are assessed using feedback forms with participants. For example, in our Fall 2009 conference there were completed evaluations of seven events by 130 participants. [See compilation from April, 2010.] Our Fall 2011 conference has just been evaluated by participants using Survey Monkey. [See evaluation.]

Our research projects are assessed by the Board of Advisors of JSRI, who meet twice a year. Project proposals are submitted to the board in writing and project updates are presented at each board meeting to solicit board input and

advice. Monthly staff meetings also contain assessment pieces in that work and events are discussed regularly by the members at a three-hour monthly meeting.

Assessment of our *JustSouth E-Newsletter* includes a review of the number of recipients who open the newsletter, click through it, and what items they view. We also compare the responses over time, as in the two documents attached—the February to August 2010 comparison document and the stand-alone October 2011 response (which, at 14% “opening,” is approximately double the percentage of persons opening the e-news from about two years ago).

Regular evaluation of the overall work of JSRI also takes place in the annual performance appraisals of the director and fellows. The board, staff, and community, university, and other participants are just completing JSRI’s first comprehensive three-year strategic plan. It includes Mission, Vision, Values and six strategic issues, for each of which there are specific goals, tactics, persons responsible, and timelines. Regular reporting on the progress on the plan will be built into the meetings of the Board.

Reports to funders are also another way in which JSRI assesses its work—in 2011, one report would have been the second report on the two year grant for our conferences from the Carnegie Corporation of New York; the other is the report to the Clinton Family Foundation on its general support grant.

WHERE ARE THE ASSESSMENTS LOCATED?

Assessments are located in the office of the Director of JSRI.

EVALUATION METHODS (How were the assessments evaluated?):

Assessments of conferences are reviewed in the regular monthly meetings of the JSRI staff. Foundation grant assessments are reviewed by the staff of Loyola’s Institutional Advancement offices and the staff of the grant-making foundations. Staff also periodically review and evaluate the responses to the e-news and, less frequently, the responses are included in the Advisory Board meeting materials.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES:

Each of the evaluation instruments or events allows us to modify the form, content, or process for the next time JSRI plans a similar event or project.

Overall, four years have seen significant growth, maturation, and effectiveness of the work of JSRI. JSRI a young organization, but now entering a new stage of long-term projects and advocacy effectiveness that responds well to the hopes of the founders. Staff are working well together; our new publications are drawing upon their energies and expertise; our fall conference planning has been and is solid, learning from year to year; and more extensive outreach across the Gulf South has begun. There are clearly weaknesses in terms of campus connectedness, fundraising, and wider educational impact; but these are timely challenges that are part of the fabric of the current JSRI strategic planning process.

USE OF RESULTS (What modifications, adjustments were made based upon the evaluation of the assessment materials?):

Each year, for example, our fall conference has been totally re-designed in light of the strengths and weaknesses of the prior conferences. The October 2011 conference on immigration detention was moved to a new site (the College of Law), involved a new Thursday-Friday daytime format, and was co-produced with: University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies and Initiative for Immigration, Religion, and Social Change; Loyola University New Orleans College of Law and Stuart H. Smith Law Clinic and Center for Social Justice; Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies at Tulane University; and the Loyola Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

Our current strategic planning process also has drawn heavily upon our first four years of experience as well as the engagement of a number of persons from across the university and the larger community.

RESOURCES/TIMELINE/APPROVALS (Based upon the modifications/adjustments included in the USE OF RESULTS section, identify the timeline, resources and approvals required to implement the change.):

Our nearly-completed strategic plan for 2012-2015 involves six strategic directions and nineteen specific goals tentatively approved by the Advisory Board at its meeting of November 4-5, 2012. Staff are now beginning the two-month process to tie specific persons and timelines to these goals.

SIGNATURE: DEPT. CHAIR/DIRECTOR

Name: Fred Kammer, SJ, Director

Date: November 10, 2011

Final Approval:

SIGNATURE: DEAN/VICE-PRESIDENT

Name:

Date:

Implementation Date: