Welcome to our accreditation website. The first college to be chartered after the creation of the new nation, Washington College was founded in 1782 to educate citizens for the vital task of democracy. With its close ties to the nation’s founding, the history of Washington College distinguishes it among the nation’s selective liberal arts colleges.

Washington College takes full advantage of its unique historical position, its distinctive setting in the environmentally important Chesapeake Bay region, and its proximity to mid-Atlantic urban centers of culture and political power through academic programs, internship opportunities, and institutional partnerships. The College’s setting on Maryland’s Eastern Shore has become an extension of the campus, serving as a laboratory for students’ intellectual, social, and personal growth.

Within a learning community of 1,500 students, Washington College provides a personalized education that tests and expands each student’s talent and potential. The College remains defiantly small in a world that more often values size and scale, and it celebrates the interaction between student and professor, between one mind exploring and another mind guiding.

Mitchell B. Reiss, Ph.D.
President
Welcome, Victor Sensenig

Accreditation Information

Washington College Overview

Washington College is a private liberal arts college located in the beautiful Chesapeake Bay region on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, just 90 minutes from Baltimore, Washington, and Philadelphia.

Founded in 1782, Washington College is the tenth oldest college in the nation and was named after our patron, George Washington. Washington's gift of 50 guineas, the largest made toward the founding of the College in 1782, was used to purchase scientific equipment. Washington served on the Board of Visitors and Governors for five years until 1789, when he became President of the United States.

The size of WC presents students with a rare opportunity to enjoy a close-knit, community atmosphere while its academic diversity enables students to choose from a wide variety of pursuits, both inside and outside the classroom.

Washington College's size lends itself to educating the whole student in intensely personal, important ways. With one professor for every 12 students, teachers know their students by names rather than social security numbers.

The College's commitment to the liberal arts and sciences encourages students to explore many areas of interest and to develop the capacity to reason, to appreciate literature and the arts, and to make the connection between courses of study and their implications in society.

Student participation is crucial to the success of a liberal arts education. That is why students are expected to design—with the help and guidance of faculty advisors—an academic program best suited to their individual interests and talents. To help in charting the course, Washington College has established a set of guidelines concerning its General Education and Distribution Requirements, which are designed to ensure a broad intellectual foundation in the arts and sciences. In addition to these general requirements, students are expected to complete writing requirements, course requirements for the major, and a Senior Capstone Experience, which usually takes the form of a thesis, performance, or comprehensive exam.

Washington College operates on a two-semester academic calendar year. The majority of courses are worth four credits; however, the College also offers one-, two-, and three-credit courses. It is customary to complete sixteen credits for each of eight semesters and to graduate at the end of four years with 128 credits. Students who transfer one or more 3-credit classes may be allowed to graduate after completing 126 or 127 credits. Please check with the Registrar for full details.

Full-time student status is defined as being enrolled for at least twelve credit-hours per semester. The total credits for which a student is enrolled in a given semester is planned by the student and the academic advisor, but must not exceed 22 credits.

The curriculum is designed to provide for a thorough and intensive study of the material selected. Like other leading national liberal arts colleges, Washington College asks students to devote considerable time to each course—normally between ten and twelve hours a week for a four-credit course. Since less than a third of that time is actually spent in the classroom, courses emphasize the importance of outside work—-independent research, additional reading and writing, laboratory research, creative projects, as well as service learning opportunities and participation in the many cultural events hosted by the College.
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Welcome, Victor Sensenig

Accreditation

Washington College Senior Staff

Dr. Mitchell B. Reiss  President
Emily Chamlee-Wright  Provost and Dean of the College
Joseph Holt  Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration
Joseph Holt  Chief of Staff
Satyajit Dattagupta  Vice President of Enrollment Management
Gary Grant  Vice President for College Advancement
Sarah Feyerherm  Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Patrice DiQuinzio  Associate Provost for Academic Services
Bryan Matthews  Associate Vice President for Administrative Services and Director of Athletics
Cal Coursey  Interim Chief Information Officer
Ruth Shoge  College Librarian
Alan Chesney  Director of Human Resources
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Executive Summary

Washington College Certification Statement

Washington College's decennial Self-Study affords us the opportunity to re-confirm our core principles, examine the path we are choosing to move into the future and assert with confidence that we are in full compliance with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's fourteen Standards of Excellence.

The full Washington College community has been invested and involved with this Self-Study since December 2011. The Steering Committee, in consultation with various constituencies, determined the appropriate Self-Study format and outline; the Working Groups, comprised of staff, faculty, students, Board members and alumni, conducted research on their standards and wrote draft chapters; these were then shared with the entire community for review and feedback. Edits continued through the fall of 2013. We are proud that this Self-Study is truly a combined effort.

Through a rigorous examination of the Standards as well as a series of questions and concerns specific to Washington College, this report also serves to focus on the completion and implementation of a new Strategic Plan.

Washington College is keenly aware that our last Strategic Plan, Towards Eminence, articulating goals and objectives for 2007-2013, is about to expire. Further, we have, like many colleges similar to ours, adjusted our planning and strategic efforts in that time period as a result of the 2008 financial crisis. Early conversations among the members of the Self-Study Steering Committee articulated a unanimous goal of moving ahead with some of the unfinished objectives from that plan but, with our new vision, mission and core values statements, we believe we are on much stronger footing and prepared for success.

Despite the financial uncertainty, Washington College has continued to push beyond our physical and enrollment boundaries. In the past decade, since our re-accreditation in 2003, the student population has increased from 1,222 in 2007 to 1,380 in 2010, and to 1,449 in 2012. In addition, the campus has evolved to include a greatly renovated and expanded Gibson Center for the Arts; a new Hodson Student Commons; a renovated Dunning/Decker science building and its new adjoining John S. Toll Science Center; the new Roy Kirby Jr. Stadium for the College's soccer, lacrosse and field hockey teams; and two new residence halls. Further, the first and second phases of a renovation of the Clifton Miller Library have been completed, with new offices for instructional technology, collaborative workspace for group study, and a cafe that opened in November 2012. Thanks to the acquisition of property on the Chester River, planning is underway for an expanded waterfront campus, including a new boathouse and a new home for the Center for the Environment & Society. A new classroom and laboratory building within a block of the current campus is also on the horizon following the purchase of a former Board of Education property. The growth of the College—both in our enrollment and in our physical plant—has been the single biggest change to campus life since our last Self-Study.

This growth has not been easy. Early analysis of the data from the Self-Study indicated that faculty, staff and students were unsure about how big was "big enough." Further, there was a concern about missing a cycle of fundraising as a result of postponing a campaign when the market collapsed. There was a general malaise across campus that the surveys and data collected as a result of the Self-Study indicate.

However, in addition to the physical growth of the campus, vast and important changes have improved the primary objective of the College: how we attract, educate and graduate our students. In the past decade, we have made significant improvements to student support services, including expansion in the Quantitative Skills, Writing, Access Services and Global Education centers. The Office of the Registrar has upgraded how we attract, educate and graduate our students. In the past decade, since our re-accreditation in 2003, the student population has increased from 1,222 in 2007 to 1,380 in 2010, and to 1,449 in 2012. In addition, the campus has evolved to include a greatly renovated and expanded Gibson Center for the Arts; a new Hodson Student Commons; a renovated Dunning/Decker science building and its new adjoining John S. Toll Science Center; the new Roy Kirby Jr. Stadium for the College's soccer, lacrosse and field hockey teams; and two new residence halls. Further, the first and second phases of a renovation of the Clifton Miller Library have been completed, with new offices for instructional technology, collaborative workspace for group study, and a cafe that opened in November 2012. Thanks to the acquisition of property on the Chester River, planning is underway for an expanded waterfront campus, including a new boathouse and a new home for the Center for the Environment & Society. A new classroom and laboratory building within a block of the current campus is also on the horizon following the purchase of a former Board of Education property. The growth of the College—both in our enrollment and in our physical plant—has been the single biggest change to campus life since our last Self-Study.

In regard to faculty, the data show that the College has added 12 new tenure track lines starting from the 2009-10 academic year. Transferring formerly part-time positions into new, full-time, tenure track positions created a few of the lines. In addition, the College created 3 Teaching Fellow positions beginning with the 2012-13 year.

Washington College students, faculty and staff have contributed over 20,000 volunteer hours to the local community and close to $100M in economic activity have been generated by the College and its operations every year. It is impressive, too, that during these challenging times, with over five hundred employees, the College did not have to lay off a single employee. Thus, the story of Washington College is one of resilience and determination, both of which are values reflected in our new mission statement, guiding principles and inspired by our founding patron George Washington.

Based upon the results of this Self-Study, we have deliberately aligned the Strategic Plan to the appropriate budgeting and finance processes to insure that resources are in place to support it, which is a first for the College. We have also put into place mechanisms to ensure that periodic
assessments of all aspects of campus are both manageable and sustainable. Not having a Strategic Plan before starting the Self-Study, once a liability, once a cart before the horse, has instead become an asset in that we are fully prepared to undertake a new capital campaign that will support this Plan.

We are cognizant of the fact that the College's last capital campaign, driven by this Plan, concluded in 2005. As we began to lay the foundation for this decennial review, it was important to us that we exploit the term “self study” to rigorously examine the institution and assess our potential for growth and development as we look toward the next decade of Washington’s College.

We believe we have succeeded.

Sources

Washington College Certification Statement
Certification Statement:
Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and Federal Title IV Requirements
Effective November 8, 2011

Washington College
(Name of Institution)

is seeking (Check one):  ___ Initial Accreditation  
  ___ Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Self Study  
  ___ Reaffirmation of Accreditation through Periodic Review

An institution seeking initial accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation must affirm that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including the following relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008:

- Distance education (student identity verification)
- Transfer of credit
- Assignment of credit hours
- Title IV cohort default rate

This signed certification statement must be attached to the executive summary of the institution's self-study or periodic review report.

The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established Requirements of Affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation as detailed on this certification statement. If it is not possible to certify compliance with all requirements specified herein, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

___ Exception are noted in the attached memorandum (Check if applicable)

(Chief Executive Officer)

(Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors)

(Date)

(Date)
Standard 1

Mission and Goals

The institution's mission clearly defines its purpose within the context of higher education and indicates whom the institution serves and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals, consistent with the aspirations and expectations of higher education, clearly specify how the institution will fulfill its mission. The mission and goals are developed and recognized by the institution with the participation of its members and its governing body and are utilized to develop and shape its programs and practices and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Purpose and Overview

For over two centuries, Washington College has been preparing citizen-scholar leaders for lives of purpose, contributing to the common good of society at the local, state, regional, and national levels. Central to its liberal arts mission is inculcating the habits of creative organized inquiry, reflective thought, and effective problem solving. Its students are taught to model effective, versatile responses to the shifting challenges of a wider global culture and changing society at home. As our revised strategic plan in process for 2013 relates:

"Washington College is a place where students are engaged wholeheartedly in processes of genuine creativity and discovery... they develop the habits of liberal inquiry and effective civic engagement necessary to leaders both locally and globally."

Preparing students in these goals for over 200 years presupposes Washington College has had an established yet versatile institutional vision and the ability to articulate clear goals and purpose, while prudently considering the assessment and allocation of resources—human, monetary, and physical—necessary for the accomplishment of its vision and goals.

This chapter demonstrates that Washington College has always engaged in articulating a clear mission and planning for the future with proper grasp and anticipation of current and possible future resources. The College's past and current planning sets far-seeing but reasonable priorities and goals in light of which it continually seeks to find, ascertain, and properly allocate necessary resources in fulfilling its goals. The Washington College mission describes its identity as a strong liberal arts college aspiring toward national prominence. Over decades, really centuries, of intense competition for excellence among small, liberal arts colleges, Washington College has not merely endured, but in recent decades moved closer toward its desired prominence by virtue of its commitment to a strong vision and regular planning, with its eye on well-articulated goals informed by its faculty, staff, and students in response to changing times. These goals focus on student learning as well as institutional improvement (see Chapter 7 of this self-study).

Revising the Mission Statement

The College's revised 2012 Mission Statement crafted under President Mitchell Reiss caps an iterative process of planning, measuring, and reassessing goals over the previous decade. It remains a concise statement of our identity as a small, distinctive liberal arts college. It also continues to guide current planning in the form of a revised Strategic Plan still in progress, with goals and objectives approved by the Board of Visitors and Governors in April 2013. The current Mission Statement and Strategic Plan reflect the ongoing process of adjustment from the College's previous Strategic Plan, "Toward Eminence," put in place in 2006 under President Baird Tipson. That plan sought to build upon the financial stability achieved by previous administrations and move the College forward to a place of national eminence among small liberal arts colleges. After that Plan was in place the College began tracking progress toward the goals of that Plan through a Strategic Plan Tracking Document. In addition to the regular process by which staff units establish annual goals and objectives that are assessed twice yearly, senior staff members were identified to take the lead on using the Strategic Plan Tracking Document to track progress on the fulfillment of critical areas of the Strategic Plan. Areas in which significant progress was made include improving student retention by developing and implementing a new retention plan, devoting resources to the fine and performing arts, and restructuring faculty salaries.

After the U.S. financial crisis in 2008, it became clear that aspects of the 2006 Strategic Plan could not be realized in the changed economic environment without a realignment of priorities. However, the outcomes of the tracking process were essential to the College's process of taking stock of its resources and path for the future. The Planning Committee, one of seventeen standing committees of the College, regularly assesses the progress made by faculty and staff units in the implementation of the College's mission, goals, and Strategic Plan. The last such effort was the 2009 Periodic Review Report. As a result of this review process, the administration initiated a growth audit and explored various budgetary models to deal with increasing financial pressures. It is against this backdrop that Washington College engaged in a process to create a new Mission Statement, institutional goals, and Strategic Plan. While developing its ongoing vision and goals, the College remains committed to assessing its programs and practices across the departments and divisions, as seen in each academic department having developed its own assessment plan and collecting data on student performance in academic courses and the Senior Capstone Experience (see analysis of Standard 14 in Chapter 7 and its corresponding Document Directory folder containing several years of assessment plans for each department). Thus the College continues to develop and redefine its programs and practices, while continually assessing their effectiveness.
Creation of the College's revised Mission Statement began in summer 2011 as part of the re-visioning process under then-incoming president, Mitchell Reiss, who began his administration in 2010. A workshop was held to bring different constituencies together to distill the core essence of Washington College's mission within higher education and among small, distinctive liberal arts institutions. Together they created the following Vision Statement to guide their efforts:

"The enduring values of Washington College – critical thinking, effective communication, and moral courage – move the world."

With the vision for the future clearly established, the group then deliberated the question of "who we are" by answering the key question, "what do we do best?" The question of "how we do what we do" was reserved to be articulated as part of the strategic planning process. The goal of the workshop was to capture the uniqueness of what Washington College does as expressed by the opinions of students, alumni, staff, faculty, and Board members (see also Institutional Research survey reports in the Document Directory) in a concise, elegant statement of Washington College's mission:

"Washington College challenges and inspires emerging citizen leaders to discover lives of purpose and passion."

The vision statement and statement of mission were presented to the Planning Committee, which was tasked with the creation of the College's revised Mission Statement. Their charge was to highlight the distinctive nature of a Washington College education, its unique place in the Chesapeake Bay region and historic Chestertown, and the inimitable qualities of the scholars, artists, scientists, and dedicated professionals who shape the futures of our students. The membership of the Planning Committee draws broadly from different College constituencies: students, alumni, Divisions of Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences faculty, staff from Advancement, Athletics, Finance/Buildings & Grounds, Information Technology, Student Affairs, the Provost's Office, and the President's Office. These members were divided into subgroups and asked to consult their constituents for comments and proposals during the drafting process.

During this process, care was taken to combine the best elements of our past traditions with a clear, concise statement of our unique position in the future of liberal arts education. The Committee, including members who had drafted the previous Mission Statement, presented arguments about which elements needed to be retained and which areas needed further articulation to address the 21st century role of the institution. At each stage of the process the subgroups established a feedback loop from their constituents to ensure campus-wide investment in the process and address any issues of concern.

The Committee decided to begin with the concise statement of mission and end with the Vision Statement. The first body paragraph states core values of the institution and our namesake, George Washington, and also describes our student community and the role that Washington College plays in the development of those students' lives:

"We share these values of our founding patron, George Washington: integrity, determination, curiosity, civility, leadership, and moral courage. We offer academic rigor and self-discovery in a supportive, residential community of well-qualified, diverse, and motivated individuals. We develop in our students habits of analytic thought and clear communication, aesthetic insight, ethical sensitivity, and civic responsibility."

The second body paragraph describes our unique setting and the resources we offer our students:

"Unhurried conversation and close connections with an exceptional faculty and staff complement a broad curriculum of study. A beautiful campus, ready access to exciting cities and the Chesapeake Bay, and engagement with cultures and communities locally and around the world afford our students ample resources and opportunities for personal exploration and shared challenges."

The third and final body paragraph is a simple statement of the institution's expectations of itself and its mission within the field of higher education:

"We prepare our students for rich and fulfilling lives; for myriad and unpredictable opportunities; for a lifetime of learning, leadership, and productive endeavor."

The Planning Committee sought feedback and approval on the mission statement from faculty, staff, Board members, current students, and alumni. Feedback was gathered through open forums, meetings, and direct communications (see Planning Committee Report from academic year 2011-2012). The Board approved the College's new Mission Statement at its February 25, 2012 meeting.

The broader College community actively participated in the planning process and views it as one of the most open we have ever had. Prospective students, parents, and the broader public have access to the Mission Statement online through the College's website. The Provost uses the Mission Statement as a tool for orienting new faculty to the Washington College community. Current students have had access to the new Mission Statement in the College Catalog since its 2012-2013 edition, and to the College’s Diversity Statement since the 2008-2009 edition. Because the revised Mission Statement is relatively new, the Planning Committee intends to have the Mission Statement included in future editions of the Faculty, Staff, and Student Handbooks.

The new College-wide Mission Statement formed the basis for academic departments to reassess their individual mission statements and subsequently revised assessment plans (see Departmental Assessment Plans in Chapter 7 of the Document Directory). In addition, the faculty have recently reassessed their role in co-governance and established a Faculty Council that works closely with the administration in the assessment and establishment of new policies to ensure that they are consistent with the mission and goals of the College. Staff units were asked to address their rationale and bring their activities in line with the new Mission Statement (see the Registrar's Office Mission Statement). Senior staff have also developed assessment plans that are in keeping with the stated mission. As part of the assessment plan, each member of senior staff develops annual goals and objectives that are coordinated at an annual senior staff retreat, approved by the Board of Visitors and Governors of Washington College, and shared with the College community. Annual goals and objectives are assessed twice a year, once in mid-year to assess progress to date and once at the end of each fiscal year. These assessments are shared with the Board of Visitors and Governors. The annual assessments are then shared with the College community. Within each senior management area, individual units have their own multi-year plans, assessment plans, annual goals and objectives, and annual assessment of those goals and objectives.
In short, Washington College’s Mission Statement forms the basis of our self-understanding and is the starting point for the implementation, assessment, and improvement of all of our operations.

Goals and Objectives

With the new Mission Statement in place, the Planning Committee proceeded to deliberate a set of Institutional Goals, which were created to provide the Planning Committee with a basic set of working tools to move forward with strategic planning. The following set of Institutional Goals were approved at the Faculty Meeting on Feb. 4, 2013:

“We educate our students to thrive in a diverse and ever-changing world as responsible, engaged citizens. Instilled with the enduring values of the liberal arts, our students learn to:

- write, speak, and communicate effectively;
- assemble and analyze information from multiple disciplines;
- perceive the connectedness and complexities of our world;
- appreciate creativity and imagination in oneself and others;
- ask hard questions and develop solutions;
- live, learn, and work independently and in partnership with others;
- contribute to their communities in a spirit of honest, generous, and open discourse.”

These goals were designed with a student-centered approach that is reflective of Washington College’s identity as a small liberal arts institution that engenders close interaction among all members of the College community. Care was taken to address the students’ relationship to local and global communities with the core values of the institution, as elaborated upon in the Mission Statement, in mind.

The breadth of goals was also intentional in order to encompass the interactions that our students have in the classroom, on the athletics field, on stage or in the studio, in internships and community groups, in the dining and residence halls, walking the streets of Chestertown or sailing the Chesapeake Bay. These goals were created to support scholarly, creative, and civic endeavors consistent with our vision of the College’s mission to educate “emerging citizen leaders.” Again the Planning Committee solicited feedback from various constituent groups and sought to identify the core functions of the institution. As with the Mission Statement, the resulting goals have been used by academic departments to reevaluate their assessment plans (see Chapter 7 of the Document Directory) and also as a basis for the Planning Committee’s ongoing work on the new Strategic Plan. In 2012-2013, many departments revised their data collection procedures and calibrated assessment instruments to ensure that they were in line with the Institutional Goals and Departmental Mission and Goals. This process continues in 2013-2014 as several more departments have used outcomes-based data generated in 2012-2013 to reevaluate their assessment plans further, which demonstrates evidence of an institutional culture of assessment that will be discussed at length in Chapter 7.

The Planning Committee again worked in subgroups to draft and revise a list of clear goals and attendant objectives. The Committee then presented the working draft of the Strategic Goals and Objectives to the College community for broader discussion in faculty and staff meetings. The College community as a whole was invited directly by President Reiss to participate and offer suggestions for tactics that would enable us to achieve these goals and objectives. Deliberation of the Goals and Objectives took place across the institution at several forums sponsored by the Planning Committee, Faculty Council, Staff Council, and student groups. The finalized goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan were approved by the Board of Visitors & Governors at the April 2013 meeting.

As was the case with the previous Strategic Plan Tracking Document, the Planning Committee has identified senior staff members who will be responsible for reviewing and finalizing constituency-solicited tactics under each goal and objective of the new Strategic Plan. As of Fall 2013, a draft of the College's Implementation Document (consisting of the approved Goals and Objectives, along with over 90 tactics submitted by faculty and staff using the Strategic Plan Tactic Template) was nearing its final stage of review.

The Goals and Objectives, vetted by the entire College community and approved by the Board of Visitors and Governors in April 2013, are as follows:

**Strategic Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1: Reaffirm the College’s core mission of providing a superior liberal arts education to prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century.**

**Objective A:** Develop a college-wide and departmental curriculum that re-commits to a vision of liberal education appropriate for 21st century challenges and opportunities.

**Objective B:** Enhance the mission of developing citizen leaders by focusing on the values of integrity, determination, curiosity, civility, leadership, and moral courage throughout the curriculum and as guiding principles in the co-curricular experience.

**Objective C:** Support existing majors, minors and programs, and expand opportunities for interdisciplinary study in ways that meet emerging student interests and position the College to compete more effectively for the most academically talented prospective students.

**Objective D:** Ensure that faculty and staff have access to leading edge technology and facilities necessary to support engaged learning within and beyond the classroom.

**Goal 2: Expand teaching and learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom that are distinctive and take advantage of the College's unique setting.**
Objective A: Develop a wide variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary connections between social, historical, and cultural context and the WC curriculum.

Objective B: Expand and support faculty-student and peer-to-peer collaborative teaching and learning opportunities.

Objective C: Promote and celebrate the value of the Senior Capstone Experience as a distinctive feature of the College’s approach to liberal learning.

Objective D: Develop curricular opportunities for engaged learning in a global context.

Goal 3: Position the College as a leader in the multidisciplinary study of the environment.

Objective A: Expand our existing Environmental Studies program through the development of an Environmental Science major.

Objective B: Develop a wide variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary connections between the natural environment and the WC curriculum.

Objective C: Transform the Washington College campus into an environmental laboratory as faculty, staff, and students work together to maximize the use of environmentally sustainable technology in the classroom, employ green energy sources and technology where possible, and reduce campus waste flow.

Goal 4: Attract, enroll, and retain outstanding students.

Objective A: Develop and implement an integrated marketing, advertising, and public relations plan that expands awareness of the College both within and beyond its traditional admissions markets, contributes to improved new student recruitment, builds institutional pride, and increases alumni and donor engagement.

Objective B: Achieve and maintain a first-to-second-year retention rate of ninety percent or better and a six-year graduation rate, averaged over five years, of eighty-five percent or better.

Objective C: Evaluate the costs and benefits of enrolling a larger student body while simultaneously strengthening both the quality of applicants and their yield.

Objective D: Increase the racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, national origin, and socio-economic diversity of the student body.

Objective E: Promote a merit and need-based financial aid strategy that improves access and opportunity for traditional and non-traditional students while optimizing the relationship among students’ actual and perceived financial need, the College’s financial resources, and national economic trends.

Objective F: Enroll students across all current disciplinary areas of the College while also proposing new areas of academic study that speak to the interests of today’s college-bound populations.

Objective G: Expand outreach and support services for students to compete for nationally competitive undergraduate and graduate-level scholarships and awards.

Goal 5: Support and recruit excellent teacher-scholars and staff committed to the distinctive character of a Washington College education.

Objective A: Actively promote pedagogical excellence and innovation.

Objective B: Ensure sufficient staffing levels in order to keep pace with the current and anticipated needs of students and the College as a whole.

Objective C: Increase the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of faculty and staff.

Objective D: Support and encourage the professional development of faculty and staff to ensure educational and workplace excellence.

Objective E: Provide a compensation package that will attain or exceed established salary benchmarks (rank-by-rank averages for II-B private, independent institutions for faculty and midpoint of assigned position levels for staff) and provide a competitive blend of benefits.

GOAL 6: Continue to strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with the community that advance the mission of the College.

Objective A: Encourage students, faculty, staff, and alumni to give of their time and talents to service learning and civic engagement throughout the local region.

Objective B: Serve as an important engine for the economic growth and vitality of Chestertown and Kent County.

Objective C: Extend and strengthen our commitment to be an active partner to improve the Kent County public schools.
Objective D: Partner with local and regional business, non-profit, civic, and governmental entities to generate for students opportunities for active learning through credit-bearing and non-credit bearing experiences.

Goal 7: Provide a well-designed, distinctive, and robust co-curricular program.

Objective A: Increase student engagement and satisfaction with campus life in areas known to support student success and retention as well as those considered integral to the College's unique educational mission and its distinctive location and environment.

Objective B: Offer student-athletes the opportunity to compete on a national level in Division III athletics, best-in-class athletic facilities, exceptional programming for club, intramural, and recreational athletics, and appropriate staff and budgetary resources to achieve these aims.

Objective C: Design and implement a comprehensive leadership program that will increase demonstrated knowledge and practice associated with effective, ethical and morally courageous leadership.

Objective D: Develop and promote the co-curricular program, along with the responsibility shared with students to craft it, so that the expectation of high levels of student engagement in intellectual and social activities becomes a distinguishing and well accepted feature of the student experience.

GOAL 8: Generate resources sufficient for the realization of Washington College's mission and the enactment of this Strategic Plan.

Objective A: Implement a multi-year fiscal plan that explores opportunities for savings, expands revenue sources beyond student payments and private philanthropy and aligns the operating and capital expenditures of the College with the goals and objectives of this strategic plan.

Objective B: Create a long-term student revenue strategy that strikes a balance between the need to grow institutional resources and our students' ability to pay.

Objective C: Develop a comprehensive campaign to generate the incremental resources necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

Conclusion
As Washington College moves forward, the constituent bodies of the institution are involved in an ongoing redefinition of the meaning of a liberal arts education in the twenty-first century. We strive to maintain the qualities and character that have made us a unique institution since our founding in 1782, while adapting to the needs of our students as they find their purpose and role in an increasingly digital and interconnected society. The recent revision of the mission statement and institutional goals is just the beginning of our attempt to provide the highest quality education to our students. We meet the fundamental elements of Standard One through a collaborative and holistic understanding of how our mission statement drives decision making and institutional change. It is ultimately the quality and character of our graduates that is the measure of our success. We celebrate the achievements of our alumni at convocation, graduation, and other events because they are the surest proof that we are fulfilling our goal of educating citizen leaders and that our mission as a liberal arts college has enduring value even in a rapidly changing world.

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- College Mission Statement 2012
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013
- Gibson Center for the Arts Renovation Gallery
- Periodic Review Report 2009
- Planning Committee Report AY11-12
- Presidential Transition Survey 2010
- Registrar's Office Mission Statement
- Strategic Plan 2006 "Toward Eminence"
- Strategic Plan 2006 Tracking Document
- Strategic Plan 2013 Goals and Objectives
- Strategic Plan 2013 Tactic Template
Standard 2
Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal

An institution conducts ongoing planning and resource allocation based on its mission and goals, develops objectives to achieve them, and utilizes the results of its assessment activities for institutional renewal. Implementation and subsequent evaluation of the success of the strategic plan and resource allocation support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality.

Purpose and Overview
A Mission Statement that encompasses an explanation of the College's Core Values and a concluding Vision Statement guides Washington College faculty and staff. We follow our mission, "Washington College challenges and inspires emerging citizen leaders to discover lives of purpose and passion," every day. The College's planning process begins from this Mission and takes into consideration departmental goals and objectives from across the College. Responsibilities are assigned in accordance with the relevant departments, and those responsible for improvements are held accountable via an assessment process that keeps record of institutional and unit improvements (see Chapter 7 of this Self-Study). As such, the College is in compliance with Standard 2 of the Middle States Characteristics of Excellence.

Relationship between Planning Process and Institutional and Departmental Assessments

The College planning process is led by the Planning Committee, a standing faculty committee of the College, whose specific membership includes:

- Four faculty members, one from each division and one at-large
- Three students (selected by the Student Government Association)
- The President
- The Provost and Dean of the College
- The Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students;
- The Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration
- The Vice President for Admissions and Enrollment Management
- The Vice President for College Advancement

In addition, members of the administration and the Alumni Association are invited by the President. The President appoints a chair; the current iteration of the Committee has the Provost and a faculty member serving as co-chairs to ensure better coordination and dissemination of data between the faculty and staff. A faculty member of the Planning Committee is also designated to attend regular Benefits and Finance Committee meetings for consideration of budget issues. The VP for Finance has requested, and has received, feedback from the planning process at the earliest stage possible to set priorities for the creation of the upcoming budget.

Per the Washington College Faculty Handbook, the charge of the Planning Committee is to participate in and involve the College community in the development (including setting) and implementation of College priorities and plans; monitor and assess progress on elements of current strategic plans; and assure appropriate dissemination of planning and assessment results to the College constituents.

The Committee's role changes annually as it is intimately connected to the creation, execution and assessment of the Strategic Plan. The Committee has at times reviewed and made recommendations related to departmental program assessment. For example, the interdisciplinary Environmental Studies Program assessed its offerings and compiled data from peer institutions during 2012-2013, leading it to request of the institution that it establish a new Department of Environmental Science and Studies and, within it, a new major in Environmental Science (B.S.) to complement the existing Environmental Studies major (B.A.). This proposal was brought to both the Planning and Curriculum Committees and vetted by each before it was presented to the full faculty for further approval. At the final faculty meeting of the Spring 2013 semester, the full faculty passed the creation of the new department; the expanded focus on the environment based on assessment feedback also appears in the new Strategic Plan (Goal #3).

Following the endorsement of the Board of Visitors and Governors and the faculty of the revised Mission and Vision Statements, the Committee added to its focus the development of a new Strategic Plan. The creation of the Strategic Plan was guided by institutional and departmental assessments as these provide the basis for what we, as a College, currently do well and upon what strengths we will build. These assessments also helped to determine those items requiring attention and improvement, especially goals and objectives that were not fully realized from the previous strategic plan. The entire process was conducted by committee and subcommittee meetings over the course of two years, inviting feedback from the broader community at regular and frequent intervals.

The faculty approved the draft Strategic Plan in April 2013, as did the members of the Board of Visitors and Governors during their April 2013
Planning and Resource Allocation

Now that the Strategic Plan is completed, which will guide the College’s resource allocation and institutional renewal, the plan will be operationalized. This process will involve the prioritization of goals and will be implemented in a five-year forecast that will inform future budget allocations and provide financial goals for the upcoming comprehensive fundraising campaign. In 2004, a post-campaign assessment of the College’s advancement program noted that the Campaign for Washington’s College, completed in 2003, while a financial success, did little to create a sustainable development program. Upon making this assessment, the College invested in a significant renovation of the Advancement Office; as a result of this implementation of new resources, the College is now positioned and is currently preparing for a comprehensive fundraising campaign.

To ensure the campaign is aligned with our mission and goals, the Planning Committee has assigned specific Senior Staff members to oversee the objectives of the plan and has also assigned relevant constituencies—faculty, senior staff, staff, and students—to generate specific tactics associated with the objectives, to be submitted to the Committee using the Tactic Rubric it has designed. This work was conducted, along with the assignment of dollar goals to the outlined goals and objectives, during the late spring and summer of 2013. Working cost estimates were explicated and the tactics themselves were placed into preferential order in the College’s Implementation Document to help identify fundraising and budgeting priorities.

Donors want to support the College’s highest priorities and view their philanthropic gifts as investments in the achievement of the College’s goals and objectives. In light of this, formal case statement documents, which will be discussed both internally and externally with all the College’s constituencies, will be drafted over the course of the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 academic years. In addition, the Advancement office will recruit a Campaign Executive Committee, conduct a feasibility study, prepare a campaign plan, a budget, policies and procedures, all to be approved by both the Planning Committee and the Board of Visitors and Governors. Just as College goals and objectives are linked to mission achievement and utilized for planning and resource allocation, so too are strategic plans inextricably linked to fundraising priorities and donor engagement.

Data Utilized in Planning and Allocation

The work of the Planning Committee is essential to projecting growth and prioritizing initiatives. The College projects growth by first examining the probability of increasing enrollment with a substantial increase in net revenue with the addition of students prepared to study at Washington College. Growth also depends on an analysis of the following capacity issues: housing, sufficient area and dining services, classroom capacity including, lab and office space. Additionally, the College forecasts the number of traditional students graduating in the future and analyzes the possibility to increase enrollments from traditional markets or by entering into international or new regional markets.

Undertaking this growth analysis has revealed an area of improvement for Washington College and a change that will be made in the future. As they currently stand, the College’s Planning Committee and the College’s Benefits and Finance Committee—while having in common the membership of the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration—operate independently of one another with rare overlap. This issue was first identified in 2010 by the Ad-Hoc Committee on Co-Governance and agreed upon by the Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration as an area in need of improvement. In operationalizing the new strategic plan, the budgetary and planning mechanisms of the College are now deliberately interconnected through the annual budget review process.

The College’s annual budget process, which is overseen by the Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration and the Budget Director, involves quarterly reviews of the overall budget including all revenues and expenditures and an assessment of the effective and efficient spending of departmental annual budgets.

To facilitate this, expenditure reports are shared and discussed with department managers and summary reports with members of Senior Staff. The reports summarize the match between the percentage of funds spent year to date and the percentage of the year completed. Explanations of significant variance are sought from appropriate Senior Staff, and the Budget Director also looks for extraordinary expenditures and seeks explanations from the appropriate budget manager.

By January of each year, a financial statement is produced to reconcile budget data to actual expenditures. The financial statement reconciles the Budget Director’s monthly budget reports distributed to members of Senior Staff.

As a result of requests that budgeting involve more constituencies across campus, this budget planning process for FY ’14 was undertaken differently and began with a discussion of the priorities of the Senior Staff members and the shared priorities of the College. In order to facilitate this, the Senior Staff analyzed anticipated increased FY ’14 revenue (using FY ’13 as a base) and selected strategic priorities for increased investment based on the consonance with the College mission, core values, and vision.

Several tactics in the strategic plan are directly aimed at aligning college resources with articulated priorities including a tactic to develop a process and discipline for prioritizing staff allocation decisions.

The following table outlines the current budget planning process:

<p>| Table 2.1: College-wide Budget Process Overview and Logistics – FY ’14 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Input</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July to August</td>
<td>- Review Health Insurance and Options</td>
<td>Senior Staff/F&amp;B Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>September to November</td>
<td>- State of Washington College Financial Report for FY '14</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Preparation of Macro Budget Assumptions</td>
<td>Senior Staff First Cut</td>
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<td>- Assumptions for Fiscal Year</td>
<td>Presentation to F&amp;B Committee</td>
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<td>- Enrollment (Overall and New Students)</td>
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<td>- Student Charges</td>
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<td>- Financial Aid</td>
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<td>- Washington Fund</td>
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<td>- New Initiatives</td>
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<td>- Additional Expenditures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- One-Year Forecast</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Capital Projects</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Recommendation to BVG Increase in Student Charges for FY '15</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>- Complete Macro Budget</td>
<td>Senior Staff/F&amp;B Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>January to March</td>
<td>- Review Final Health Insurance Premiums and Options selected for FY '15</td>
<td>Senior Staff/F&amp;B Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Prepare Preliminary Macro Budget for Financial Affairs (February)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Make Budget Presentations as necessary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April to May</td>
<td>- Present Macro Budget to Financial Affairs &amp; BVG</td>
<td>Sr. V.P. for Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Start Micro Budget development with Senior Staff</td>
<td>Senior Staff/V.P./Budget Director</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Review final budget with President</td>
<td>Budget Managers</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>- Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Completion</td>
<td>Sr. V.P. and Budget Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Specific to Planning Range of Majors, Sports and Co-Curricular Activities**

The College engages in this type of planning every time a strategic plan is developed. The most recent strategic plan—and the related planning process—considered the range of majors, sports, and co-curricular activities offered. Indeed among the goals articulated by the Planning Committee in the Strategic Plan (Goal 7), is to "Provide a well-designed, distinctive, and robust co-curricular program."

This goal will be fulfilled by the following objectives:

1. Increase student engagement and satisfaction with campus life in areas known to support student success and retention as well as those considered integral to the College’s unique educational mission and its distinctive location and environment.

2. Offer student-athletes the opportunity to compete on a national level in Division III athletics, best-in-class athletic facilities, exceptional programming for club, intramural, and recreational athletics, and appropriate staff and budgetary resources to achieve these aims.

3. Design and implement a comprehensive leadership program that will increase demonstrated knowledge and practice associated with effective, ethical and morally courageous leadership.

4. Develop and promote the co-curricular program, along with the responsibility shared with students to craft it, so that the expectation of high levels of student engagement in intellectual and social activities becomes a distinguishing and well-accepted feature of the student experience.

Additionally, the College’s Curriculum Committee has the following charge:

- Reviews and evaluates the College undergraduate curricula and academic assessment procedures at regular intervals.
- Develops and recommends to the Faculty proposals for curricular change.
- Reviews and recommends to the Faculty all proposals for adding or terminating courses or modifying programs (other than those covered by the By-Laws on Program Change and Financial Exigency).
- Prepares an annual State of the Curriculum report reflecting on curricular needs and summarizing both curricular changes and the curricular development information presented to the Faculty during the preceding year.
- Monitors curricular trends in higher education, disseminating to the Faculty such information as it judges worthy of attention.
- Solicits and approves Honors courses and GRW seminars.

Standing committees, representing all College constituencies, ensure that the range of majors, sports, and co-curricular activities are robust and reflective of the exceptional education Washington College provides. In academic year 2012-2013, the Curriculum Committee began a full scale review of the College-wide distribution (general education) and first-year writing requirements and continues to investigate the curricular needs of our students and how they are aligned with our mission and goals. These new initiatives are discussed more fully in Standard 11 (general education).

**Planning, Allocation in Donor Relations**
As it relates to the work of the College Advancement Office and the stewardship of College resources that are provided from endowment income, this work is emerging. We have established a major gifts team, staffed by a director of major gifts and three full-time gift officers. The stewardship and donor relations staff position within College Advancement had been frozen for several years, but is now fully functional following the summer 2012 appointment of the College's Director of Stewardship and Donor Relations within the College Advancement Office.

This Director, in cooperation with the Donor Relations and Stewardship Working Group (the membership of which is included at the conclusion of this section and represents a tremendous cross-section of the campus community) is moving this work forward.

Attention in this area ensures the effective and efficient spending of the College's named funds, of which there are 266.

Membership of Donor Relations and Stewardship Working Group, established 2012-2013:

- Chair, Director of Donor Relations & Stewardship
- Admissions: Director of Financial Aid
- Athletics: Associate Athletic Director or designee
- Business Office: Controller, Endowment Analyst, Budget Director, Director of Physical Plant
- College Advancement Office: Executive Director of Legacy Giving and Donor Engagement, Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Advancement, Director of Advancement Services, Assistant Director of Advancement Services
- College Librarian
- Faculty Representative
- President's Office: Chief of Staff or designee
- Provost and Dean's Office: Academic Budget Manager
- Student Government Association: President or his or her designee

Conclusion

In the areas of planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal the members of our faculty, staff, student government, alumni council, and Board of Visitors and Governors work closely together to achieve success. Because we are a small institution, we benefit from the strength of being a close-knit community. It is not uncommon to find multiple generations of families among our student body and alumni on the faculty, staff, and Board. As a result, the entire campus community is committed to an open, collaborative process for institutional planning and renewal. Recent examples of this institution-wide culture of assessment and renewal include greater budget transparency among Senior Staff, the Faculty and Staff Councils as well as shared commitments in the areas of advancement, planning and enrollment in regard to priorities. Moving forward with the implementation of the Strategic Plan, Washington College stands poised to continue the process of institutional renewal, meeting the fundamental elements of Standard 2.

Sources

- Budget Process Overview
- Campaign Timeline for Faculty and Staff
- CFO Growth Report
- College Master Plan 2006
- College Mission Statement 2012
- Department of Environmental Science and Studies Proposal 2013
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 24)
- Mission Statement 2012
- New Approach to Departmental Assessment (SLOA and DPAP Memo)
- Planning Committee Report AY11-12
- Strategic Plan 2006 "Toward Eminence"
- Strategic Plan 2013 Goals and Objectives
- Strategic Plan 2013 Goals and Objectives (Page 4)
- Strategic Plan 2013 Goals and Objectives (Page 8)
- Strategic Plan 2013 Tactic Template
- Student Affairs Strategic Initiatives 2011-2012
Standard 3
Institutional Resources

The human, financial, technical, facilities, and other resources necessary to achieve an institution’s mission and goals are available and accessible. In the context of the institution’s mission, the effective and efficient uses of the institution’s resources are analyzed as part of ongoing outcomes assessment.

Purpose and Overview

As we have articulated in Chapter 2, Standard 1, the College has consistently utilized the planning process to determine what our priorities are currently, and what they will be moving forward. Our resources—human, financial, technical and facilities—undergo robust and routine assessment to ascertain what current and future needs might be. Based on those outcomes, assets are allocated and plans for both annual and multi-year budgets are formed.

Final student enrollment counts in September determine the operating budgets for the year as well as build on forecasting models for the next five years. Student charges generate approximately 78 percent of the College’s revenue. Once the fall revenues are determined, spring revenues are projected with estimates of attrition and transfers and an analytical review begins on a continuous monthly basis for every department within the College. Simultaneously, future year’s budgets are forecasted based on current information. Additionally, forecasting helps determine the revenue needed as the College continues to add priority tactics aimed at advancing the Strategic Plan goals and objectives. As priorities are selected for action, the models determine under reasonable assumptions if there are adequate resources to fund them. Washington College’s process ensures that we have the human, financial, technical, facilities, and other resources to achieve our mission and goals.

A Foreword

On September 18, 2008, the Washington College Board of Visitors and Governors was meeting in retreat to review the College’s recently adopted strategic plan and to consider the launch of a comprehensive capital campaign—two of its core functions in planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal. During a break between plenary sessions, the Blackberry devices of Board members began to ping. It was then that we learned about the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, the sale of Merrill Lynch, and the liquidity crisis at AIG. These events were merely harbingers of a broader crisis in U.S. financial markets that would spread around the globe and lead to one of the longest, sustained economic downturns in history. With this new context, the Board decided the timing was not right to launch a capital campaign. A “cycle” was missed, but not all was lost.

The remainder of Fall 2008 was filled with stories of bank failures, securities firms closing, the housing bubble bursting, and massive layoffs taking place or anticipated. Higher education is not unfamiliar with the routine business cycle: relatively brief recessions, followed by robust recoveries, resulting in “business as usual,” with continued expansion of operating budgets, staff, and facilities. Colleges simply increased tuition, room, and board to provide the needed incremental resources. It was evident early in the FY ’10 budget planning process that this was not a normal business cycle.

Fortunately, Washington College was well positioned to end FY ’09 in a sound financial position as the result of a larger than expected fall enrollment. To add to the momentum going into what was anticipated to be a challenging FY ’10 budget, Senior Staff made reductions in base FY ’09 expenditures of $550,000—such as study abroad funds (a surplus that did not affect the program); freezing a number of then vacant staff positions; reducing legal expenses, and reducing travel, training and general operating expenditures. Taken together, the additional revenue and expenditure reductions produced a surplus of approximately $1.1M to ease the way toward a balanced budget in FY ’10.

Like many institutions of higher education, Washington College was hit hard by the economic downturn and its impact on endowment value (which declined from $162.8M on June 30, 2008 to $123.3M on June 30, 2009), donations, and state aid. It was extremely difficult to forecast the impact of economic conditions on the College for FY ’10, but the College’s historic dependence on student charges for 80% or more of annual revenue made enrollment planning central to short-term success.

The Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration proposed three models for FY ’10, all based on different projected student enrollments. The models included enrollment of 1,200 full-time equivalent students (FTE), 1,235 FTE and 1,269 FTE. To best prepare for what might occur, the College based the budget and presentations to the Board (as well as to the campus) on the 1,235 FTE budget model. The FY ’09 FTE had been 1,269, so the adopted model represented a conservative, but not worst-case scenario for enrollment drop-off in response to the economic downturn. Senior Staff were aware that further budget reductions would be needed if the FTE fell to 1,200 students, but we believed the probability to be low that enrollment would drop to that level. Other key variables assumed as part of the budget for FY ’10 included a higher discount rate of 35.5 percent (an increase of 3 percent over the then current year); an increase in student charges of 3.95...
percent; a reduction in the Sellinger Grant (direct aid from the State of Maryland) of approximately $300,000, and a reduction in the Washington College Fund of approximately $300,000. On the expenditure side of the budget, expenditures that the College could not avoid were scheduled to increase by $988,000 (or 2.1 percent) from $48.2M to $49.2M. During the years leading up to the economic downturn, Washington College was able to move its tuition discount rate to a range of between 20%-32%. The ability to grow the discount rate as needed to support continued growth in enrollment and net revenue was a key element in efforts to grow marginal revenues to sustain core operations and invest in strategic initiatives.

When comparing the estimated revenues with expenditures for FY ’10, the College initially forecasted a deficit of approximately $1.8M. It was evident that a planned increase in employee compensation could not be supported in the FY ’10 budget. A modest 3 percent increase was slated to cost $665,000. In addition to this “savings,” the College also reduced operating expenditures by approximately $750,000 and maintained $475,000 in compensation savings by keeping the freeze on twelve staff positions. Combining all these savings, the College eliminated a total of $1.9 million in expenditures in the FY ’10 base and, as previously noted, included the earlier reductions from the FY ’09 base of another $550,000, to produce an overall savings of $2.4M (or a 5% reduction in base expenditures from FY ’09). Finally, the Administration focused attention on reducing out-year expenditures from various large vendors including Canon, United Healthcare, Suez Energy (bidding on electricity), maintenance vendors, Alger Oil Company (bidding on oil delivery), Chartwell’s operation of the dining facility, and Allied Waste Management.

This was a difficult approach to preparing the budget, but in achieving a balanced budget with no furloughs or layoffs of any kind, maintenance of salary and benefits, no freezing or reduction of faculty positions, and minimal impact on the educational experience of our students, it was an approach that was widely accepted by the College community. These early actions reset the base and positioned the College to address the fiscal years that were to follow.

Although the College was able to preserve the jobs of all active employees, thirteen vacant staff positions were frozen. All but three of these have subsequently been refilled. At the same time, the College expanded tenure track positions by 12 lines, plus two full-time, post-doc teaching fellows. And, with the support of an additional 0.5% draw on the endowment (authorized through FY ’18), the College was able to fund a number of incremental hires in both Advancement and Admissions to prepare for both an anticipated comprehensive campaign as well as a reinvigorated student recruitment program.

Since FY ’10, the cost-of-living has increased by 7.3%. In the intervening years, the College was able to offer a 4% increase in FY ’11 (with a minimum increase of $1,000 for employees making less than $24,000, and a cap of $3,000 for employees earning more than $80,000) and a 1.5% increase in FY ’12. No increase was possible in FY ’13. A decision on whether to authorize an increase in FY ’14 will be made once the spring semester revenue becomes clear following drop/add.

Another important issue that challenged the College during this time was debt, especially given the only recommendation emanating from the College’s last Middle States re-accreditation was that the institutions was, “underleveraged.” For the renovation of the Gibson Center for the Arts, two new 100-bed residence halls, and the construction of the new Hodson Hall Commons, new debt of approximately $45M was issued. This increased total outstanding debt to approximately $66M. While pursuing the financing for these projects, the College first attempted to go with a fixed rate 30-year bond. Presentations were made to Moody’s on the bond rating for the College, which was the first time this was ever done by the College. In response to the presentations and financial information provided to Moody’s, a “shadow rating” came back as a positive A-3. When the fixed bond rate hit very high numbers in late Fall 2008 (between 6.5 to 7.0 percent), which would have been financially difficult for the College, a variable rate option was selected and the rate with all overhead was below 4 percent. A fixed rate swap was entered into with Royal Bank of Canada and Citizens Bank. Citizens Bank also provided the Letter of Credit for this financing. During the ensuing economic crisis, Citizens Bank’s rating for the Letter of Credit declined from an A-1 to an A-2. This negatively affected the weekly variable rate. To provide for greater certainty in debt structure, the College subsequently refinanced the variable rate with swap through PNC. Outstanding debt for the College as of June 30, 2013 was $57.7M, and is being retired at a rate of approximately $3M per year.

The College’s physical plant and land holdings also advanced during this period of economic stress. Beyond the projects made possible through the increased borrowing, Washington College has practiced the discipline of funding depreciation, which has fueled a sustained capital renewal program. Funded depreciation has grown from $5.2M in FY ’09 to $7.4M in FY ’14. These resources have been invested in plant renewal and debt service. In addition, and largely through private gifts and a State capital grant, the College was also able to complete a $10M renovation of Miller Library and a $2M expansion and renovation of the Johnson Fitness Center. Through a series of strategic acquisitions, the College increased its waterfront holdings from 1.7 acres to 11.4 acres. In addition, as a passive investment in the endowment, the College owns 76 acres of farmland acquired at a cost of $9.6M in the summer of 2008, which was most recently appraised in August 2013 at $12.4M. The acquisition of this farmland was required to secure 5 acres of the almost 10 acres in new waterfront property.

Although the College missed a campaign cycle (the $103.7M Campaign for Washington’s College concluded in December 2005, and the new campaign was slated to launch in Spring 2009), the College has made sustained progress in program expansion, facilities renewal, and faculty and staff recruitment.

The College has weathered the economic downturn in remarkably strong position. Undergraduate enrollment stands at 1,483, compared to 1,334 in Fall 2008. The College endowment, which had dipped to $123.3M on June 30, 2009, now stands at $195.7M, an all-time high. Total net assets have increased from $234.5M in June 30, 2007 to $292.3M in June 30, 2013, a 25 percent increase during these tough economic times. Total assets have increased from $263M in 2007 to $364.6M in 2013, a 38 percent increase.

The revision of the College’s Mission Statement, and creation of a new Strategic Plan, have set the stage for the next phase in Washington College’s development. For the past several months, the College’s Planning Committee has been working to finalize a financial model for the strategic plan that will be integrated with the College’s three-year budget forecast. For FY15, it is recognized that the only investments from the strategic plan that will be possible in the operating budget will be those funded through donor support. Also during FY15, the College will launch the quiet phase of its next comprehensive campaign during Academic Year 2014-2015. Beginning in FY16, it is anticipated that both the operating budget, and the proceeds from the comprehensive campaign will fuel strategic plan investments.

Faculty/Staff Resources
The charts below summarize the major categories of Washington College staff by full and part-time status.

**Figure 3.1: Full-Time Staff by Type – 2012**

- Faculty: 112 (24%)
- Administration: 127 (27%)
- Staff: 185 (40%)
- Service: 41 (9%)

**Figure 3.2: Part-Time Staff by Type – 2012**

- Faculty: 8 (7%)
- Administration: 50 (42%)
- Staff: 61 (51%)
- Service: 0 (0%)

At Washington College, the key component of the cyclical budget and forecasting processes lies with assessing and allocating human capital within the faculty and staff ranks. The Human Resources Office routinely analyzes its IPEDS survey data and the staffing needs represented therein. Four years' worth of examples from the most recent IPEDS HR surveys (2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13) are included to demonstrate how the College deploys its faculty, staff, and administration based on category, level, status, and full-time versus part-time employment.

Faculty needs are assessed by the Dean and Provost for current and future years based on full-time faculty members' expected teaching loads, controlling for anticipated sabbaticals, parental and junior leaves, part-time faculty, and adjunct staffing needs. This process improved greatly in 2012-2013 under the new Dean and Provost's leadership with the introduction of a new schedule projection process, whereby departments specified their expected course offerings and instructor loads for AY 2013-2014 three full semesters in advance and communicated to the Provost their anticipated staffing concerns or requests for a new tenure line. Additionally, the summer 2013 creation and hiring of a new Academic Budget Director position to represent the Provost's Office in matters of budgeting and to interface with the Senior VP for Finance and the Budget Director further anticipated a growing need for efficient and predictable projections of academic staffing needs.

Faculty and academic departmental hiring needs are primarily determined based on the overarching student enrollment goal of maintaining a 12:1 student/faculty ratio. The Dean also includes strategic priorities and demand for courses and curriculum. To help better understand evolving course needs, the Registrar's Office bolstered its use of the online course waitlist functionality (from only 22% of course sections...
enabling waitlists in 2010-11 to 89% adoption of the technology by Fall 2013), which is available to students during the registration period. This has enabled both individual departments and the Provost’s Office to determine student demand for courses and the need for additional faculty hires to cover those courses. Additionally, the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion recommends all appointments to continuous tenure, promotions in rank within the faculty, dismissals and the appointment of department and program chairs. New faculty lines are considered by the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion at a year-end meeting on the State of the Faculty. In consultation with the Provost/Dean and the President, and in consideration of the budget, new lines can be granted if a department demonstrates a need reflecting demands within the specific field or in order to maintain the 12:1 ratio.

Washington College assesses its need for administrative staff based on the needs of each department and the student enrollment. Position requirements may depend on new programs, increase of facilities, increase in technology, or the demand of services. Position requests are vetted through Human Resources and the Finance Department. Additionally, Washington College conducts annual staff evaluations for supervisors to report on the performance of employees and for employees to self-evaluate their performance. During these evaluations, promotions, dismissals and improvement plans are initiated through Human Resources and budget ramifications are reported to the Budget Director for consideration in the budget process. These evaluations also identify administrative units within the College where individuals may need training or professional development.

Based on the student enrollment and projected revenue and expenses, all requests to/from Senior Staff are collectively reviewed for viability. This decision process is conducted annually and approved by Senior Staff (in conjunction with the Benefits & Finance Committee) for presentation to and approval from the Board’s Financial Affairs Committee. The presentation to the Committee is done in a macro fashion to present anticipated increases in student charges with a balanced budget. The Benefits and Finance Committee then receives the Board-approved macro-budget and begins reviewing requests, recommendations and demands for human capital through the Budget Request process for priorities and allocations.

Recently, Washington College implemented a Code of Conduct Policy which establishes guidelines for professional conduct for all members of the College Community. This policy represents that Washington College is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct for all employees. The College relies on every member of the campus community’s ethical behavior, civility, honesty, integrity, and good judgment in achieving personal success.

### Resources for Student Learning

Washington College’s process for determining the resources needed for student learning is an integral part of the forecasting and budgeting. Key factors that are addressed during these processes are: student retention, lab capacity, new labs and offices for new faculty, operating needs for academic departments, student activity needs, curriculum needs, converting adjunct faculty to full-time faculty, hiring adjunct faculty, and academic support. The College maintains a continuous five-year plan that includes planned faculty needs as well as administrative needs.

Currently, the capital budget addresses the need for planned maintenance, office space for faculty and staff, an increase in information technology, small campus renovations and specific departmental requests. Over the past five years, the College has addressed major capital needs that have led to the following:

- Two new residential facilities, Chester and Sassafras Halls
- A major expansion of the Gibson Center for the Arts
- A new dining facility, Hodson Hall
- The addition of the Davenport Cardio Gallery to the Johnson Fitness Center
- A renovation to the Cain Gym
- A new sprinkler system for Minta Martin (residence hall)
- A major renovation of the Miller Library
- Beautification of the campus landscaping
- Major renovations in the Casey Academic Center to create an Admissions Welcome Center
- Conversion of storage space in William Smith Hall into faculty offices and repurposing as a sculpture classroom
- Addition of offices at 515 Washington Avenue for the Office of Informational Technologies and the Business Office
- Renovations to Foster House to create a new Global Education Office and study/leisure space for international students
- The creation of the Hillel House in an underused College-owned property across from the Campus Lawn
- Replacement of the College’s boiler

Currently, the new Academic Building (the former Kent County Board of Education Building, which has been purchased by the College) is in the programming phase and is scheduled for a demolition and construction effort in 2015 or 2016.

A ten-year plan is currently being prepared with emphasis on planned maintenance and new projections in conjunction with the College’s Master Plan. The plan will coincide with initiatives of the Strategic Plan that include the improvement of academic buildings and the addressing of overall academic needs. It will also address the capital needs for increased future enrollment growth.

Washington College has recently provided permanent staffing to our Quantitative Skills Center (formerly the Math Center) and increased budgets for both the Quantitative Skills and Writing Centers as well as the Office of Academic Skills to further provide the support students need to advance their learning within the academic curriculum. In addition, both the Quantitative Skills Center and the Office of Academic Skills were relocated to Miller Library as part of its renovation, providing easier access by students to these crucial academic resources. The Office of the Provost’s decision to increase support for these resources came about as a result of self studies each unit conducted during AY 2008-2009 in preparation for external review (see the 2008-2009 reports from the Writing Center, Math Center, and Office of Academic Skills). Current annual reports for these three resources (see the 2012-2013 annual reports from the Writing Center, Quantitative Skills Center, and Office of Academic Skills) show that our students have, indeed, not only increased their usage of these resources since each conducted its 2008-2009 review but that each has demonstrated its importance in improving student learning outcomes. The evaluation process that led to increasing support for these resources is discussed more fully in Chapter 4 (Standards 8 and 9) and the improvement to student learning outcomes is detailed in Chapter 7 (Standards 7 and 14).
Technology Resources

Technology resources are deployed to advance the priorities of the College’s mission and goals. OIT annually addresses bandwidth needs of the Campus Community as a whole in order to maintain enough resources for everyone. All academic buildings and student housing have access to a wired and wireless network.

OIT maintains 48 public computers in Miller Library, 104 computers across four discipline specific labs and a total of 76 computers in Daly 108, Goldstein 100, and Goldstein 202. IT provides smart classrooms that contain video projectors, at least one dual boot instructor workstation, the option for instructors to connect their laptop to the projector and access the Library’s digital content. All College-owned equipment is maintained on a six-year replacement cycle or as needed. OIT uses a hardware asset inventory database to track, maintain and identify end-of-useful-life systems. OIT developed partnerships with Apple and Lenovo to provide the College with high quality and reliable systems that meet the College’s computer recommendations.

OIT installs a collection of current software, called the standard load, on all Washington College owned systems. The standard load is reviewed annually to ensure the College keeps pace with advancements in technology. OIT also provides a student-operated help desk, which offers walk-in, phone and email support to the campus community. GLPI, OIT’s web-based trouble ticket system (link only works when on-campus), helps OIT track and manage all requests for service.

Digital Media Services (DMS) is a campus resource that endeavors to create and sustain an environment in which the integration of digital media education enhances the visual communication skills and overall message of the campus community. Over the years the requests for video support for educational and campus events has increased significantly. Additionally, the campus community raised the bar by expecting high quality video (e.g. broadcast quality) and fast post-production processing. Better quality leads to complexity and a need for more highly skilled staff to meet the growing demand. In order for DMS to keep pace with the growing demand for its services and programs, the College will need to consider additional staffing.

Educational Technology helps faculty use technology effectively to (1) create engaging learning experiences for their students, (2) connect with scholars and learners across the globe, and (3) teach and learn in a digital world that is increasingly untethered by the limit of time and space. Today digital media plays an increasing role in effectively communicating ideas. Two dedicated professional staff members work in the Educational Technology group. The current ratio of faculty to educational technology staff is 9:1. The Educational Technology unit desires to maintain a 30:1 ratio, based on data collected from six CLAC (the Consortium of Liberal Arts Colleges) institutions. CLAC’s charter is to explore the use of technology in the context of a liberal arts education and to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas among its members. Among this peer group, Washington College’s student to instructional technology staff ratio is 700:1, which is 250+ students higher than the average ratio of 438:1 for the other six institutions. Our standard ratio of 30:1 for Washington College factors in the part-time faculty and attempts to account for our heavy student interactions. Ultimately the College would have to hire four additional staff to reach this ratio. A protocol for reviewing incremental staff positions is part of the new strategic plan. As part of this process, requests for more instructional technologists will be assessed and prioritized relative to other staffing requests.

Facilities

Housing

Based on student enrollment, housing needs are assessed iteratively and space utilization is analyzed, budgeted, and assigned appropriate staff for the students’ living and/or studying environment. This information is included in the Senior VP for Finance’s growth report. In 2009, the Chester and Sassafras dorms were built and opened to accommodate over 200 students. In 2011, Washington College contracted with Kent Crossing Apartments, which sits adjacent to our campus, for additional housing. Based on annual housing assessments from Residence Life, additional rooms can be leased. Additionally, in these years Residence Life received two new resident area directors to manage the increased variety of facilities in which students can live on campus.

Library

With a $9 million upgrade in 2012 to the building’s infrastructure, technology, and learning spaces, Miller Library is well positioned to contribute to the College’s mission.

In the last Self-Study (2003), Miller Library was discussed primarily in two sections: facilities (p. 33) and curriculum (p. 97). In facilities, the building’s needs were considered critical, earning a recommendation for action (p. 41). In curriculum, the library was cited for significantly expanding access to digital resources and information literacy.

Further, in the last Strategic Plan (2006), Miller Library was the focus of two strategies (p. 8-9) under Objective 2 of Goal II. Strategy 1 called for developing “a building program for enhanced and expanded library facilities.” Strategy 2 called for building “an information commons and communications tools to enhance the transmission, creation, and production of new knowledge.”

As a result of the focus placed on upgrades to the library, the College created and executed a 2-phase building plan. Between 2003 and 2012, the following efforts in regard to the library were completed:

- Phase I created the Information Commons within the library, completed in 2009.
- Phase II, a major renovation of the building, was completed in late 2012.
- The Library Mission Statement was reviewed and revised in 2012 to support the newly revised Washington College mission statement.
- The Library Strategic Plan was reviewed and revised in 2012.
- The Library Assessment Plan was reviewed and revised in 2012.
- In the last decade, the number of professional librarians has increased from 4 to currently 6; support staff from 5 to 7.
- The library’s operating budget climbed steadily from $488,200 in 2003, peaking in 2007 at $656,030. The 2008 recession cut the budget back to $513,140 in 2010 with a gradual recovery that stands at $543,980 in 2012. As described in the Library’s Annual Report 2011-2012, all of these numbers are comparable to those of our peer group.
As these renovations have been completed, the library has turned its attention to staff development and, in 2012, wrote a new Staff Development Plan.

With many building problems now resolved, attention will be focused on updating the library’s use of information technology and increasing the library’s value to student learning and success, as discussed in its Strategic Plan 2012-2017.

Allocation and the Mission of the College

Washington College aligns resource allocations through rational financial forecasting and consistent budgeting. A new and important addition to these processes will be the strategic budget priorities identified in the Strategic Plan of the College.

Financial planning is conducted with reasonable assumptions with allocation of resources stemming from the various committees (Planning, Benefits and Finance and Senior Staff) as illustrated in the Vice President for Finance's Budget Planning Assumptions. Strategically allocating limited funds to meet the high priorities generates higher education value and academic enhancement to meet the College's mission and our goals. We utilize a budget process overview that articulates the various stages and participants.

Student enrollment is critical to our forecasting and budgeting; however the College Advancement Office is vital to our building and securing of external funding to make us successful in reaching our annual and overall goals. The Advancement Office takes a leadership role in diversifying revenue streams, decreasing dependency on tuition and increasing funding to underwrite financial assistance. Through their strategic work, we are able to sustain our annual operations and increase our endowment to align funds to specific purposes like scholarships, campus beautification and athletics.

Over the past two years, the Advancement Office was successful in raising over two million dollars toward our new Johnson Lifetime Fitness Center. Advancement also provided over $1.3 million toward prior year operations.

Washington College's Advancement Office aligns closely with our Centers of Excellence (the Center for Environment and Society, the Rose O'Neill Literary House, and the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience) and departments throughout the campus securing donor funds which directly enrich the lives and opportunities of our students with cultures and communities locally. Around the world, our students have opportunities provided by the Global Education Office that fosters an intercultural education experience for both WC students studying abroad and incoming international students.

Washington College's Building and Grounds Committee manages capital expenditures with the best, economical vendors to provide an environment that is not only beautiful but is secure, comfortable and conducive to productive learning. Following the goals from the last Strategic Plan and Self-Study, a capital budget was implemented that afforded us the opportunity to renovate the Gibson Center for the Arts and Miller Library, securing our commitment to academic excellence. In November 2012, a ten-year preliminary capital plan was presented to the Committee including Information Technology capital needs. Based on curricular and enrollment growth, that budget reflects the need for another academic building that will be constructed on the site of the current Kent County Board of Education building beginning in 2015 or 2016.

Assessing Efficiency of College Resources

The annual A-133 audit is the College's most extensive assessment of financial condition (FY '09, FY '10, FY '11, FY '12). Policies, practices and procedures are formally assessed based on materiality and level of risk. Internally, actual amounts are compared to budgeted amounts to determine efficient use of funds as designated in the Senior VP for Finance's Stewardship report.

Budget reports are prepared monthly for the Senior Staff to review all department expenditures. These reports highlight all expenditure lines and review where the expenditures are comparable to the percentage of the fiscal year competed. Additionally, the Budget Director reviews all departmental budgets to make sure the departments will be within budget for the fiscal year.

The Finance team reports to the Finance Committee of the Board of Visitors and Governors three times per year. The committee receives information regarding the budget that includes actual numbers in the current year as well as budget planning for the coming year with specific detail given to areas of increased tuition, fees, room and board, salary increases, employee benefit increases and/or specific extraordinary items such as endowment draw-downs. Additionally, they must approve the annual Form 990 tax return.

The Audit Committee of the Board of Visitors and Governors is presented the annual audit from our independent auditors and our Finance team. The committee meets with the auditors to discuss the audit, the findings and any recommendations for improvement. We are happy to note that, as a result of this kind of interaction, the College has not received an audit management letter in over three years. During fiscal years 2009 and 2010, the College adopted required disclosures for the Endowment which required corrections to net assets and to how gains and losses are recorded. Additionally, the College had errors reporting to the National Student Loan Data Service (NSLDS). Process changes within the Registrar's Office have since corrected this.

The Investment Committee of the Board of Visitors and Governors meets three times on campus and one time offsite throughout the year to assess the performance of the endowment managers, overall asset distribution and future asset allocation. The committee, with the assistance of Cambridge Associates, reviews overall Endowment performance and performance ranking, specific performance of individual investment managers and discussion of manager replacement or future investment management with different asset distribution. The endowment's performance is critical in providing the operating budget support using the annual five percent, three-year rolling average spending rate revenue that provide funds for scholarships, books, programs, student prizes, and building maintenance. While there is no goal for endowment support of the operating budget, the Board most recently restated its endowment spending rate (5% of the three-year rolling average).

Human capital is evaluated annually to determine effective use of the College's resources, salary and benefits. Staff is evaluated using standard evaluation forms. The purpose of the evaluation process is to offer a fair and balanced assessment of an employee's performance. The forms
are designed to record the result of the employee’s evaluation, which may include a record of specific accomplishments, service and relationships, accountability and dependability, adaptability and flexibility and effectiveness in decision-making.

Tenure-line faculty are assessed through the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion, which makes its recommendation to the President, who then recommends to the Board of Visitors and Governors all appointments to tenure, promotions in rank, dismissals and the appointment and regular evaluation of department and program chairs. Adjunct faculty are assessed by the department chair in consultation with the Provost.

The physical plant is assessed annually using the five-year capital maintenance plan to determine what maintenance and/or overhaul is necessary to keep the facilities in working and attractive order. Additionally, the College’s Master Plan is re-visited annually by the Planning Committee. The Buildings and Grounds team reports three times per year to the Board Committee on Buildings and Grounds in order to discuss current year activity as well as what is planned in the coming year.

Assessment to Meet Current and Future Needs

The College assesses financial resources through its annual financial forecasting and fiscal projections. Five years of forecasting are prepared for operations and capital budget and are updated annually. These forecasts are prepared from a baseline of the current operating year and specific assumptions. Also taken into consideration are the College’s strategic and master plans aligning resources with priorities.

Annual budgets are prepared for operating and capital expenses based on requests from Senior Staff receiving input from their Faculty or Administrative Staff during each office’s budget process. The Benefits and Finance Committee serves as an advisory body in order to help prepare the annual budget, provide input, and report on the process. The committee reviews the prior year performance for indicators of change or status quo in the current year budget process. A balanced budget with priorities is presented to Senior Staff and budgets are aligned accordingly.

Since student enrollment is the determining factor in revenue to the budget process, enrollment is continuously monitored and assessed while building the budget. Student persistence and retention is carefully analyzed in myriad ways: by tracking each first-year cohort, analyzing entering class profiles, assessing the College’s retention plans, creating retention initiatives, verifying annual and retention and completion (graduation) rates, and evaluating whether changes to the Retention Action Plan are needed.

The College’s Conference Services have been available to a variety of clients throughout the years—from privately-run continuing education seminars to summer athletic camps. Using our facilities generates additional operating funds for the College when the students are on summer break. Forecasts projecting the use of the facilities during shorter breaks in the academic year when the students are not in session have been developed to identify new sources of income. We have recently added a staff member whose position is dedicated to recruitment of potential conferences and coordination of all aspects of campus that are impacted by visiting groups.

Hodson Hall is a nearly-new dining facility built to provide dining to a maximum of 1,800 students. Five different meal plans are available with foods that nourish the mind and body. The College supports its dining provider, Chartwells, and their management team in creating an appetizing, clean facility as well as providing for diets that require special attention. The College retail facilities provide casual dining and have undergone some minor construction to provide an attractive, alternative venue for student dining. Washington College has recently provided a prepaid method of payment to allow students to purchase additional meals and/or snacks while providing parents a means to control spending. A varied menu at the disposal of the student has created a consistent revenue stream. The Dining Hall uses online surveys and in-house questionnaires to seek input on meal preferences and customer service.

The Office of Information Technology uses its multi-year forecasting in conjunction with the strategic planning process to determine future needs for the College. OIT uses surveys to assess overall customer service and the effectiveness of its programs and services.

In response to the recent tragedies at Virginia Tech and ongoing concerns about the safety of our community, the College’s Senior Staff created an Emergency Operations Group in 2010. This working group convenes twice a month during the school year and once a month outside of regular semesters to discuss issues related to both emergency and “all-clear” campus operations. Members of EOG include head administrators from across the spectrum of campus offices (including Human Resources, Public Safety, Buildings & Grounds, Information Technologies, College Relations & Marketing, and Athletics as well as numerous representatives from academic affairs, student affairs, the Business Office, health & counseling services, and dining services). While there is occasionally overlap of agenda items tackled by the existing Safety Committee, EOG has the additional mandate of adequately preparing the College for true emergencies. The working group has participated in table-top crisis response drills, recommended the procurement of automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and completed after-action reports for a wide range of minor incidents on campus. The group also convenes in the case of actual emergency preparations, such as before and during Hurricane Sandy, to establish when and how information should be disseminated to students, families, and staff/faculty, when the campus should be closed, and what other steps should be taken if the crisis had escalated. The EOG submits an Annual Report for review each year.

Conclusion

Despite the enrollment growth to the College since the last Self-Study, our commitment to informed and rational resource allocation has not wavered. With continuous updates to the College’s Master Plan and routine internal assessment mechanisms in place to determine needs in technology, facilities, finances and staffing, we assert that we are in compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 3.

Appendix 3.1

Numeric Profile

Over the past several years, Washington College has enrolled approximately 1,500 undergraduates from 35 states and 30 countries. The College offers a small graduate student program of mainly part-time students, although the future of the graduate program is under review. The six-year graduation rate average is 72 percent, and the three most recent freshman cohorts display an average first-year retention rate of 84%.
In fall 2012, full-time employment at the College included 127 faculty, 41 administrators, 185 staff members, and 112 service employees. In addition, the College employed a total of 119 part-time faculty, staff, and service members. In 2012, ninety-four percent of tenure-track faculty held the highest degree in their field. The College is committed by Board mandate to a student-faculty ratio of 12 to 1. Despite increasing undergraduate enrollment, the College has been able to achieve this goal in 4 of the past 5 years.

Throughout the 27 majors and 16 special programs our professors teach the lifelong values of critical thinking, clear communication, curiosity and intellectual risk-taking. Through internships, externships, fellowships, study abroad and our 15-week Chesapeake Semester, students match classroom learning with real-world experience for strong post-graduate results. Approximately 29% of recent graduating classes have undertaken a study abroad experience (see Standard 13).

Washington College offers three signature academic centers that provide special programming, community outreach and outstanding student opportunities in their focus areas. The Center for Environment & Society promotes a vital ongoing dialogue about our role as stewards of the natural world. The C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience makes history more approachable and relevant to today’s public. The Rose O’Neill Literary House is the epicenter of the College’s rich literary life, where students can hear and meet some of the nation’s most celebrated writers.

Co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities abound on campus. In any given year, there are over 80 clubs on campus, many of whom receive funding from the Student Government Association. Nearly a dozen clubs are specifically dedicated to public service and volunteer opportunities. Drama productions, concerts, comedy nights, open-mic events, dances and movies also provide plenty of entertainment on campus. In addition, Chestertown’s cultural scene adds theater, concerts and art shows to the mix, and our Chesapeake Bay locale offers outdoor action, from biking and kayaking to waterskiing.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in athletic competition. A member of NCAA Division III, the College offers 17 intercollegiate sports, most of which compete in the Centennial Conference. There are currently 7 NCAA sports for men and 9 for women. Sailing is offered as a co-educational varsity sport. A quarter of the College's students participate in varsity athletics, and 60 percent enjoy one or more of 21 club sports and intramurals, which include such activities as rugby, equestrian, martial arts, dodgeball, wakeboarding, and wilderness adventure. The 120-acre Washington College campus features the best of small town living but with the major metro areas of Baltimore, D.C. and Philadelphia an easy drive away. Now on the drawing boards, a new waterfront campus on the shores of the Chester River and a new academic building will greatly expand student opportunities for learning and recreation. There are almost 30 residence halls across campus, and over 20 academic, administrative, athletic, and multi-use facilities. In a given academic year, about 85% of degree-seeking undergraduates live on campus.

Sources

- 2012 Update on 2008 Retention Action Plan
- Academic Departments
- Admissions Entering Class Profiles
- Benefit Committee Minutes (secure link)
- Budget Process Overview
- C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience
- Cain Gym/Fieldhouse Renovation
- Campus Map
- Casey Academic Center
- Casey Time 2013 Gallery
- Casey Time at the Campus Garden Gallery
- Center for Environment and Society
- CFO Growth Report
- CFO Stewardship Report
- Chesapeake Semester
- Chester and Sassafras Halls
- Code of Conduct
- College Mission Statement 2012
- Conference Services
- Davenport Cardio Gallery
- Emergency Operations Group
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 22)
- Fall 2011 Freshman Cohort Retention
Chapter 3 - Washington College

Standard 4

Leadership and Governance

The institution's system of governance clearly defines the roles of institutional constituencies in policy development and decision-making. The governance structure includes an active governing body with sufficient autonomy to assure institutional integrity and to fulfill its responsibilities of policy and resource development, consistent with the mission of the institution.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College operates within a framework of collegial, shared governance. By virtue of the Charter for the College, the Board of Visitors and Governors exercises ultimate legal and fiduciary responsibility. The By-Laws of the Board delegate management of the College to the President and Senior Staff and the academic program to the Faculty, “Subject to approval of matters of policy by the Board, the Faculty shall be responsible and accountable for the design and conduct of the academic program of the College.” The Staff Handbook provides a summary of employee benefits, personnel policies, and employment rules; the Faculty Handbook provides general information on administrative and academic organization, academic policies, and personnel policies; and the Student Handbook provides students with information about their rights, responsibilities and resources as members of the Washington College community.

Goverance: Board of Visitors and Governors

Washington College is chartered by the State of Maryland. The Board of Visitors and Governors consists of 37 members: 12 appointed by the Governor of the State of Maryland, 12 elected by the Alumni of the College, and 12 elected by the Board itself. Members are appointed to staggered, six-year renewable terms, with two positions from each category of membership up for renewal each year. The President of the College serves as the 37th member, is a voting member and is elected annually by the full Board, as are the officers of the Board (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer). Board members have six-year terms, but there are no term limits.

The Board meets four times a year: August (by conference call), November, February (in conjunction with the annual George Washington’s Birthday Convocation), and April (the annual meeting) and at other times as determined by exigent circumstances. The Executive Committee (which consists of the Chair of the Board, Vice Chair of the Board, the President of the College, the Chair of all Standing Committees, and not more than two members at-large) occasionally meets between regularly scheduled meetings of the Board to address urgent business. All actions of the Executive Committee require confirmation by the full Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board meets generally extend over a Friday and Saturday of the same week. The schedule usually begins with committee meetings on Friday morning and throughout the day, concluding with an evening social occasion that often includes faculty and/or students. The Saturday morning session begins with an executive session, attended only by Board members plus the Assistant Secretary and the Recording Secretary. In the following Regular Session, faculty, staff, and student representatives are invited to join the Board. The day concludes with a luncheon, to which faculty and students are often invited. Occasionally, an afternoon of optional programming is scheduled on the Thursday of Board weekends. This program often takes the shape of Board member attendance of regularly scheduled classes, presentations of co-curricular activities, or a major college lecture or other program.

The agenda for the Board is based upon cyclical needs and driven by by-laws requirements. The President and the Chair set the large, plenary topics (which often emerge from previous Board meeting discussions). The bulk of the agenda is driven by committees, which work up recommendations for full Board consideration. As such, the Board relies upon a strong committee structure to consider matters of policy and to act upon recommendations that emanate from the administration and the faculty. There are 12 standing committees of the Board:

- Executive
- Academic (includes faculty and student members)
- Admissions and Student Financial Aid (includes faculty and student members)
- Advancement (includes faculty and student members)
- Buildings and Grounds (includes faculty and student members)
- Financial Affairs
- Honors and Awards (includes faculty and student members)
- Investment
- Legal Affairs
- Marketing (includes faculty and student members)
- Student Affairs (includes faculty and student members)
- Trustees

The Financial Affairs Committee has two subcommittees: Audit and Budget Oversight. The full faculty elects the faculty representatives and the Student Government Association appoints the student representatives. Each member of the Board serves officially on at least two committees,
yet they may attend most other committee’s meetings as time permits. Members have the opportunity to request a change in their committee assignments each year. The Chair makes committee assignments with the consent of the full Board. When necessary, some committees may meet either in person or via conference call to transact business between Board meetings.

The Board itself generally meets on Saturday mornings for three hours, although it is not uncommon for the Board to assemble in plenary session on the Fridays of Board weekends for extended conversation on strategic issues. During regular session, each Board committee is afforded an opportunity to report with the primary focus on items that require Board action. Full committee meeting summaries are prepared and shared with all members of the Board the week following the quarterly meeting. Other standing reports include those from the Faculty Representative, Alumni Representative, President of the Student Government Association, and the Editor of the student newspaper, The Elm. In advance of each Board meeting, members of the Senior Staff prepare administrative Board reports that are included in the Board meeting package and are posted on the College's intra-net for all faculty and staff to review. These opportunities for communication between the Board and administration and faculty are augmented by more informal exchanges during social occasions during Board weekends and throughout the year.

The Trustees Committee has developed a thoughtful process for the identification, cultivation, and recruitment of individuals to the Board. The Committee relies upon the discipline of a complex funnel for prospective member identification and cultivation. The funnel assigns responsibility to Board leadership, the President, and Vice President for Advancement to engage and cultivate relationships that lead to consensus regarding an individual’s level of engagement and commitment to the mission of the College and the unique set of talents and expertise that the individual brings to complement that of the Board as a whole. Both the Alumni Board and the President’s Leadership Council have proven useful both as a way to educate individuals on the mission and goals of the College as well as a proving ground for potential as collaborative colleagues to add to the Board.

Once elected to the Board, individuals are offered a full-day, on campus orientation during which they are introduced to the governance documents of the College; briefed on the College’s strategic plan, campus master plan, and current operating/capital budgets; and given the opportunity to meet one-on-one or in small groups with the College’s Senior Staff and Faculty Council. New members are also provided with a portfolio of publications from the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) that speaks to standards of stewardship for independent, non-profit colleges, as well as detailed material relative to the committees on which they have requested to serve. Ongoing education of the Board takes place during plenary sessions scheduled during the Board weekend, as well as through a subscription to AGB’s Trusteeship, and frequent articles or other monographs shared by the President through email communications. The Assistant Secretary of the Board (the College’s Chief of Staff) attends the convention of the AGB on a bi-annual basis in order to monitor best practices for incorporation into Washington College governance operations.

The Trustees Committee has also authored a policy on the roles and responsibilities of Board membership that is communicated to each individual member and serves as the basis upon which individual Board member performance is judged. Evaluation against these standards helps to inform the Trustee Committee’s decision of whether to extend to members the opportunity to serve additional terms.

The Board of Visitors and Governors periodically undertakes a formal assessment of its operation and the success with which it meets its governing obligations as set forth in the Charter and By-Laws. In 2001, the Board undertook a self-directed assessment as a part of an off-campuse retreat to discuss progress and strategic directions. A number of enhancements to Board operations followed. In 2008, the Board of Visitors and Governors elected to utilize the services of BoardSource to administer their Board Self-Assessment Survey to gather feedback from Board members about their individual and collective performance. A senior governance counselor at BoardSource oversaw the questionnaire, compilation of results, and analysis and formulation of recommendations to inform subsequent Board decisions and actions in order to strengthen the Board’s contribution to its work and advancing the mission of the College.

Specifically, the 2008 survey identified a number of areas for focus:

- Mobilize resources and maintain multiple priorities
- Fundraise
- Improve educational excellence, and new property purchases
- Determine the most effective process to evaluate the performance of the President and implement it; undertake a capital campaign
- Manage tuition rates as other schools may be lowering tuition
- Optimize enrollment and retention
- Continue improving on other admissions metrics regarding applications, acceptances, and retention
- Consider “green standards” in all building projects.

Despite the economic downturn that followed shortly after the administration of this survey, the Board made progress on a number of these initiatives. Although fund raising was enhanced marginally, the Board declined to launch a capital campaign. The College has acquired a number of property acquisitions—most notably at the waterfront and on Washington Avenue adjacent to the main campus. The College had a very modest tuition discount rate at the beginning of the economic downturn, so there was room to move this up in order to meet families’ altered financial situation while also achieving enrollment and net revenue targets. The College has also adopted LEED Silver as the baseline for all renovation and new construction on campus.

In response to the 2008 self-assessment, the By-Laws of the Board underwent a comprehensive review in 2009. A number of modifications were identified and ultimately approved by the Board. Chief among these were the creation of new committees on Investment and Marketing, the development of formal charges and membership descriptions for each committee (including the expansion of membership on a number of committees to include faculty and student representatives), and the formalization of the process for the annual assessment of the President and the recommendation as to the President’s compensation for the coming year. This latter function was assigned to a subcommittee of the Executive Committee, chaired by the Vice Chair of the Board, and reported at the annual meeting in April of each year.

In response to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, the Board of Visitors and Governors adopted a formal policy regarding conflict of interest in 2003. This policy, which extends to key employees, requires an annual certification by all members of the Board and Senior Staff. These certifications are maintained in the President’s Office and made available each year to the College’s auditor. The Board now also reviews the IRS Form 990 in advance of its annual submission.
The Board of Visitors and Governors plays a leadership role in the generation of resources to advance the mission of Washington College. Over the past five years, members of the Board of Visitors and Governors have accounted for 17 percent of total giving and 31 percent of the budget-supporting Washington Fund. The most recent comprehensive campaign, which concluded in 2003, was launched with an original campaign goal of $72 million, and surpassed its target by nearly 44 percent, bringing total contributions to the Campaign for Washington’s College to $103.4 million. Members of the Board of Visitors and Governors contributed $26 million, or 25 percent of this total. In addition to their role in traditional philanthropic activities, members of the Board also serve as partners with the President in supporting efforts to secure funds from private foundations, wealthy individuals, and State and Federal agencies for higher education in general, and Washington College in particular.

The resources to advance the College are provided in annual operating and capital budgets. The Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration prepares the budget following extensive consultation with the Senior Staff and the College's Benefits and Finance Committee (augmented by the faculty members of the Planning Committee), both of which receive regular updates throughout the fiscal year (as discussed in Standards 2 and 3). On the recommendation of the Financial Affairs Committee, the full Board approves the budget for the coming fiscal year at the annual meeting in April. Updates are provided to the Board during their quarterly meetings. The Board delegates the management of the College to the President and Senior Staff.

**Governance: Senior Staff**

At Washington College, the Senior Staff is composed of twelve colleagues:

- Provost and Dean of the College
- Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Vice President for Advancement
- Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Associate Provost for Academic Services
- Associate Vice President for College Relations and Marketing
- Director of Athletics
- Director of Miller Library
- Director of Human Resources
- Chief Information Officer
- Chief of Staff

The complete set of College organizational charts from the Fall 2012 Fact Book is available for review here: [College Organizational Charts](#). Additionally, a biography, curriculum vitae, and publication list is available for all members of Senior Staff as of the Fall 2013 semester is available here: [Senior Staff Résumés](#).

The Senior Staff meets bi-weekly to share information and to coordinate initiatives across functional areas, to consider issues of policy, and to advise the President. Members of Senior Staff serve on standing committees of the College and provide staff support to Board committees within their area(s) of responsibilities. In a 2012 survey of employees, 62% of faculty respondents and 58% of staff respondents expressed satisfaction with the collaborative interaction they have with the members of Senior Staff with whom they interact. Just 12% of faculty and 13% of staff expressed dissatisfaction over their interactions with members of Senior Staff. In narrative comments elicited from staff respondents, several observed that improvement is needed in cross-departmental communication and cooperation. In referring to this dysfunction, a common used word was “silos.”

The Charter and By-Laws vest in the President the authority to appoint all faculty and staff at the College, although Board authorization is required for the conferring of tenure and promotion. Faculty review is discussed in Chapter 5. Review of non-faculty employees takes place each spring and utilizes a performance review process outlined more fully on the College's Human Resources [website](#) and discussed in Standard 3. Review forms are specific to the classification of employee but all staff members complete a self-evaluation that also includes a section for goal setting for the coming year. This form is then reviewed and commented upon by the employee's supervisor. The resulting evaluation document forms the basis for a conversation between the employee and supervisor where agreement is reached on both an assessment of the prior year’s performance as well as the goals for the coming year. Customarily, all employees who meet performance expectations participate in the College’s awarding of cost-of-living and, when available, merit increases in pay.

Faculty and staff are important contributors to recruitment by serving on appropriate search committees. The recruitment of members of Senior Staff routinely includes opportunities for all-college forums with the finalist candidates. Faculty candidates for tenure-track lines also make presentations that are open to the entire College community.

**Governance: Faculty, Staff and Students**

Faculty, staff, and students serve on **seventeen standing committees** of the College. This is the primary means through which members of the College community participate in governance and policy setting of the College.

To gauge how faculty, staff, and students view their contributions, two study questions were fashioned:

“**Do you feel that you have a voice in the governance of the College?**” and “**Do faculty/staff committee members seek your input?**”

For those members of the faculty, staff, and student body who serve on standing committees, two additional study questions were framed:

“**Do you feel that your committee has benefited from your leadership skills?**” and “**Do you feel that your input is valued and taken into consideration?**”
Chapter 3 - Washington College

A majority of both faculty (62%) and staff (54%) feel they have a voice in the governance of the College, and similar levels of faculty (13%) and staff (14.5%) feel they "rarely" have a voice in governance. For those who serve as appointed members of standing committees, 70% rate their level of participation as "high" or "very high," 62% feel their respective committee had benefited from their leadership, and 96% feel that their input has been valued and taken into consideration during committee deliberations and decision making. Although the responses to these questions were generally favorable, 17% of respondents offered suggestions to improve the function and operation of standing committees, many related to matters of communication. Some noted that committee minutes were too often so cryptic as to be meaningless and recommended that guidelines be established setting minimum requirements as to content and distribution. It was suggested that individual committee work, as well as collaboration between and among committees, would be strengthened if all committees established a full meeting schedule at the beginning of each semester. Finally, several faculty respondents expressed concern regarding the faculty nomination process, which often leads to too many un-tenured, junior faculty being placed "where they have little experience or prospects for making informed decisions."

The President conducts a monthly Staff Coffee to which all non-faculty employees are invited. These meetings provide the President with an opportunity to share news with and to solicit input from all employees, as well as to introduce newly hired employees. Three years ago, after the arrival of President Reiss, Staff Council was established to serve in an advisory capacity to the President and Senior Staff in matters pertaining to the interests and needs of the staff with regard to their daily activities and work conditions as they strive to support the College's goal of a quality liberal arts education. The members of Staff Council are elected by their co-workers.

Staff Council has taken into consideration recent recommendations to form an annual agenda and plans to discuss it at an upcoming meeting. Additionally the Council is moving to produce a quarterly one-page summary of issues and milestones. Typically agenda items arrive before the Council by way of the online submission form available to all employees of the College. Submissions can be anonymous. Beginning in April of 2013, Staff Council formed three standing committees to address issues with better efficiency. The three committees (Policy and Action, Events, and Communication) work together between meetings to lay the groundwork for discussion amongst the greater council at the monthly meeting. Submitted agenda items are briefly reviewed via email before being forwarded to the relevant committee to study prior to the subsequent meeting; at which time the rest of the council discusses the topic.

In a survey of staff, 52.8% expressed satisfaction with the work of Staff Council, while 9.7% expressed dissatisfaction. More than a third had no opinion. More than one-third of respondents expanded on their view of Staff Council with narrative responses. A recurrent theme was that staff feel the creation of Staff Council was a positive step and that individual representatives do a good job of soliciting the views of co-workers and reporting back following meetings. There were several respondents who suggested that Staff Council could be more effective if it adopted a formal agenda each day, focused its work on advancing issues important to staff, and followed through on and reported back on recommendations that Staff Council advances to Senior Staff.

Two years ago, an Administrative Council was formed to provide a monthly opportunity for managers to meet together, to receive updates from the President and other members of Senior Staff, to provide feedback on proposed College policies, and to receive training on a host of governmental rules and regulations. In a survey of members, more expressed dissatisfaction with Administrative Council (39.1%) than satisfaction (30.4%). Almost half of all respondents provided narrative responses to support their assessment. All, in one manner or another, expressed confusion regarding the purpose and function of the Administrative Council. Subsequent to the survey, the Administrative Council appointed a task force of its membership to propose recommendations on how to strengthen the purpose, structure, membership, meetings, and meeting format. The task force reported in June, and the recommendations were adopted. As of August 2013, the Administrative Council has been operating under these new procedures.

When the College is in session, the President meets monthly with the faculty at Faculty Meetings. He also meets regularly with the Faculty Council, which advises the President and Dean on matters of general College policy, as a forum for the administration's consultation of the faculty, and for the faculty's access to the administration. It receives faculty requests and concerns and takes them to the administration and/or refers them to an appropriate committee (including itself). The Council monitors the committee structure and performance of individual committees, consults with the Chair of Service and Scholarship before annual nominations and elections, and receives annual reports from all College committees. The Council recommends policy concerning faculty workload, duties, and responsibilities in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service; faculty support services and working conditions; faculty appointment, evaluation, tenure, promotion, and leave; tenure and promotion appeals and faculty grievances; the roles and duties of departmental and divisional chairs; the appointment and evaluation of departmental chairs; and academic freedom and professional standards and ethics. Members of the Faculty Council meet annually with the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Visitors and Governors and serve as the pool of recommended faculty representatives for presidential search committees. In a survey of all faculty, 52.8% expressed satisfaction with the work of Faculty Council, while 38% had no opinion or were neutral, and 9.7% expressed dissatisfaction. Over a quarter of faculty respondents provided a narrative comment. The majority of those commenting acknowledged the hard work of the Faculty Council, but a significant number of the remaining lamented that the Faculty Council too often finds itself in a reactionary mode to administration proposals and should focus more on proactive agenda developed by faculty to advance the College.

As noted earlier, the faculty is accountable for the design and conduct of the academic program of the College. They exercise this responsibility through their work in departmental and divisional settings, in the appropriate standing committees of the College, and the monthly meetings of the Faculty. The faculty's contribution in this regard is discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

Student governance is entrusted to the Student Government Association (SGA), which operates under a formal Constitution and Bylaws. The SGA is composed of a 13-member Executive Board and a 46-member Student Senate. The SGA selects the students who serve as active members on 10 of the 17 standing committees of the College and three of 12 committees of the Board of Visitors and Governors. The President of the SGA meets monthly with the President of the College and bi-weekly with the Vice President and Dean of Students. The other members of the Executive Board have as a part of their duties the obligation to meet proactively with members of the Administration in their area(s) of responsibility. It is through this committee service and one-on-one meetings with administrators that the students participate in the governance of the College.

Conclusion

Guided by the words and actions of our founding patron, Washington College functions within a framework of shared and collegial governance.
that speaks to the interconnected nature of our small campus. Expectations and responsibilities are detailed and shared across all constituencies, leading to an environment in which community is valued. The survey conducted as part of our Self-Study was illuminating in helping the Senior Staff and the Faculty, Staff and Administrative Councils better communicate with the various constituencies. As a result, all four of these entities have looked at ways of developing best practices for all standing committees of the College that includes the distribution of schedules and agendas for all committees at the start of each semester so that effective dissemination of information is campus-wide. Indeed, this level cooperation will be essential as the College embarks on the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Based on our analysis of the data collected and the above evidence, we can confidently assert that we are in compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 4.

**Appendix 4.1**
College Catalog

**Appendix 4.2**
Mission Statement

**Appendix 4.3**
About Our College

### Sources

- 2008 Board Self-Assessment
- About Our College: The Basics
- Administrative Board Report (Sample)
- Administrative Council
- Administrative Council Charter
- Alumni Board
- Board Meeting Schedule (Sample)
- Board of Visitors and Governors
- Board Orientation Schedule (Sample)
- Board Responsibilities
- College By-Laws (Summer 2008 Revisions)
- College Catalog 2013-2014
- College Charter 1782 (Re-Enacted in 1986)
- Conflict of Interest Policy and Form
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 20)
- IRS 990 Public Disclosures 2009
- Organizational Chart as of 12-13
- President Reiss Curriculum Vitae
- Senior Staff Resumes 13FA
- Staff Council
- Staff Handbook 2011-2012
- Student Government Association
- Student Government Association Constitution and By-Laws 2011
- Student Government Association Officers & Leadership
- Student Handbook 2012-13
- The Elm (student newspaper)
- VP for Advancement Named (news article)
Standard 5
Administration

The institution's administrative structure and services facilitate learning and research/scholarship, foster quality improvement, and support the institution's organization and governance.

Purpose and Overview

The By-Laws of the Board of Visitors and Governors delegate administration of the College to the President and Senior Staff: “The officers of Washington College shall include the President, the Provost and Dean, the Chief of Staff, and the Vice Presidents appointed or elected by the Board ... The President is the chief executive officer of Washington College. The President is responsible for the leadership of the College and is accountable to the Board for implementing the policies of the Board and for all of the programs and activities that further the educational mission of the College.” The senior leadership team is supported by a talented and dedicated staff of more than 300 full-time employees.

The Administration

Mitchell Reiss became the 27th president of Washington College on July 1, 2010. Dr. Reiss has a law degree from Columbia Law School, a D.Phil. from Oxford University, a Master's degree from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and a B.A. from Williams College. Prior to his arrival at Washington College, Dr. Reiss held a number of positions at the College of William & Mary, including Vice Provost for International Affairs and Director of the Wendy and Emery Reves Center for International Affairs. Dr. Reiss also served as a Special Envoy to the Northern Ireland Peace Process, as a key official addressing the North Korean nuclear crisis, and as Director of the Office of Policy Planning at the U.S. Department of State for Secretary Colin L. Powell. Upon his arrival at Washington College, President Reiss implemented several new programs, including the creation of Staff, Faculty and Administrative Councils as a way to further open the lines of communication and collaboration within the College.

Aiding the President in the daily operations of the College is the Senior Staff. (More information and details about the senior staff are discussed in Standard 4.)

All members of Senior Staff possess the appropriate degrees, skills and certifications required to fulfill their respective positions. The management structure and lines of responsibility of the College are made clear through a series of organizational charts that are published annually in the College's Fact Book. The number of direct reports for individual members of Senior Staff range from a low of 2 (Chief Information Officer) to a high of 18 (Director of Athletics, due mainly to the number of coaches). The average number of direct reports is six. Members of Senior Staff and department heads are required to update their respective organizational charts on a yearly basis. This ensures that the charts clearly indicate reporting/responsibility relationships, as well as providing the appropriate structure, which is essential for the efficient and effective administration of the College.

Staff

Washington College is fortunate to recruit and retain an outstanding workforce of administrative and support staff. To ensure that the College employs a qualified staff, all newly hired staff employees follow the same process. The process begins when the hiring official completes the Recruitment Authorization Form and Human Resources advertises the position. Advertising is done on the College's website, HigherEdJobs.com, and other appropriate forums specific to the department. The advertisement includes a description of the position as well as the qualifications and requirements a successful applicant must possess to be eligible for employment. Typically, an applicant will apply using the College's online applicant portal. The hiring official determines the members of the search committee. The Committee has access to applicant materials and has the ability to rank each applicant, which determines the most qualified candidates to interview. During the interview process, the applicant must complete a Washington College Employment Application.

The hiring official, in consultation with the search committee, selects the best applicant for the position. The hiring official and Human Resources review the candidate's qualifications to determine an appropriate salary. The hiring official completes the Employment Authorization Form for New Staff (or the form for New Faculty; both were revised in 2013) and Human Resources extends an offer of employment. All offers are contingent upon successful completion of a criminal background check and other applicable hiring procedures. Upon hire, all new employees are scheduled to participate in a daylong orientation, usually on the third Thursday of each month.

Washington College staff participate in annual performance reviews. Review forms are specific to the classification of employee. For example, exempt employees are required to complete a self-evaluation that also includes a section for goal setting for the coming year. This form is then reviewed and commented upon by the employee's supervisor. The resulting evaluation document forms the basis for a conversation between the employee and supervisor where agreement is reached on both an assessment of the prior year’s performance as well as the goals for the
coming year. Customarily, all employees who meet performance expectations participate in the College's awarding of cost-of-living and, when available, merit increases in pay. Employees who fail to meet expectations are ineligible for cost-of-living and, when available, merit increases in pay.

The Strategic Plan

At a time of considerable transition in senior leadership, Washington College is in the midst of developing a new Strategic Plan and preparing a comprehensive campaign. With a relatively new president (in his fourth year), a new Dean and Provost (in her second year), and ongoing transition in several senior leadership roles (advancement, college relations and marketing, enrollment management, information technology, and student affairs), the College has proceeded slowly and carefully with the reshaping of its mission, the development of its Strategic Plan, and the launching of a campaign.

The College's new Mission Statement represents the collective effort of many stakeholders over a lengthy period of time, also discussed more fully within the Standard 1 narrative. The new Mission Statement emphasizes alignment between core values, activities, and assessments. It is intended to provide a clearer set of expectations for faculty and others about how the daily work of the College aligns with the College's enduring liberal arts values. A recent staff survey reveals that two-thirds of staff and three-quarters of faculty are aware of the new Mission Statement, and a similar proportion report that they can easily find the Mission Statement if they wished to share it or consult it.

The new Strategic Plan, as described extensively in Chapter 2 (Standards 1 and 2) has been developed by an intensive ongoing consultative process led by the College's Planning Committee. Senior Staff and the College's Board of Visitors and Governors, as well as stakeholder groups such as faculty, staff, students, and alumni, have had input into the shaping of the Plan. This collaborative work has led to the establishment of a number of primary goals and objectives: to reaffirm the College's core mission of providing a superior liberal arts education to prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century; expand teaching and learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom that are distinctive and take advantage of the College's unique setting; position the College as a leader in the multidisciplinary study of the environment; attract, enroll, and retain outstanding students; support and recruit excellent teacher-scholars and staff committed to the distinctive character of a Washington College education; continue to strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with the community that advance the mission of the College; provide a well-designed, distinctive, and robust co-curricular program; and generate resources sufficient for the realization of Washington College's mission and the enactment of this Strategic Plan. Overall, the process of developing the Strategic Plan has been a broadly collaborative effort—the most ambitious, thorough, and collaborative attempt to reshape the identity of the College in many years.

With the approval of the Strategic Plan goals and objectives by both the Faculty and the Board of Visitors and Governors in April, the Planning Committee has transitioned its work to developing a formal implementation plan. Like the process to develop the goals and objectives, the process for developing the Implementation Plan is broad-based and inclusive. Initially, the Planning Committee has assigned each objective in the Strategic Plan to a member of the Senior Staff. These individuals will prepare implementation tactics for each objective based upon recommendations received during community forums earlier in the spring, as well as others they deem appropriate and workable. All proposed tactics will be returned to the Planning Committee using the Tactic Template for an initial review and approval. Once this has been achieved, tactics will be assigned to the cognizant member of the administrative staff or the appropriate standing committee of the College to be fully built out, including the recruitment of broad-based implementation teams. Fully developed tactical plans will then be returned to the Planning Committee where decisions will be made on the prioritization of tactics for implementation.

The decisions on prioritization will lead to the development of a multi-year implementation plan that will inform both projected future operating budgets as well as the elements of the College's comprehensive campaign.

Administrative Organization

Washington College has an established group of aspirant institutions to which we routinely compare ourselves. These schools include Allegheny College, Goucher College, Juniata College, Muhlenberg College, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Ursinus College, Beloit College, College of Wooster, Dickinson College, Gettysburg College, and St. Lawrence University. A careful review of organizational charts from these institutions showed that Washington College had a similar organization and administrative structure in compared areas and that the College's size, shape, and distribution of administrative units seems appropriate for the mission of a selective national liberal arts institution. Administrative units at the College have mission statements and goals and objectives, and submit annual reports to the appropriate vice president. However, administrative units are not required to have assessment plans similar to those in academic departments. Many administrative units at the College have relatively thin staff levels and the primary responsibility of administrative units involves daily operational tasks. Nonetheless, administrative units do assess their effectiveness and look for ways to improve operations. The assessment process for administrative units is explored more fully in Chapter 7 (Standard 7).

Administrative Support Systems

Washington College's Office of Information Technologies (OIT) provides the IT infrastructure and software to support the administration and its decision-making processes. Ellucian's (formerly Datatel's) Colleague Student Information System software, running on powerful servers, is the main administrative ERP system, which accesses the underlying co-relational database to both record information and to extract data for Human Resources, Student Information, Finance, and Advancement. A "Datatel Users Group" meets on a monthly basis to share information and business practices across administrative units, to decide how best to use the Colleague system, and to recommend any additional modules for procurement. Among recent software and hardware solutions procured by OIT since 2012, with Datatel Drivers' guidance, are the following:

- Ellucian Retention Alert (RA), a case management system for students at risk of academic or social issues that may lead to withdrawal from the College
- Colleague Reporting and Analytics (CRAO), a robust turn-key solution to construct and run advanced reports and dashboards
- SoftDocs Doc e-Serve, Doc e-Scan, and Doc e-Fill, a hardware and software platform solution for digital archiving of formerly paper-based
 records and electronic form generation to replace the use of paper forms and the need for physical signatures

Ancillary to the Colleague system are other software and server systems, which can be accessed with proper credentials. These include:

- Synoptics – financial analytics
- Entrinsik Informer – reporting tool
- E-commerce – PCI compliance
- WebAdvisor – employee and student personal information access
- CBord – student meal plans management and employee and student ID cards
- Admin server – information access for employees and students who do not have direct access to Colleague
- Canvas - learning management system

By the purchase of bulk software license agreements through consortiums as well as by direct negotiations with software companies, the College is able to offer software packages such as Microsoft Office®, SPSS®, etc., that are useful tools in financial analysis, and other decision-making and research processes, available to faculty and staff at the best possible price points.

**Study Questions**

In addressing the fundamental elements of Standard Five, three study questions were developed:

1. "Focusing on those members of the College’s Senior Staff with whom you most frequently interact professionally, please tell us how satisfied you are with the degree to which they work collaboratively with you and with others?"

2. "How satisfied are you with the College’s overall alignment of resources, staffing, organization and budget priorities with the diverse needs, from academics to residential life to athletics to infrastructure, of the college community?"

3. "How satisfied are you with the clarity of and guidance provided by the College’s primary policy handbooks and guidebooks (the College Catalog, the Faculty Handbook, the Staff Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the Student Athlete Handbook)?"

To assess employee perceptions of the working practices and everyday culture of the college at the Senior Staff level, we conducted two surveys: a large survey of faculty and staff, and a more focused survey of senior staff themselves. To get more focused and intense feedback on the topic of collaboration at the Senior Staff level, a survey of Senior Staff members was also conducted.

The survey of all employees received a high number of responses of 170, representing a 40% response rate to the survey administered by email to faculty and staff. The survey among senior staff was conducted during a senior staff meeting. Survey responses were collected anonymously, and nine responses were collected.

Fifty-eight percent of all respondents were satisfied with the degree to which senior staff work collaboratively with them and others. 13% expressed dissatisfaction and 29% were neutral. The overall staff perception was mirrored in the response from senior staff itself.

During a follow-up open discussion with senior staff members, the following points emerged as themes: The Board of Visitors and Governors is perceived as very supportive of the College’s planning efforts, ongoing administration, and collaborative work. Budgeting was mentioned in particular as an area where collaboration is solid and extensive; structures put in place in the last couple of years have encouraged collaboration in budget planning. The relatively new Staff Council was also noted as a positive instance of collaboration, as were the library renovation, the Safety Committee, and the Emergency Operations Group. A common sentiment was that “Collaboration is easy to come by on this campus when you reach out.”

With respect to the College’s overall alignment of resources, staffing, organization and budget priorities, a survey of faculty and staff received 170 responses. Thirty-two percent expressed satisfaction, 28% unsatisfied, and 40% neutral on the question. These figures indicate that the College needs to do a better job sharing the rationale behind decisions.

There were 65 comments to this question. Many indicated that they had concerns with the future growth of the College with no apparent plan in place for increasing faculty/staff to accommodate this growth. The departments mentioned the most in need of increased staffing were Building and Grounds and Housekeeping. The desire to know the rationale behind new hires and major investments and a better understanding of the budget process were other common themes expressed by respondents.

With respect to how satisfied employees are with the clarity of and guidance provided by the College’s primary policy handbooks and guidebooks, 47% expressed satisfaction, compared with 15% who are dissatisfied, and 38% who are neutral. While the overall survey results did not show glaring problems in document consistency, numerous open comments were supplied by survey respondents, a great many supplying thoughtful criticisms of the process whereby these important college documents are updated. As a result of the survey, members of Senior Staff, Faculty Council, Staff Council, and Administrative Council are looking to share responsibility in the annual update of the College's primary policy handbooks and guidebooks (Faculty Handbook, Staff Handbook, and Student Handbook), while also pursuing ways that these three important documents can be better integrated and available to all constituencies on campus.

**Conclusion**

At the time of our last Self-Study, the presidency of John Toll was concluding. Since then, we have had two presidents, with the second now in his fourth year. As the transitions have been made, the College has remained dedicated to staffing all aspects of the administration with individuals aware of the College’s history yet equipped with the skills necessary to bring us into the next phase of growth. Further, both presidents have clearly defined their goals and benchmarks for success. It is with confidence in our administrative leadership that we assert that we have met the Fundamental Elements of Standard 5.

**Sources**

Standard 6

Integrity

In the conduct of its programs and activities involving the public and the constituencies it serves, the institution demonstrates adherence to ethical standards and its own stated policies, providing support for academic and intellectual freedom.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct as an integral part of its core values of critical thinking, effective communication, and moral courage. In addition, the College’s Mission Statement highlights a commitment to several of George Washington's values, including: integrity, civility, and leadership. In the conduct of its programs and activities, the College adheres to policies and procedures that are fair and impartial; strives for honesty and truthfulness in all materials provided to students, faculty, staff, and the public; and relies on each community member’s ethical behavior, civility, honesty, integrity and good judgment as a demonstration of our institution’s integrity.

Communicating Ethical Standards for Faculty and Staff

The clearest statement of the institution's expectations with respect to integrity are represented in the College's Code of Conduct, which establishes guidelines for professional conduct by representatives of the College including:

- Executive officers
- Faculty, staff and other employees of the College
- Consultants, vendors and contractors when doing business with the College
- Volunteers

The Code of Conduct cannot address all situations that may arise, but it offers a framework to assist community members in understanding the College's expectations of them. Specifically, the Code speaks to respect for others, respect for property, standards of safety, compliance with laws and College policy, work performance, and standards for attendance. This Code supplements other published College policies, such as those contained in the Faculty Handbook and Staff Handbook. The College is clear that violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary or corrective action up to and including termination of employment, contractual services, or volunteer service, as applicable.

Communicating Ethical Standards for Students

The Washington College Honor Code is central to the Washington College experience and outlines the expectations that students will:

"Respect the ideas, well being, and property of others."

The College chooses to utilize an Honor Board that consists of both students and faculty to adjudicate both academic and social violations of the Honor Board. This structure reflects a desire on the part of the College to address personal integrity in a holistic manner, recognizing that the ethical development of its students is best achieved through a lens that views all aspects of a student’s life.

As a way of introducing the Honor Code, new students participate in a session led by a faculty member during Summer Advising Days and discuss the College's expectations of Student Conduct. The students then sign the Honor Code during August orientation. Following orientation, they travel to George Washington’s Mount Vernon in Alexandria, VA where, as a group, they re-affirm their commitment to the Honor Code on Washington's front lawn. The Code is reinforced throughout their time as a student by faculty, staff and other students. The Code reads:

"I pledge my word of honor that I have abided by the Washington College Honor Code while completing this assignment."

The College has also printed the Code on a prominent wall in the Casey Academic Center, where many students, faculty and staff pass by several times a day. Finally, as a part of Commencement week activities, graduating seniors return to George Washington's Mount Vernon to celebrate their academic and moral success.

The Student Handbook, available online and included in orientation activities, describes the Honor Code as well as the procedures utilized by the Honor Board. The Faculty Coordinator of Academic Integrity and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs are both advisory members of the Honor Board. Policies regarding the Honor Board and the student conduct process in general are reviewed each year by an Honor Board.
review group that is composed of student, faculty, and staff members of the Honor Board. The Associate Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for ensuring that adjudication policies are consistent with federal statutes and policies, particularly Title IX and the Clery Act.

The Faculty Handbook also contains a description of the Honor Code and the composition of the Honor Board (particularly the role of faculty on the Honor Board). Orientation for new faculty includes education on the Honor Code and the processes through which faculty can both support students’ academic integrity and assist in enforcing the Honor Code.

First-year students report being highly knowledgeable about the Honor Code, and believe that the climate on campus supports academic and social integrity. The most recent Student Satisfaction Survey indicated that there is a gap between perceived importance and satisfaction about how seriously students take the Honor Code; the Honor Board has on their agenda for the 2013-2014 academic year a review of the wording of the Honor Code and the ways it is implemented. Their goal is to propose new language to bring to the community by May 2014. Prospective employees (faculty and staff) are also introduced to the Honor Code as part of their orientation. It also appears on the Human Resources website, which includes a link to the College’s Diversity Statement and a link to College’s Annual Security and Fire Report so that all potential applicants can review this information.

**Commitment to the Principles of Diversity**

One of the characteristics Washington College instills in its students is “ethical sensitivity” to those with whom they share the community. Diversity is considered a critical component to an environment of integrity and is integral to the Washington College mission. The College’s commitment to diversity is also echoed in our Mission Statement: “We offer academic rigor and self-discovery in a supportive, residential community of well-qualified, diverse, and motivated individuals.” It further states, “A beautiful campus, ready access to exciting cities and the Chesapeake Bay, and engagement with cultures and communities locally and around the world afford our students ample resources and opportunities for personal exploration and shared challenges.” While the Mission Statement has recently been revised, as explained in great detail within the Standard 1 narrative, the value of diversity has long been part of the College’s mission.

The value the College places on diversity is specifically described in its Diversity Statement:

> “Washington College welcomes people of all backgrounds and beliefs who wish to participate in a diverse educational community. The College strives to be a place where all students, faculty, administrators, and staff are able to live, study, and work in an atmosphere free from bias and harassment. The College encourages civil debate and the lively exchange of ideas in the belief that such exchanges promote understanding that will grow beyond simple tolerance of difference to embracing and celebrating the richness of diversity. Our graduates acquire knowledge and learn skills that help them thrive in a culturally diverse world.”

**Practices to Ensure Fair, Impartial, and Equitable Recruitment**

Faculty and staff recruitment procedures involve the Office of Human Resources (HR). The Director of Human Resources reviews at least annually federal and state regulatory changes that impact employee recruitment and regularly monitors the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources website to ensure that the College’s practices are in keeping with the highest standards of integrity with regard to employment and recruitment.

All available positions are listed on the HR website. Applications for employment for both faculty and staff are submitted through Consensus, an online application portal. The HR website Employment Opportunities section states that the College, “is committed to attracting and retaining outstanding and diverse faculty and staff” and that we have a diverse student body. The Equal Opportunity Employer Statement published on the Employment Opportunities page states that, “Washington College is an equal opportunity employer and, as such, takes affirmative action to insure that all qualified applicants for employment are considered, and employees are treated, in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing equal opportunity and non-discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or other factors prohibited by law,” along with the link to the College’s Diversity Statement. HR also conducts educational and criminal background checks and has introduced the minimum requirement of a high school diploma for employment. An exception to the high school graduation requirement is made for applicants referred by the Kent Center, a community partner organization dedicated to providing employment opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.

**Consensus allows for summary data collection about the characteristics (sex; race/ethnicity categories) of the applicant pool for those applicants who chose to report. Consensus allows search teams to view all applicants and, for staff positions, means that applications can no longer be submitted directly to the hiring office.**

The Faculty Handbook outlines the College’s Affirmative Action Plan. The responsibility of that plan is shared by the Advisory Committee on Appointments, the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer, the President, and Provost and Dean. The goal of the plan “is to achieve, over time, a diverse faculty. The College therefore commits itself to go beyond nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, and will engage actively in efforts to achieve such diversity.” (p. 57).

In filling faculty positions, the search committee (usually consisting of the faculty members of the academic department seeking to fill the position) is augmented by faculty members of the Appointments Committee, a standing committee of the faculty, which is described in the Faculty Handbook. The at-large member of the Appointments Committee serves as the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer. The role of the Faculty Affirmative Action Officer is outlined on page 58 of the Faculty Handbook. In addition, one role of the committee is to “make evaluations and recommend to the faculty, which in turn may recommend to the administration, policies pertaining to affirmative action. It is responsible for the implementation of the College’s Affirmative Action Plan for faculty positions.”

The Office of Admissions is charged with recruiting and enrolling students. The Fact Book provides data about the ethnicity of matriculated undergraduate students. It also provides information about the total number of undergraduate international students (matriculated and
Chapter 3 - Washington College

Retaining and Supporting a Diverse Community

There are numerous efforts to ensure that we are working to retain and support a diverse community. Foremost is the Diversity Committee (a standing faculty committee) and the Campus Climate and Diversity Committee of the Student Government Association. The faculty’s Diversity Committee is “responsible for leading campus efforts to strengthen the measurable quality and effectiveness of diversity related programs, policies and practices consistent with the mission of the College, the Diversity Statement and the College’s diversity goals.”

Membership of the faculty Diversity Committee includes the following:

- Three elected faculty members
- Director of Multicultural Affairs
- Director of Human Resources
- Two staff members chosen by the Staff Council
- Three students appointed by the Student Government Association

Membership of the SGA’s Campus Climate and Diversity Committee includes the following:

- Four senators
- Secretary of Diversity

Additionally, the Office of Multicultural Affairs plays a significant role in supporting an inclusive environment on campus. The mission of the Office of Multicultural Affairs is stated on the website: “The Office of Multicultural Affairs is committed to creating an inclusive environment essential for all students’ cultural development and academic success. We serve as the principal department for promoting multicultural education for the purpose of critical thinking, moral courage, social responsibility and promoting awareness of social justice issues. The office serves as a support system for historically underrepresented students to foster a sense of belonging, academic achievement, retention, and assist in leadership development.”

The Office provides an annual report that describes its activities. Six years ago, the title of the staff position dedicated to this work shifted from “Minority Advisor” to “Director of Multicultural Affairs” to reflect the broader scope of the office’s work and its role on campus. The office and its director often work with various student groups that provide cultural diversity to the campus, including:

- EROS (a group that celebrates diverse sexual orientations)
- Cleopatra’s Sisters (providing sisterhood to women of diverse ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds)
- The Black Student Union
- The Arab Student Union
- Hillel
- The International Relations Club

The director also works with the Student Government Association’s Secretary for Diversity in designing and delivering programs to the campus. The office also supports other programs, including the Diversity Café, a series of social events that incorporate ethnic, cultural, religious, and other types of diverse perspectives; the multicultural mentor program which pairs upper class students with new students; an overnight experience for prospective students from underrepresented backgrounds; and Safe Space training which educates students, faculty, and staff in supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning students.

Other initiatives and programs are designed to support the academic mission through particular attention to the role of diversity and inclusion. The Center for the Study of Black Culture, which is housed in the Office of Multicultural Affairs, provides a physical space and a library of books and other materials and resources to support the preservation and promotion of African American culture as well as Black students and other members of the Black community. Along with four other colleges (Goucher, Ursinus, Washington & Jefferson, and McDaniel) Washington College was a recipient of a Teagle Grant in 2008 which funded a three-year long project designed to assess the effectiveness of diversity initiatives on each campus and how well those initiatives impact student learning.

Participation in the grant provided the institution with an understanding of what areas are working well and specific areas for improvement. Some of those areas that need improvement are to revise the Diversity Statement of the College to be more affirmative in our commitment, provide educational training for faculty on incorporating diversity into the curriculum, provide individuals on campus the opportunity to engage in unhurried conversations around diversity, and recruitment and retention of diverse populations.

The College also supports an interdisciplinary minor in Black Studies, a minor in Gender Studies, and a variety of other courses with content focused on either domestic or global diversity. All first-year students are required to take a Global Perspectives Seminar (GRW-101) as part of the First-Year Writing Requirement (GRW stands for “Global Reading and Writing”). This course exposes students to a variety of topics through a global lens.

For students, faculty, and staff who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination based on protected class, the College provides avenues to address these concerns both formally and informally. Students are provided this information in the Student Handbook which describes those specific members of the campus community who can provide support and guidance as well as the specific processes for addressing complaints and concerns. The Handbook also states that students may also file a complaint with the U.S. Office of Civil Rights.

The College has designated a Title IX Coordinator as well as two deputy coordinators who ensure that the College complies with federal regulations and College policy in addressing Title IX-related complaints. These coordinators also provide training to faculty and staff in
recognizing and properly addressing sexual harassment.

In the spring of 2012, in response to the Department of Education’s “Dear Colleague” letter regarding the appropriate structures and response mechanisms for Title IX complaints, the College revised its grievance procedures to comply with the federal recommendations. Further revisions to the grievance process, job descriptions for both the Title IX Coordinator and 504 Coordinator, and the methods by which the College notifies students, faculty, and staff about the grievance process were made in the spring of 2013 in response to additional guidance provided to the College by the Office of Civil Rights. These grievance procedures can be found in both the Faculty Handbook and the Staff Handbook.

Assessment of Practices to Ensure Integrity

The College’s commitment to the integrity of the operations of its administrative units is reflected in consistent and thorough assessment of their operations. The administrative offices at Washington College continuously engage in self-assessment of their compliance to non-academic policies.

The Business Office’s annual A-133 audit and monthly balance sheet reconciliations ensure that the institution adheres to standard accounting practices. Other Business Office policies, practices, and procedures are formally assessed based on materiality and level of risk. Not all areas may be covered every year, however they are randomly sampled and assessed over the years. In the past year, the College received an audit free of any findings and, additionally, did not receive a management letter. Historically (as is common), our audits have generated findings and/or a management letter. A management letter is used when the auditors may come across a weakness in policy, practice or procedure that is worth bringing to management’s attention but does not warrant a public finding in an audit. Whether it is an audit finding or a management letter comment, the College is expected to correct the failure by the following year. The annual Form 990, Tax Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, is also an exercise in assessment of policy. There are many questions about best practice policies that the IRS poses to ensure that policies are in place for tax-exempt organizations. The IRS Form 990s for the past few years are listed at the bottom of the Business Office’s downloads page.

On a monthly basis, the Budget Director prepares summary reports for all members of the Senior Staff. The summary reports highlight departmental expenditures that exceed what is expected for the specific point in the fiscal year. Every January a draft of the Financial Statement is prepared and reconciled with the budget documents.

The annual report provides the Registrar’s Office with various metrics and statistics utilized in self-evaluation. The office tracks various metrics (e.g. number of transcripts produced, online registration activity and paper registration requests processed, transfer credit requests processed, etc.) and compares those statistics from year to year, as well as discussing any major initiatives or changes brought about in the office over the previous year. Last year’s document also outlined the numerous changes instituted in 2012 after the arrival of the current Registrar. The next stage in the evaluative loop will be coming in the next year’s annual report. The Registrar’s Office revised its mission/visions/goals/objectives in 2012 in response to the change in the College’s overall mission. This was a multi-stage process whereby the entire staff had several opportunities to help revise the document, including a retreat at which we finalized the revision.

The Office of Information Technology undergoes an annual audit and must adhere to Federal and State laws regulating its practices as well. For the past several years the auditing firm responsible for this has been Grant-Thornton, LLP. During those years OIT has received no high priority issues to correct, and has received only suggestions. One medium priority issue that OIT implemented three years ago was the mandate to force all Washington College users to change their College services passwords every 90 days.

The Office of Human Resources utilizes a handbook committee to review, evaluate, and update the Staff Handbook and its associated policies. This Committee meets quarterly. A fully web-based Staff Handbook, including numerous revisions from the previous version, was published in Spring 2014 and effectively replaced the previously PDF-based Staff Handbook (although individual chapters are available in PDF format).

The Student Handbook, produced by the Office of Student Affairs, is reviewed annually by the Vice President and Associate Vice President to ensure that policies are consistent with Federal requirements and guidance. Individual sections are sent out to their corresponding offices to determine what, if any, changes need to occur for the following year’s handbook. Additionally, student affairs staff members are asked to reconcile information in the Student Handbook with information on the website to ensure consistency.

The Faculty Handbook contains Washington College’s commitment to academic freedom; specifically the Board of Visitors and Governors endorsement of the 1940 statement of the American Association of University Professors. The Faculty Moderator and the Faculty Secretary track policy changes that affect the Faculty Handbook and, in collaboration with the Provost’s Office, make appropriate revisions at the end of each academic year. Periodically, the Provost’s Office coordinates a comprehensive review of the Faculty Handbook to ensure consistency and to recommend changes required to align with current practice.

To ensure that both faculty and students are knowledgeable of and are in compliance with current copyright standards, Miller Library staff post and promote awareness of the College’s copyright policy. Further, library staff consult with faculty before readings are posted to the Canvas course management system to ensure copyright compliance.

During the Fall 2012, an ad hoc compliance committee developed a Compliance Matrix detailing all annual federal, state, and professional organization reporting requirements. The matrix included a list of the College staff member or office with primary and secondary responsibility for delivering each finished report, and the date that each report is due during the academic or calendar year. The Compliance Matrix, designed to ensure that Washington College remains compliant with all state and federal reporting requirements, is maintained by the Office of Institutional Research.

Washington College provides information in print, electronic, and video format via the College’s website which fulfill all applicable standards and reporting and other requirements of the Commission. Along with the standard information presented to prospective students through the U.S. Department of Education’s College Navigator portal, the College also uses its page on the University and College Accountability Network (UCAN) to relay pertinent and reliable information to prospective students and their families. Information on institution-wide assessments (including graduation, retention, and other outcomes) is made available to prospective students and the general public through a Consumer
Information web page that complies with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA 2008). An assessment of the College’s graduation rate is shared on this web page and in the introductory pages of the College's Catalog. On average, 95% of students who graduate are able to complete their degree requirements within eight semesters, demonstrating that the required courses and electives are sufficiently available to allow students to graduate within the traditional length of our four-year program.

The 2009 Middle States Periodic Review Report (PRR) was made available for review by faculty, students and staff on the Provost’s web site. Comments could be directed to the Provost. The Middle States PRR response was also uploaded to the Provost’s page. The first major draft of the 2014 Self-Study was posted on the College’s website in Fall 2013, after which the Self-Study Steering Committee facilitated a systematic review of the draft by all College Standing committees, Administrative, Faculty and Staff Councils, Senior Staff and the three academic divisions. Over 170 individuals participated in discussions about the content of the self-study and made wide-ranging editorial suggestions regarding its content. Based on these contributions, additional revisions were made by the main Self-Study authors, resulting in the final document prepared for the Middle States Visitation Team in Spring 2014. The final version of the Self-Study will again be archived and available online for all faculty, staff, students and members of the Board of Visitors and Governors.

Conclusion

In summary, Washington College's on-going commitment to integrity, ethics and best practices is complete, robust and in compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 6.

Sources

- 2014 Staff Handbook
- Annual Security and Fire Safety Report 2012
- Bradley Booke profile
- Business Office
- Business Office Downloads
- Center for the Study of Black Culture
- Code of Conduct
- College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 3)
- College Mission Statement 2012
- Compliance Matrix - Fall 2012
- Consensus Application Portal
- Consumer Information
- Culture of Academic Integrity Student Survey 2013
- Darnell Parker profile
- Dismissal for Cause (Faculty Handbook language)
- Diversity Statement
- Employment Opportunities
- Faculty Expectations 2013
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 62)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 86)
- Global Perspectives Seminar
- Grievance Process (Faculty Handbook language)
- GRW Course Descriptions
- Honor Board and Student Conduct
- Human Resources Handbook Committee Roster
- Minor in Black Studies
- Minor in Gender Studies
- Multicultural Affairs Student Groups
- Noel-Levitz SSI 2010
- Office of Admissions
- Office of Human Resources
- Office of Information Technology
Standard 7

Institutional Assessment

The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards.

Purpose and Overview

The Middle States Characteristics of Excellence cites several key points and fundamental elements that an institution must demonstrate to be in compliance with Standard 7. Important considerations are that the assessment process be useful, cost-effective, reasonably accurate and truthful, carefully planned and organized, systematic, and sustained. Furthermore, fundamental considerations are that the process is used to evaluate and improve the total range of programs and services, and that the process helps the College achieve its mission, goals, and plans. This chapter documents the College's compliance with these very important criteria.

Institutional assessment at Washington College takes place in a wide variety of sustained efforts. Over the past decade, and since our Periodic Review in 2009, there has been strong recognition of the critical importance of institutional assessment. This fact, coupled with many new administrative hires who value and promote internal effectiveness, has moved the College toward the establishment of a sustained, organized, and consistent culture of assessment.

The diagram below summarizes how the College approaches institutional effectiveness. Assessment begins with students as they are the key stakeholders for the College mission and goals. Student learning, satisfaction, engagement, and other areas are assessed from the input stage through the entire undergraduate experience and, finally, student outcomes. Faculty and their interaction with students are continually assessed. Administrative units assess their own effectiveness, and also evaluate their interactions with students and faculty. All of these take place in the context of external events that impact the College.

Figure 7.1: Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Diagram

The overarching plan for key assessments related to students, faculty and staff is contained in the College’s Institutional Effectiveness Plan. The Institutional Effectiveness Plan presents the sequence of the various major surveys and/or projects that are conducted institution-wide. Surveys
such as National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) are administered on a regular basis, although not annually. These national surveys have been funded through separate administrative units (e.g., Admissions, Student Affairs, Institutional Research). One advantage of the effectiveness plan is that funding for the various survey projects can be planned for and budgeted well in advance. The documentation for the Effectiveness Plan is public and available on the Institutional Research and Assessment website. The plan is updated on a periodic basis.

Appendix 7.1 below contains representative copies of each of the reports from the effectiveness plan dating back to the 2008-09 academic year. All of these reports have been made available to faculty and staff on the institutional research website under a secure link (see Secure Reports). Below we would like to cite several examples of how various survey results have been used to improve the College's effectiveness and help us achieve our mission and goals.

Washington College Survey Usage and Institutional Effectiveness

The Writing Task Force utilized results from the 2005 NSSE survey to make changes in the freshmen writing program at the College. The NSSE data revealed that our students were not writing as much as students in our peer group and not writing as much as the College demanded. Using these data, the Task Force proposed a complete change in the structure of freshmen writing. Previously, freshmen writing was a component of two seminar courses taken by all freshmen called CNW (Community, Nation, World). This curricular approach was replaced by the introduction of mandatory freshmen courses in Global Perspectives (GRW) Research and Writing Seminars as well as ENG-101 (Literature and Composition) which emphasizes analysis and writing through the study of literature. ENG-101 features frequent writing assignments and individual conferences on the student's writing.

Over the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years, the Curriculum Committee, represented by faculty and students from the Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, Miller Library, and the Provost are conducting a curriculum review and potential redesign for all-college graduation requirements beyond the major. A central focus of this review/redesign process is to assess how well the College's current academic program is advancing the College's mission and general education learning goals. The aims of the curriculum can be grouped into four broad categories:

- Acquisition of information
- Analysis, synthesis and evaluation
- Articulation and action
- Responsiveness to individual needs

NSSE data have informed the Committee's process. For example, NSSE data provide indirect measures of how well the College is doing, relative to the Carnegie Class and institutional peers, in areas directly related to our mission such as the quality of faculty-student interaction and the development of a personal code of values and ethics. Further, such data are informing the process on whether our all-college requirements are advancing key learning goals such as developing students' ability to write clearly and effectively, analyze and synthesize data and conceptual material, make judgments, apply knowledge to novel contexts, and effectively engage in problem solving.

The Curriculum Committee has also looked at trends in Washington College NSSE data (2002, 2005, 2008, 2009, and 2012) to make sure that decisions are based on stable results. The Committee also received data that showed pairwise gains in student engagement among students who were freshmen in 2009 and seniors in 2012. In 2011-2012, the College also administered the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). The Curriculum Committee looked at BCSSE and NSSE comparisons on the same students to investigate the academic expectations at the beginning of the college year with what the same students report they received during the freshmen year. The Committee also reviewed faculty curricular expectations from the FSSE survey and compared faculty views with the same variables and student responses from the NSSE 2012 survey.

Career Services and Institutional Research administer the Senior Cap and Gown survey to graduating seniors at Commencement rehearsal. One key purpose of this survey is to collect information on the future educational and career plans of the graduating class. In other words, what career outcomes has attendance at Washington College provided to a graduating class? Prior to the 2009 graduating class, the College used the HEDS (Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium) senior survey to obtain this information. However, HEDS went to a strictly online administration in 2009. The College had been administering the survey at the Commencement rehearsal, and this methodology guarantees a response rate of over 90%. To insure a high response rate that would give us confidence in the results, the decision was made to continue to administer the survey locally and also to reduce the length of the senior survey. Results from the survey are used for almost all of the annual and long-term planning of Career Services, including the creation of goals and objectives. Results are used for report writing for the Board of Visitors and Governors and the Career Services annual report (the survey captures usage of various programs and offerings provided by Career Services). The survey is also used as a source of information to bring alumni back to campus and to serve as mentors to current students. Finally, results are shared with Senior Staff and members of Administrative Council, and represent indirect assessments of student satisfaction with administrative offices. Trends in results are monitored to look for significant changes in student satisfaction. Career Services also administers a six-month follow-up survey of the graduates to collect updated information or new data from students whose plans had not yet crystallized.

The Office of Student Affairs regularly administers the CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey. Recent administrations have taken place in 2009, 2011, and 2013. The 2011 administration resulted in a fairly low response rate, so steps have been taken to utilize resident assistants in the administration of the 2013 CORE survey. One change in policy resulting from the CORE surveys is that Student Life added a marijuana educational program for first-time marijuana offenders. The 2009 survey demonstrated that marijuana use was not rampant; however, it did indicate that usage was significant enough to warrant a specialized education program to address this issue.

One significant measure of institutional effectiveness can be seen in student retention and graduation rate statistics. In 2009-2010, the College established the Retention Oversight Group to monitor ongoing trends and issues in student retention. This committee annually examines a variety of research reports on first-time freshmen and transfer cohort subgroups for the purpose of addressing retention issues. One report looks for differences in retention rates by gender, ethnicity, state of origin, predicted grade, actual grade, and applicant intended major. In addition, the College sends the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) the information on all students who did not return to the College from the previous fall semester. In this way, we can monitor retention beyond the experience of a freshmen cohort. The NSC results allow us to review
the types of institutions selected by various student subgroups, e.g., Dean's List students, students on academic probation, etc. Finally, students who are planning to withdraw from the College are requested to have an exit interview in the Provost's Office. Not all students comply, of course, but those that are interviewed also complete a short survey. During the spring 2013 semester, the Provost's Office and Institutional Research instituted a new program that allows students to complete the survey on an iPad. This will permit instant retrieval of the survey results. Over the years, the primary reasons that students give for withdrawal have been consistent: financial, location, and size.

Chapter 4 presented some of the various program changes that have been made as a result of our retention research, so we will not repeat the information here. The reader is referred to Chapter 4 for an in-depth summary of our institutional improvements as a result of retention-related research.

Washington College also administers the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) on a three-year cyclical basis. It was first administered in 2007 as a result of an unexpected decrease in first-year freshmen cohort retention. A follow-up administration was scheduled in 2010 and a third administration is currently underway in 2013. In 2007 the College engaged the services of a consulting firm and undertook a careful investigation of student satisfaction. One of the major areas that was revealed on the SSI was dissatisfaction with first-year advising. In addition to the changes articulated above, the College took steps to significantly improve the freshmen advising experience by increasing contact between first-year students in the first six weeks of the semester and improving advisor training (see details in the Retention Action Plans report).

The 2007 SSI also showed that many students reported that they did not experience "intellectual growth" at the College. In response to this, the College introduced the Presidential Fellows program to involve students more fully in academic life and to improve the cultural activities and campus recognition for top students. The College also strengthened student-mentoring programs and expanded student leadership opportunities (see more details and planning and resource timeline in the Retention Action Plans report). The College administered the SSI in the spring 2013 semester, and student satisfaction with intellectual growth shows a statistically significant gain over the 2007 and 2010 results.

Another example of the College's commitment to assess institutional effectiveness can be found with the Student Government Association (SGA) State of the Major Survey. In 2009, this was a student-developed paper and pen survey that was delivered to majors by members of the SGA. The response rates for separate departments were very low, and, justifiably, academic departments were not confident in the survey results. In 2011, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment worked with the SGA to convert the State of the Major Survey from paper to an online instrument. A core set of questions were asked of all majors, but individual departments could add their own individualized questions. The online approach boosted response rates to an overall average above 50%; some departments received over an 80 percent response rate.

One example of how the State of the Major survey has improved department curriculum can be found in the Chemistry department. The 2011 State of the Major Survey revealed one significant point of student dissatisfaction: students were unhappy with opportunities to participate in internships related to chemistry. In the summer of 2012, the department worked with the Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives to satisfy Chemistry majors' high demand for summer internships. Another representative example of how the State of the Majors survey is used is in the Business Management department. The 2011 survey showed that majors expressed concerns with the limited variety of courses in the major. The department used this fact and other information to request permission to hire an additional department member.

It is important to note that many other offices and programs conduct surveys to examine unit effectiveness and look for ways to improve services. Appendix 7.2 below presents many of these examples and include:

- Student Orientation Survey (beginning fall semesters)
- Residence Life Survey (fall and spring semesters)
- Campus Visit Survey (ongoing)

Assessment of Faculty

Faculty at the College are assessed in a variety of ways. Faculty voted in 2007-08 to require every course for every instructor to be evaluated by students. Previously, faculty could opt to evaluate only two courses out of their usual three-course load. Originally all non-tenured faculty were required to assess all courses, but tenured faculty could invoke the option above. At the conclusion of every semester, students use the Course Evaluation Form to assess the quality of instruction in their classes.

At the conclusion of every semester beginning from fall 2008 through spring 2012, the Office of Institutional Research calculated the College norms (see, for example, Fall 2011 Norms) for every question for every question on the faculty evaluation form. The College norms permit individual faculty members to compare their scores on the various questions to College normative data. Note that the frequency distribution of student responses has been quite stable over the years which indicates that, overall, students are very satisfied with faculty instructors. Individual instructors rely upon numerical rankings and qualitative feedback in course evaluations to adjust their pedagogies to meet the students' needs and the learning goals of the course. Course evaluation data is used by department chairs to explore effectiveness of curricular innovations and evaluate teaching methods, among other items. Data are also used by the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion for junior colleagues in the probationary period and for associate professors who are seeking promotion to full professor.

Two other changes have occurred since 2008 in how faculty use institutional data for assessing effectiveness. Department chairs now receive electronic copies of the grade distribution for each course and faculty member in their department. The grade distribution data is used to help chairs discuss grade inflation and trends within the department. The Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion also uses faculty grade distributions in combination with course evaluation data when considering promotion. For example, if a faculty member's course evaluation indicated that a course was extremely hard, the Committee looks at the grade distribution to compare student opinion with actual grades awarded.

The Provost, Faculty Council, and the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion now receive a faculty workload report that presents departmental FTE faculty counts, student course enrollment and credit hours consumed. This report is prepared for both the fall and spring terms. In this way, hiring decisions can be informed by data. During the course of this Self-Study, we recognized that faculty FTE, enrollment, and credit hours do not tell the entire story of faculty workload. Plans are underway to develop a more complete picture of departmental activity. To improve the information needed for departmental planning, the Office of Institutional Research will develop annual departmental...
assessments that include senior capstone advising, faculty service commitments, as well as budget information that will more fully describe department activity.

Finally, another way that academic departments assess their effectiveness is through external reviews. Due to the difficult budget constraints since FY09, external reviews of academic departments have not been possible. The last department to be reviewed was Political Science in 2008. As a result of that review, the department was able to add a new line in the field of American Politics. The current Provost has already made the renewal of external reviews a high priority in her planning.

Assessment of Administrative Units

Administrative units at the College have mission statements and goals and objectives, and submit annual reports to the appropriate vice president. Representative examples of administrative annual reports are provided in the Document Directory within the Chapter 7, Standard 7 subfolder. Below we present two examples of how annual reports are used in the assessment and documentation of institutional effectiveness. These demonstrate how the various units have mission and goals, how accomplishments are assessed, and how actions are taken to close the loop and improve institutional effectiveness. Note that administrative units are not required to have assessment plans similar to those in academic departments. Many administrative units at the College have relatively small staff levels and the primary responsibility of administrative units involves daily operational tasks.

- The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment Annual Report lists goals and objectives for the year, and discusses whether objectives have been met. In addition, the report provides examples of improvements or efficiencies that have increased the productivity of the office. For example, one of the primary objectives for the office is the timely completion of external reporting such as the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA). Prior to 2008 there was a very small library of custom reports for institutional research and they were all contained within the Datatel Colleague administrative software. Institutional Research did not take advantage of the reporting benefits of Entrinsik Informer (the College's business intelligence software). These Colleague reports were run, printed out, and numbers were summarized in a manual process or with a hand calculator.

- Over the past several years, Institutional Research worked with staff in OIT to create a library of Informer “production” reports that can be run as needed. These reports electronically deliver the data and/or summary statistics needed for all IPEDS, MHEC, MICUA and other surveys. This greatly improved the speed and accuracy of external reporting.

- The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is of critical importance to both the academic and administrative functioning of the College. The Academic Computing Support Services Annual Report provides an excellent example of relating the unit mission to the College mission, and documenting the approach to improving the availability and usage of technology at the College. For example, the 2011-2012 OIT Annual Report describes how the unit monitors customer satisfaction. There is also a discussion of the implementation and evaluation of an iPad pilot program to use mobile devices in the classroom. The report presents research conducted by OIT to look at alternatives to BlackBoard as the campus learning management system, as well as information on the extent and variety of training workshops for faculty, staff, and students. Another section of the OIT report describes how the unit is optimizing and improving audiovisual products and services on campus.

Annual performance reviews, as discussed elsewhere in relation to Standards 3 and 5, are another way the College assesses the effectiveness of employees. Unit personnel complete a performance review self-evaluation and submit that to their supervisor. The supervisor then completes the performance review and employees are rated on accomplishment, service and relationships with fellow workers, accountability and dependability, adaptability and flexibility, and decision-making and problem solving. If employees are found to need improvement in any area(s), a plan of development/improvement is created and followed. The annual performance review also contains a section where employees lay out goals and objectives for the following year. These goals are reviewed by unit heads and goals and objectives can be prioritized in this fashion.

There are several other ways that the College assesses institutional effectiveness. These methods are cost-effective, collaborative, and reasonably straightforward to conduct. Appendix 7.3 below contains examples of various surveys, results, and actions taken by individual administrative units. We highlight a few examples of these activities below.

Datatel External Training and Audit Reviews

An example of how the College uses these audits can be seen with the Registrar's Office. Since their September 2008 audit, the Office of the Registrar has addressed a number of critical issues to streamline its business practices and improve student outcomes. First, the College fully implemented an online registration system for its undergraduate student population. The Registrar's Office has continued to revise and improve this service in several key ways: by scheduling registration priority based on a student's current class level, by offering online Drop/Add periods for all students to make registration adjustments prior to the start of each semester, by increasing use of the Datatel-provided waitlist procedures and scoring system, and by fully adopting prerequisite, co-requisite and overload restriction codes to ensure that students can enroll only in courses they are eligible to take.

Furthermore, in 2012 the Registrar's Office began a two-year overhaul of its degree completion audit software. The outcome of this project has already improved both student and faculty advisor access to an online, real-time report of a student's progress towards his or her degree. The final phase of this project, to be completed by the end of 2013, will provide students with accurate information about their major and minor requirements as verified by the Registrar's Office, which will increasingly free faculty advisors and department chairs from having to manually confirm a student's progress. Beginning with the Class of 2013, the Registrar's Office launched brand-new record-keeping and communication procedures to better inform juniors and seniors of any deficiencies in their academic programs that would need to be addressed prior to their prospective graduation date.

External Review

The Athletic Department is one of the few units that was able to fund an external review in recent years (2011). As a result of that review, several improvements have been made in the athletic program. For example, coaches have worked with Admissions to increase Early Decision recruits. The contracts for head coaches were changed to become 12 month employees and their salaries
were raised. The College is now fully compliant with all Title IX requirements. The College also reduced the number of two-sport coaches (only tennis and swimming are coached by a single individual). The Athletic Department has developed a Strategic Plan, a Fundraising Plan, and is developing a High Performance Division III Coaching Plan. A summer recruiting fund was established which helps fund summer recruiting. The College hired a recruiting trainer and each varsity sport has a Recruiting Coordinator within their staff. The Athletic Department assigned responsibilities to two current employees for academic liaison and an assistant athletic director. Finally, the department assigned one full-time and two part-time Strength and Conditioning coaches.

**College-Wide Collaboration**

One of the key factors in improving institutional effectiveness is communication and sharing information. On the recommendation of two senior administrators, the College established a Datatel Drivers group in 2010. Senior staff from all the administrative units that use Datatel (now called Ellucian) SIS and the Informer reporting platform are in this group. The group meets monthly to set project priorities and share information about their use and need of the Ellucian Colleague software system (see Datatel Drivers Project Priority List as of Summer 2013). One benefit of initiating this group is to minimize the "silos" that can often happen in administrative computing. All major administrative department requests for programming assistance from OIT are listed, prioritized, and agreed upon. All administrative units can see the status of the various projects as due dates and go-live dates are specified. Another key accomplishment of the Drivers group was to prioritize the importance of new Datatel modules that the College may purchase in the future. The top priority in 2011-2012 was a capital request to fund the Colleague Reporting and Analytics module (CROA). The Drivers group recognized that this module—a data warehouse and reporting solution—would tremendously assist the College with reporting obligations. This priority has been recognized and accepted by the administration for the 2013-14 capital budget.

Additionally, since the introduction of the College’s faculty co-governance model, administrative staff from several levels of the College's hierarchy actively serve and participate on many standing faculty committees, such as the Committee on Academic Standing & Advising and the Curriculum Committee. These staff serve in primarily ex officio roles but provide much-needed guidance on how to leverage the College’s information technologies, academic policies, and student-related best practices in order to help the faculty meet its core mission and objectives.

**General College Assessment**

Finally, the College takes seriously the importance of illustrating to external constituencies that it is a responsible and effective institution. Institutional transparency is a key value accepted by the College. Three important examples of this transparency:

2. Our membership and annual participation in the University and College Accountability Network (U-CAN)
3. The College's internally-developed Compliance Matrix.

The Compliance Matrix (available to all College constituents through the Office of Institutional Research website) ensures that all federal, state, and local reporting requirements are known and can be met in a timely fashion. The Compliance Matrix was an initiative of the President's Office intended to ensure reporting and guarantee continuity in compliance with federal and other reporting mandates.

Internal College data are also monitored for effectiveness. The first important document in this area is the College Dashboard. The 29 measures on the Dashboard were approved by senior staff prior to the 2010 semester and are shared annually with the Board of Visitors and Governors. The statistics in the Dashboard pertain to enrollment, admission, faculty, instruction, finances, and fundraising. The Dashboard contains data covering five-year trends, and indicate whether the current value has improved from the previous year. It is very easy at a glance to see trends and how the College is performing on key institutional indicators.

It is not enough, however, to view the College by itself. The matrix through which we monitor our effectiveness also includes attention to our peers. For example, the past two NSSE reports include a peer reference group consisting of any of our peers who also administered NSSE the same year as the College.

In addition to these kinds of comparisons, the College uses a Strategic Indicator report based on IPEDS and Common Data Set information. Many of our peer institutions have larger enrollments than we do, and this report illustrates some of the challenges the College faces compared to our peers. For example, the strategic indicators report shows that we are smaller than the vast majority of our peers, and that impacts our tuition revenue.

Another fundamental element that is critical to institutional effectiveness is a written institutional strategic plan(s) that reflect(s) consideration of assessment results. The College's Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board of Visitors and Governors in 2006 did track detailed progress towards meeting goals and objectives. The College has recently developed a new Strategic Plan that was approved by the Board in April, 2013, and is discussed extensively in Chapter 2. In the summer of 2013, extensive work has been done on the development of tactics that can be monitored and assessed to determine successful accomplishments and achievements of the Strategic Plan.

**Self-Study Questions**

In addition to the fundamental elements of Standard 7, the Self-Study Steering Committee addressed the following questions related to the quality of institutional assessment at Washington College.

**Question 1.**  Are the assessment processes ongoing and adequately supported by individual units?

The College’s institutional assessment process is ongoing as evidenced by the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. Each unit that is involved in projects in the plan has that on their annual calendar. For example, the Senior Cap and Gown survey is administered at commencement rehearsal every year. Approximately one month prior to that scheduled event, Career Services and Institutional Research consult to determine
the number of surveys needed, and coordinate the plan for administration. Similarly, the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory is administered every third year in the month of March. Student Affairs and Institutional Research consult in January about survey methodology (full population or sample), and optional institutional questions. The Office of Information Technology is informed of the survey timing so that the College firewall does not interfere with the delivery of the survey to students. The overall Institutional Effectiveness Plan is updated at periodic intervals, and this has enabled the College to move to a more systematic and rigorous culture of assessment.

Question 2.
How relevant and useful are the various measures and data points collected by the College for assessing institutional effectiveness?

Results from the various measures are used to make modifications and improvements in the delivery of services as indicated in the text on Standard 7 in this chapter. Based on these outcomes, we conclude that the collected data is pertinent and effective in assessing institutional effectiveness. One survey instrument that the College no longer uses is the UCLA CIRP freshman survey. In 2008-09 it was recognized that the College did not use much of the information provided on that survey of freshmen. Consequently, that instrument was removed from the institutional effectiveness plan.

The College's Institutional Effectiveness Plan measures and collects data on a systematic and timely basis to assess incoming students, student opinion and satisfaction during their tenure here, levels of student engagement during their career, faculty impressions of student engagement, faculty and staff opinion and satisfaction, employment and further educational plans of new graduates and older alumni, internal five-year trends on key measures of institutional performance, and strategic indicators comparing the College to our peer groups. Individual academic and administrative departments collect data specific to their mission and to assess various components of that mission. Results are used to make modifications and improvements in delivery of services as indicated above.

Question 3.
In what ways has the College supported the institutional assessment process with financial and/or personnel decisions?

The College has supported the institutional assessment process with both financial and personnel decisions. In 2008, two positions in the Provost’s Office were combined to support the hiring of an experienced institutional researcher. Dale Trustheim, an alumnus of the College with twenty-five years of experience in institutional research, was hired as Assistant Provost for Institutional Research and Assessment in July, 2008. He was charged with the goal of implementing an effective institutional research operation that can support the information needs of the College. In particular, the College administration wanted to develop an institutional research program that could support the ongoing assessment of institutional effectiveness by providing timely and accurate management of data that can inform decision making.

To assist with the current Self-Study process, the College licensed the purchase of Campus Labs Compliance-Assist software. The software allows the College to select more than one accreditation agency, and the College may want to continue the annual license fee to assist with the re-accreditation of programs such as Education. The software could also support the Middle States Periodic Review that will occur in 2019.

In the 2013-2014 budget process, the College is funding the purchase of the Ellucian Colleague Reporting and Analytics module (a recommendation by the Datatel Drivers group). This add-on Ellucian module will greatly improve the College’s ability to quickly and consistently retrieve management information for reporting and dashboard purposes. The Reporting and Analytics module will provide a data warehouse capability, a library of delivered reports for each administrative unit (e.g., Registrar, Advancement, Admissions, etc.), and data fields that will provide the same information regardless of which users access the data.

In addition, the College recently purchased the Scanntr Campus Climate software to upgrade and improve the efficiency of the course evaluation process; the process of implementation began in the fall of 2013.

Question 4.
How and to what extent are assessment results used to inform budget decisions?

Assessment results at the College are used to evaluate institutional effectiveness. At times, the results suggest that program improvements would require additional budget lines and/or newly budgeted or reallocated funds. Consequently, assessment results at the College regularly inform budget decisions. Typically, the unit or group that identifies the budget need will make that case to the appropriate vice-president. If the vice-president agrees, the budget addition will become part of the next budget cycle or the vice-president might reallocate funds within their category. Some examples of this process are provided below.

A Retention Working Group was established in 2011 after freshman retention dropped from 85% to 81%. The ad hoc working group was charged with making recommendations that could improve freshman retention. One of the group’s primary recommendations was to make the Director of the Math Center a full-time position. This position had actually remained unfilled due to a hiring freeze. However, the importance of the position with respect to retention efforts was recognized and the position was funded and filled in spring 2012.

The Retention Working Group also determined that signature programs such as Global Research and Writing (GRW) and ENG 101 were severely understaffed. This led to the creation and funding for three new teaching fellows. Teaching fellows are a new faculty category at the College: full-time, non-tenure-track positions for three year contract that are designed to support the GRW and ENG 101 programs. Funding for this permanent addition to the faculty ranks began with the fall 2012 academic year.

A third recommendation of Retention Working Group was the addition of weekend bus trips to a variety of places of interest. All students, not merely freshmen, are eligible to sign up for the trip, at no cost. Funding for these trips was provided by the President’s Office beginning with the 2012-13 academic year.

The Tenure and Promotion (T & P) committee routinely does assessment as a first step in planning incremental lines for academic
departments. The size and shape of the faculty is assessed with institutional data that looks at faculty and department workload. Departments can also submit requests that justify new lines. After review of the data, T & P puts forward requests for new faculty lines to the President. If approved, the line then gets hard-wired into the upcoming budget.

Another example of how assessment results are incorporated into the budget process can be seen with the survey administered to faculty in fall 2012 as part of the Middle States Self-Study. One item on this survey was to obtain faculty feedback on their priorities for professional development. These results will be used to determine where the College needs to invest Provost Office budget funds for the improvement of teaching, scholarship, and professional development.

The Datatel Drivers group is charged with assessing the current and future computing needs of the administrative side of the College. As a client of Datatel/Ellucian, this group has evaluated many of the add-on modules that could be incorporated into the existing Colleague system. In 2011-2012 the Drivers Group recommended as a top priority the licensing of the Reporting and Analytics module. The purchase and implementation of this Datatel module is built into the 2013-14 capital budget.

**Question 5.**
How are assessment results communicated to the College community? Are assessment results used to improve inefficiencies, and is process improvement and innovation rewarded?

The College adopts a policy of transparency related to the presentation of important institutional data. Key information about the College for external and internal audiences is contained in the Consumer Information link available on the institutional research website. The Consumer Information site also contains links to public information provided to the federal government as a part of the IPEDS data collection, data provided for the federal Equity in Athletics survey, and information provided to the University and College Accountability Network (U-CAN). The College also makes the information in the Common Data Set available to the public.

Internal assessment results are available to faculty and staff on the institutional research website under Reports and Secure Downloads. Key findings are also made available to Senior Staff, standing College Committees, to faculty (e.g., at faculty meetings or personally), to the Student Government Association, and to department chairs, as requested.

As documented in the text above, assessment results are regularly used to improve inefficiencies. Innovation is recognized as part of the internal job performance evaluation. Staff and faculty are recognized publicly for outstanding work that advances the College. This occurs at faculty meetings, the monthly employee breakfasts supported by the President’s Office, and website and email announcements.

**Question 6.**
To what extent are assessments carried out on state/federal regulations (for example, for NCAA compliance for athletics, diversity, American Disabilities Act)?

This chapter has demonstrated through the Compliance Matrix that the College monitors and complies with all state and federal reporting requirements. One current limitation in our compliance efforts is the lack of workforce analyses although our location in a rural area makes employment of qualified underrepresented faculty and professionals a challenging prospect.

**Conclusion**

Based on the evidence uncovered as a result of our Self-Study and through analysis of the answers to the Self-Study questions, we have learned that we have made enormous progress in the area of Institutional Assessment since our Periodic Review in 2009. Indeed, the addition of an Assistant Provost for Institutional Research and Assessment has greatly enhanced our ability to evaluate all facets of the College’s assessment mechanisms. We are confident that, as a result of systematic, sustained and thorough assessments, we are not only meeting our mission and goals but also in full compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 7.

**Appendix 7.1**

- Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2012)
- BCSSE11-NSSE12 Report
- BCSSE11-NSSE12 Respondent Characteristics
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE, 2012)
- College Dashboard Fall 2012
- Noel-Levitz SSI Survey
- Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (2010)
- Senior Survey (2012)
- Strategic Indicators Report (2011)
- Washington College Fact Book (Fall 2012)

**Appendix 7.2: Additional Washington College Administrative Unit Surveys**

Student Affairs conducts a satisfaction survey for all students who attend new student orientation in the fall. This has been done annually since 2006. Student Affairs has used the results of the orientation surveys in a number of ways. Survey results are used to give individual feedback to Peer Mentors about how their mentees rated their effectiveness. The questions about how knowledgeable peer mentors are in certain areas are used to address deficiencies in training and to focus on areas they are less knowledgeable about for future orientation programs. The survey results are also used to determine which social events we want to continue to run during orientation (based on how they are rated and attended). Another example of how orientation was improved as a result of the survey feedback is the addition of individual faculty advisor
meetings during orientation (in response to findings several years ago that they did not know their advisor very well). In addition, a session focused only on health and counseling services was added to improve student knowledge in that area as well.

Residence Life also surveys all students living in College residence halls every semester. Survey results have been used to review and enhance student understanding and enforcement of quiet hours. Results from the surveys have allowed Residence Life to fine-tune and enhance the response of Resident Assistants (RA) to student needs during duty rounds. Also, survey results provide continued enhancement of RA programming to include more student involvement in program planning.

The Office of Admissions administers a Campus Visit Survey to every prospective student who visits campus. From past survey results, several major changes have been made to improve the program. The first change was creating a baseline tour for the Student Ambassadors. After shadowing many different Student Ambassadors, Admissions found that there was no standard for knowledge of the campus or route taken. A baseline tour was created by the summer Student Ambassadors, revised by the Office of Admissions Staff and had a final review by President Reiss before the academic year began. In the most recent survey results, the Student Ambassadors were praised for their wide knowledge about the campus. A second change as a result of the survey was to have customer service training for all of the Student Ambassadors. Admissions staff discussed in small groups how to answer uncomfortable questions, what topics about campus they could not answer with ease, how to treat different types of visitors, and how to personalize the baseline tour for each visitor. The Student Ambassadors were trained to ask for help when they could not answer a question. Again, the latest survey results show that Student Ambassadors were praised for their helpfulness and enthusiastic nature toward Washington College. A third change was establishing an evaluation system for the Student Ambassadors. All of the Student Ambassadors have been shadowed more than once by Kaitlyn McEnroe (Admissions officer responsible for Campus Visit Program), a Student Ambassador, or an Admissions Fellow. These evaluations create an environment where we can praise the Student Ambassadors for their strengths and address areas for improvement. This evaluation system resulted in the Student Ambassadors being more conscious of their actions.

Appendix 7.3: Institutional Effectiveness Assessments

2006 Strategic Plan
2006 Strategic Plan Tracking Report
2013 Strategic Plan
Admissions Campus Visit Survey
Athletic Department Coaches Survey
Athletic Department External Review
Datatel Audit--Accounts Receivable
Datatel Audit--Finance
Datatel Audit--General Ledger
Datatel Audit--Human Resources
Datatel Audit--Registrar's Office
Faculty Workload Report
Human Resources Annual Performance Review
New Student Orientation Survey
Residence Life Survey
SGA State of the Majors Survey
Washington College Senior Survey

Sources

- Academic Computing and Support Services Annual Report 2011-12
- Admissions Campus Visit Survey Results 2013
- Athletic Department Fund-Raising Plan
- Athletic Department High Performance Div III Coaches
- Athletic Department Strategic Plan
- Athletics Department External Review 2011
- BCSSE Fall 2011 Report
- BCSSE11-NSSE12 Combined Report (Washington College)
- BCSSE11-NSSE12 Respondent Characteristics (Washington College)
- Coaches Survey - Athletic Department (Sample)
- Compliance Matrix
- Compliance Matrix - Fall 2012
- Consumer Information
- CORE Alcohol & Drug Survey (Sample Scantron)
- Dashboard Fall 2011
- Dashboard Fall 2012
- Datatel Accounts Receivable Cash Receipts Usage Audit 2008
- Datatel Drivers Project List - July 2013
- Datatel Financial Usage Audit 2008
Standard 8

Student Admissions and Retention

The institution seeks to admit students whose interests, goals, and abilities are congruent with its mission and seeks to retain them through the pursuit of the students’ educational goals.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College Admissions recruits, admits and enrolls students who share the College’s core values, can meet its expectations for academic rigor, and are looking to develop the intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and civic habits of mind that a Washington College education fosters. Our communications and interactions with prospective students emphasize our distinctive values and strengths, including the challenge to students to discover lives of purpose and passion.

Admissions

The goal of the Washington College Admission's Office is to recruit talented students who believe in and can benefit from the mission of Washington College and can meet its academic expectations, as indicated in the Mission Statement of the Offices of Admissions and Student Aid:

The Offices of Admissions and Student Aid share a common goal and purpose: to attract, enroll, and retain students who will contribute to and benefit from the College’s academic and campus life. With consideration and respect for every student’s unique set of personal interests, academic abilities, and financial resources, we select worthy candidates for admission and determine who can be awarded merit-based scholarships and need-based aid. We make every effort to help students and their families assess the College’s 'fit' and affordability and, in so doing, aim to serve the best interests of College and those who aspire to become its graduates.

Communication with prospective students is accomplished via online materials located on the Admissions website, emails to prospective students, printed brochures, on-campus Open Houses and campus visits by prospective students.

In keeping with the College's mission to prepare students for lives of purpose and passion, Admissions’ communication focuses extensively on how students at Washington College actively engage in the learning process. Admissions publications (online and print) and other communications (such as student-led campus tours) emphasize the availability of faculty inside and outside the classroom and the availability of hands-on learning opportunities such as laboratory experiences, summer research experiences, the Chesapeake Semester, and the Senior Capstone Experience. The "Stories of Purpose and Passion" item on the Academics web site, for instance, features current students whose Washington College experience embodies the active, engaged learning, close collaboration with faculty and staff and taking advantage of learning opportunities outside of the classroom that define the mission of Washington College.

A majority of the communication with prospective students focuses on academics and academic achievement. These communications link to academic departments matching the particular interests of given prospective students as well as news stories about students in majors they are interested in. They also educate prospective students about academic opportunities such as the Presidential Fellows Program and the Toll Science and Mathematics Fellows Program. Given the greater emphasis in the College’s new Mission Statement on preparing students for leadership, leadership training and opportunities for leadership will be reflected in future Admissions communications as well. These endeavors reflect our commitment to meeting the needs of students from their first interaction with the College through to their graduation.

In the 2011 Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) 86% of the first year students believe that Washington College offers services that help them succeed academically. Washington College prides itself on unhurried conversations, maximum student/professor contact interactions, and the support services to ensure that our admitted students have every opportunity to succeed. Information about academic resources and other support services, including links to their web sites, are featured on the Admissions website. Admissions Counselors inform prospective students about these services and direct them to the website of each academic service for further information.

The Admissions Office also encourages all students who disclose a disability during the admissions process to consult with the Director of Disability Services and the Office of Academic Skills and schedules appointments with the Director upon request of prospective students. This link between Admissions and Disability Services enables these students to learn about resources available to them should they be admitted and decide to attend Washington College. In the Office of Academic Skills 2012-2013 annual report, the Director of Disability Services stated that she met with 56 students during the student’s first year, with another approximately 35 visits taking place between the Director, the student, and the student’s family during the admission process.
To assist prospective students in making an informed decision in choosing Washington College the Admissions Office publicizes entrance standards and the academic profile of entering classes in print and online. Admissions Counselors also direct prospective students to use resources such as the “Net Price Calculator” tool on the Office of Student Financial Aid website to determine the price for a Washington College education. This website also offers prospective students the ability to investigate various academic tuition scholarships, need-based aid, loans, and various payment solutions within the Finance Your Education page.

The diversity of the Washington College student body has been relatively constant from the period of 2008 to 2012:

Table 8.1: Minority Students as Percentage of Total Undergraduate Population – 2008 to 2012

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During this time the distribution of different minority and ethnic groups within this category has changed, as the percentage of matriculated African-American students enrolled has decreased from 5% in 2008 to 3% in 2012 and the percentage of Asian-American students has increased from 1% in 2008 to 4% in 2012. During the same time period the percentage of Hispanic students increased from 7% in 2008 to 13% in 2012.

Further enrollment growth at Washington College could also bring changes to the demographic make-up of the College. This depends on what students we target to recruit. An important goal of the new Strategic Plan is to "increase the racial, religious, sexual orientation, national origin and socio-economic diversity of the student body." With the arrival of a new Vice-President of Enrollment Management and Director of Admissions, the College has articulated an ambitious plan to explore the existing barriers to admission and retention experienced by ethnic and multicultural applicants. Recruitment plans include developing an incoming cohort of students through early outreach to community based organizations and schools, capitalization on students eligible for the Maryland Guaranteed Access Grant, hosting specialized on-campus yield events and then providing a summer bridge program for enrolled students. Once on campus, this cohort will continue to be developed by integrating them into the outreach efforts. While many of these strategies are in their infancy, there has been a positive collaboration among the staffs of Enrollment Management, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Assistant Provost for Institutional Research and Assessment.

One development to note, however, is Washington College has recently been successful in targeting and recruiting more international (nonresident alien) students.

Table 8.2: F-1 Visa Students Matriculated as Percentage of Total Incoming Undergraduate Students – 2008 to 2013

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If this trend continues, international cultural diversity on campus will subsequently increase, as discussed in Standard 11, Study Question #6.

Since the economic downturn of 2008 more high school students have elected to attend community colleges for their first one or two years of post-secondary education and then transfer into a four-year college or university. To adjust to this change Washington College Admissions Counselors have begun to strengthen our relationships with community colleges. These relationships allow us to recruit excellent students who will be transferring to a four-year institution to complete their studies. The Senior Associate Director of Admissions specializes in transfer students and works closely with them to ensure that they are good fit for Washington College and that Washington College is a good option for them. Prospective transfer student are also directed to the Admissions website, where there is a section of information specific to transfer students. The College's policies on transfer credit are also published on the Registrar’s Office website.

Between the academic years 2001-2002 and 2013-2014, we have on average enrolled 41 transfer students in the fall and 12 transfer students in the spring. But this number has varied from lows of 29 in Fall 2003 and 30 in Fall 2010 to highs of 55 in Fall 2002 and 52 in Fall 2012, and from lows of 5 in Spring 2005 and 6 in Spring 2001 to highs of 17 in Spring 2006 and 15 in Spring 2004 and in Spring 2011.

To ensure that admitted students are a good fit for Washington College, Admissions Counselors go beyond just examining an applicant's academic pedigree. Admissions staff also look at what opportunities at Washington College will keep the prospective student engaged and enrolled at Washington College. To assess their success in recruiting students who fit with Washington College's mission and have strong potential to be successful and happy here, the Admissions Office routinely analyzes comprehensive retention data. Over the last eight years the lowest retention rate was the cohort that entered in Fall 2006, whose retention rate was 79.8%, while the highest was the cohort that entered in Fall 2005, whose retention rate was 86.6%. For the cohort that entered in Fall 2011, the retention rate was 84.7% (e.g., see trend in Washington College Fact Book).

To the extent that the percentage of applicants who are admitted is related to increasing the academic rigor of a Washington College education, we have made uneven progress in that direction in recent years. The College's acceptance rate was 59% in 2004 and 2005, but it moved steadily upward until it reached 74% in 2010. We were able to reduce this rate to 57% in 2011, but in 2012 and 2013 it returned to 66%. With a new Vice President for Admissions and Enrollment Management joining the college in July 2013, we should be able to arrive at reasonable expectations for the acceptance rate going forward and better strategies for how to achieve it.

The Associate Provost for Academic Services and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs work closely with the Director of Admissions on communication with new students in the spring and summer before they come to Washington College. Together they manage online communications with these students and create a website for first-year students with information about the summer advising program in June (where new students learn about life and Washington College and register for their fall courses), the Peer Mentor program, residence life, the first year common reading and other related programs and services.

For each entering class the Admissions Office calculates each student’s predicted first-year grade point average and provides this information to the Provost's Office and the Office of Student Affairs. Using the new Retention Alert case management module within Ellucian Colleague (discussed in Standard 5), the Associate Provost and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs use this data to identify students who may
need additional support. They target students with a predicted first year grade point average of 2.4 or less for referral to the Office of Academic Skills, the Writing Center, and the Quantitative Skills Center. The Associate Provost and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs also solicit input from Admissions Counselors about any students who may be particularly challenged by some aspect of life as a college student or who may need early intervention—academic support, emotional support or support adjusting to life in a college residence hall—in order to ensure a good transition of these students from the admissions process to life at Washington College. Administrative and student support staff, as well as faculty, have been trained on using the Retention Alert module to contribute retention information that might assist the Associate Provost and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs in their effort to intervene on behalf of students at risk of academic or other issues during the transition to Washington College.

There are several areas where improved assessment of outcomes for Washington College students would enhance the College's recruitment and enrollment management efforts. One such area is better measurement of long-term, post-graduation outcomes; another is better information about students' service activities while at Washington College and post-graduation. Admissions Counselors report that prospective students are very interested in opportunities to be involved in service activities and in student outcomes, whether careers or graduate education. The counselors would like to have more information about these outcomes to share with prospective students.

Growth in the size of the student body should not present a challenge for financial aid. Financial aid for students is a percentage of total revenue; therefore as the number of students increases so will revenue, making financial aid available for students who qualify for it. However, it is important that Washington College determine an acceptable financial aid discount rate and maintain it. This rate has fluctuated in recent years from below 30% prior to 2008 to as high as 50% in 2011. The discount rate for the class on 2016 was 43%. Over roughly the same time, the percentage of first year students receiving financial aid has increased steadily from 79% in 2008-2009 to 89.7% in 2012-2013.

Washington College can grow its class size without distorting the discount rate by increasing the size of the search pool at the very top of the admissions funnel. This gives us a larger inquiry pool and ultimately a stronger applicant pool. This is the only way to increase selectivity without compromising the discount rate.

Our merit and financial aid regimen has been designed to strike a balance between quality and quantity. While academically stronger students receive a larger merit amount, offers from other institutions tend to be equally attractive. Therefore, we do not expect any surprises with a higher-than-expected yield from these students. On the other hand, our high-income but academically weaker applicants will receive a merit offer which should be slightly more generous than our peers. We expect to yield a higher number of students in that category to strike that balance between quantity and quality. Starting at the top of the admissions funnel, we have purchased more names of students that fall in the 1100-1200 SAT range so we expect a larger pool of applicants in the lower to middle range of our merit grid.

Geographic diversification is another important strategic concern. Washington College currently draws 80% of its students from the Mid-Atlantic region, which is expected to see a 10% drop in population over the next ten years. To adjust to this demographic reality we will build territories outside of the region in states like California and Florida, while keeping a sharp eye on how the tools to recruit those students—increasing the perceived value of the institution and offering more scholarships—affect the discount rate.

The average Federal loan debt for graduated students was $23,863 in 2012.

We are also making an effort to articulated agreements between regional community colleges and Washington College to increase the number of transfer students. We are in the process of developing Guaranteed Transfer agreement with Chesapeake College that will increase the flow of transfer students who have successfully completed their two-year degree at Chesapeake.

Washington College aspires to become an elite undergraduate institution and to do this the academic requirements for acceptance at the College will need to be increased. This may pose a problem for recruitment, as the lower portion of the applicant pool will be eliminated. This will tend to decrease the applicant pool and reduce the yield of admitted students. These deleterious effects can be offset by the addition of new majors or programs. Increasing numbers of prospective students are interested in Communication, Media Studies, and Accounting, and the College has recently added a minor in Accounting and Finance to its curriculum. Many of our competitor institutions have degrees in these areas and if we were to offer these majors we could recruit more and better students in these areas. An Honors Programs could also help recruitment and retention of excellent students. Currently, our Presidential Fellows Program and John S. Toll Science and Mathematics Fellows Programs are a value-added component to a Washington College education for higher achieving prospective students. There is some evidence that these programs also increase retention. For example, retention of Presidential Fellows has been especially good:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Year</th>
<th>Retention Of Presidential Fellows</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results suggest that a future Honors Program would have positive results for both recruitment and retention of high achieving students.

The academic student profile has stayed consistent over the past ten years, with an average GPA in the 3.4-3.5 range and an average SAT score of 1140-1150. A push to improve the profile of incoming students will have to come from an enhancement of the perceived value of the institution or by increasing our financial aid awards. A balance will have to be found over the next two to three years, once the College's incoming class size has stabilized.

A benefit to an improvement in the academic profile of future incoming classes would be greater homogeneity of academic abilities, as increased admissions standards would eliminate the “bottom of the class.” This homogeneity and range of students prepared for the rigors of college academics would allow for classes to contain students of more similar ability level, thus creating a better learning environment for all students by enabling professors to present material, set the pace of course work and develop assignments and other evaluations of students’ performance that are better suited to the majority of students in each course.
Retention

Retention of first-time, full-time students from their first to their second year has fluctuated recently, from a low of 79.8% for the cohort entering Fall 2006 to a high of 86.6% for the cohort entering Fall 2005. This retention figure for the cohort entering Fall 2011 was 84.7%.

Persistence to graduation for first-time full-time freshmen has varied as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entering Fall</th>
<th>% Graduated In 4 Years</th>
<th>% Graduated In 6 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>79.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>68.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>64.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retention of transfer students shows similar variation. Over a ten-year period, retention and persistence to graduation of transfer students who enrolled in a fall semester has ranged from a low of 60% for the cohort who entered in 2011 (some of whom are still enrolled) to a high of 83.8% of those who enrolled in Fall 2005. Over the same period, retention and persistence to graduation of transfer students who enrolled in a spring semester has ranged from a low of 30.8% for the eight students who enrolled in Spring 2008 to a high of 100% for the five students who enrolled in Spring 2006. Part of this great variation in retention rates can be explained by the low numbers of transfer students who enroll in a spring semester.

In general, retention and persistence to graduation for transfer students tends to rise and fall with the same rates for first time, full time freshmen. For example, for students who enrolled in Fall 2006 or Spring 2007, retention and persistence to graduation for first time full time freshmen was 75.5%, for transfer students who enrolled in the fall it was 68.3% and for transfer students who enrolled in the spring it was 58.8%. The corresponding rates for those who enrolled in Fall 2007 or Spring 2008 are 68.8% for first time full time freshmen, 62.7% for fall transfer students and 30.8% for spring transfers.

Recent Retention Initiatives

Washington College has devoted considerable effort and resources to student retention since 2007-08, when we hired Theresa Farnum and Associates to help us conduct a major review of retention and develop new, better-targeted retention initiatives. The in-depth assessment and analysis of retention we did in 2007-08 yielded the following key findings:

“As recently as 2005, the 2004 entrants retained at 89.1%, more than a standard deviation above the mean of similar colleges, as defined by ACT. The following year was a significant decline, followed by a year that might have indicated a turnaround. Unfortunately, the dramatic dip this year (the first rate below the national average for similar institution) may mean a downward trend.” - Theresa Farnum & Associates, Washington College Retention Assessment, November 19-20, 2007

Interestingly, as seen in Table 8.5 below, higher retention rates are associated with larger first-year classes, which may indicate a desirability to set a goal of 400 new FTFT students, which would increase “critical mass,” the lack of which can create retention problems at small colleges. With new residential buildings coming online, the College will be in a position to accommodate an increase in the number of new first-time students. Academic preparedness, as measured by average SAT scores has remained consistent.

Table 8.5: One-Year Retention Rate of Undergraduate FTFT Students – 2002 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Time, Full-Time, Degree-Seeking Entering Students</th>
<th>Number Entering</th>
<th>Average ACT / SAT Score</th>
<th>Percent Enrolled Following Fall (Even If Only Part-Time)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>1126</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>1151</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>1162</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>1133</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>1140</td>
<td>84.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>1161</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>1171</td>
<td>84.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the recommendations presented to us by the consultants, and as a result of our own in-depth assessment and analysis of retention, the College developed a set of nine retention initiatives (“Retention Action Plans”), incorporating all of the recommendations that came out of our Retention Planning Workshop, and began implementation of these initiatives in 2008-09.

A summary of retention efforts since 2007 is as follows:

- Created an Enrollment Management Group, since renamed the Retention Oversight Group, consisting of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Provost, the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, the Associate Provost and the Director of Institutional Research and
Assessment, that meets regularly to review data on retention and related initiatives. The Retention Oversight Group has as its goals:

- establishing appropriate goals for the College related to its retention of students;
- providing a centralized and comprehensive forum for the review of retention-related data, ensuring that the College is collecting and utilizing the necessary data to inform retention-related decisions;
- making recommendations for retention-related initiatives on campus; and
- ensuring that retention-related initiatives on campus are strategically coordinated.

- Created a dashboard, published each year, that includes retention data.
- Created a withdrawal questionnaire that asks students who are leaving the College before graduation to rate 34 items based on how important that item was to their decision to leave, and improved efforts to complete an exit interview with every student who leaves the College before graduation.
- Completely revamped the College’s program of first year advising to ensure closer connection and more frequent contact of first year students and their faculty advisors, especially in the students’ first semester at the College.
- Redesigned the College’s first-year writing courses, and linked them to the first-year advising program that still undergoes constant revision and improvement itself (e.g. ongoing biannual training for first-year advisors).
- Created a First-Year Career Awareness program including a skills and interests inventory that all new students complete and sessions at New Student Orientation and in January of the freshman year that introduce first year students to Career Development Services.
- Added staff and increased funding for the academic resources areas (the Writing Center, the Quantitative Skills Center and the Office of Academic Skills; details are provided in Standard 3 under the heading Resources for Student Learning).
- Created the Presidential Fellows program to attract and retain high achieving students.
- Hired two Area Directors in the Office of Residential Life, both of whom live on campus, to improve the residential experience for students.
- Improved service to new first-year students from the Registrar’s Office, such as expedited posting of transfer credits and AP Exam equivalencies.
- Reinvigorated fall semester traditions including expanded pre-orientation experience offerings for new students, a more student-centered Fall Convocation ceremony, improvements to Fall Family Weekend, and the renewal of a fall homecoming event.
- Created a Summer Bridge Program for under-represented minority (URM) students.

In 2012, after a thorough review of the success of the retention efforts listed above, the Retention Action Plan was updated to capture changes that had been implemented since 2008 and to detail further initiatives that could be considered.

Results of Retention Initiatives

Survey data suggests that most if not all of these retention initiatives have had a positive effect on students’ experience at Washington College, as indicated by results of the College’s National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). The SSI administered in 2010 includes comparisons to the results of our 2007 administration of the same survey. As reported by the Washington College Office of Institutional Research:

“The SSI contains 73 questions. Of these questions, almost half (n=35) show statistically significant higher scores in spring 2010 compared to fall 2007. Only three items show statistically significant lower scores in the most recent survey administration.”

The college also administered the SSI in spring, 2013. Student satisfaction continues to show positive improvements as determined by students. Of the 73 items that can be compared between 2010 and 2013, 23% show statistically significant higher mean scores. An additional 43% of the questions show higher satisfaction in 2013 than 2010.

The most dramatic increases in student satisfaction from 2007 to 2010 occurred in the areas of the student center and the College’s dining hall, suggesting that our investment in Hodson Hall contributes to improvements in students’ experience. And for the three overall summary questions on the SSI, WC students in 2010 are more satisfied than students in the national norm group, and the 2010 College mean scores are higher than our 2007 scores.

Data from the College’s 2009 NSSE survey suggest increases in students’ satisfaction with key components of their Washington College experience. Perhaps most notable is improved satisfaction with advising. Washington College freshmen rated their advising more highly than freshmen at Carnegie class and WC peers rated their advising. Typically seniors rate their advising more highly than do freshmen, but WC freshmen rated their advising more highly than did WC seniors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Carnegie class freshmen</th>
<th>WC peers freshmen</th>
<th>Washington College freshmen</th>
<th>WC peers seniors</th>
<th>Washington College seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We think this finding reflects increased satisfaction of freshmen with their experience of the new first year advising program, which we implemented in Fall 2009. The seniors who responded to the Fall 2009 NSSE did not experience this improved approach to first year advising.

In the 2012 NSSE data, Washington College freshmen continue to rate their advising more highly than do Washington College seniors, 3.28 for freshmen compared to 3.22 for seniors. But the 3.22 response from Class of 2012 seniors, the first graduating class who experienced the new first-year advising program, is an improvement compared to 2009 seniors’ response of 3.15.

In 2009 overall satisfaction for freshmen was 3.35 and for seniors was 3.29. In 2012, overall satisfaction for freshmen was 3.42 and for seniors was 3.44. In 2009, freshmen response to the question of whether they would attend the same institution if they were starting all over again
was 3.19 and for seniors was 3.01; in 2012 the freshmen response to this “starting all over” question was 3.21 and for seniors was 3.17.

Despite these improvements to students’ experience, especially the first-year student experience, however, the rate of retention of students from their first to their second year at the College has continued to fluctuate, although we have retained at least 81.5% of our first-time, full-time freshman into their second year for every year since 2007.

Data from our withdrawing student questionnaire, instituted in Fall 2010, and qualitative data from the Associate Provost’s exit interviews with students provide some insight into our current retention rates.

Beginning in the summer of 2010, at the end of each academic year, the Associate Provost compiles her notes from her exit interviews and the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment compiles the results of the withdrawal questionnaire to present a report (with both qualitative and quantitative data) on why students who withdrew that year left Washington College. They circulate that report to the Retention Oversight Group. The Registrar’s Office also changed the way it records student withdrawals in the Colleague student information system beginning in January 2012, allowing for better cross-checking between the exit interview data culled by the Associate Provost and the transfer-out data obtained from the National Student Clearinghouse by the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment.

Results of the withdrawal questionnaire indicate that the most important reasons why students leave Washington College before completing their degree have to do with finances. Students cite the cost of attending Washington College as the number one or number two reason why they leave and this finding is confirmed by the Spring 2010 results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), in which “Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment” was third on the list of challenges—items with a high importance rating but low satisfaction rating by students.

Another frequently cited reason for withdrawal is that the College’s location is too isolated. In the results of our most recently administered withdrawal questionnaire (2011-2012), the third, fourth and fifth most frequently cited reasons for withdrawal are that the college is too small, the student feels out of place at Washington College and there is not enough to do on weekends. These reasons for withdrawal are confirmed by qualitative data from exit interviews with withdrawing students.

In exit interviews students also often mention that “the College doesn’t have the major I want” as a reason they are leaving. Every year we lose between 2–5 students who were enrolled in or thinking about one of Washington College’s 3-2 programs (engineering, pharmacy or nursing) and decided to transfer to a college or university where they could complete that major in four years. Most frequently mentioned majors are communication/journalism/media studies, and pre-professional Natural Science majors such as pre-vet, nutrition/dietician, and nursing.

Recruitment and retention of transfer students has varied over the years. Retention of fall semester transfer students to graduation has varied from a low of 60% of the transfer students who enrolled in Fall 2011 to a high of 83.8% of those who enrolled in Fall 2005. Retention of spring semester transfer students to graduation has varied from a low of 30.8% of those who enrolled in Spring 2007 (which was 13 students) to a high of 100% of those who enrolled in Spring 2005 (which was a total of five students).

It is difficult to draw conclusions about the retention and persistence to graduation of transfer students at Washington College given the great variation in the number of transfer students we enroll each semester. But changes in retention and persistence to graduation rates for transfer students tend to mirror those for first time full time freshmen. For example, for first time full-time freshmen who enrolled in Fall 2007, the six year persistence to graduation rate was 68.6%, a decrease from 75.5% for those who enrolled in Fall 2006. For transfer students who enrolled in Fall 2007, the six year persistence to graduation rate was 62.7%, down from 68.3% for those who enrolled in Fall 2006 and for transfer students who enrolled in Spring 2008, the six year persistence to graduation rate was 30.8%, down from 58.8% for transfer students who enrolled in Spring 2007.

With “Attract, enroll and retain outstanding students” as the fourth goal of the Strategic Plan, the College is placing emphasis on improving retention rates; objective b articulates a goal to “achieve and maintain a first-to-second-year retention rate of ninety percent or better.” We look toward further development of the Presidential Fellows program and to more proactively anticipate the needs of struggling students with the Retention Alert system. We believe that a target retention rate for these students of 85-87% is within reach and possible.

We have recently improved services to transfer students, especially the on-boarding process. Beginning in Fall 2010, the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs has run an orientation program specifically for transfer students, including a student peer mentor assigned to the group who is him or herself a transfer student and a follow up meeting with each new transfer student by the middle of the semester. We have also improved first semester course registration for transfer students. Beginning in Fall 2012, the Associate Provost has worked with the Admissions Office to identify transfer students who are ready to declare a major, enroll them in that major, assign them a major advisor and consult with their major advisor and/or department chair about what courses they should take in their first semester. In the past, we would work with these transfer students on course registration and major declaration much closer to the first day of classes or during the first week of classes. The Registrar’s Office also posts transfer credit immediately upon receipt of a transfer student’s official transcript, in an effort to provide accurate information about each student’s preparedness for upper-level coursework.

Fall semester transfer students who are transferring in less than a year’s course work are also invited to participate in the Summer Advising program in June, so that they can begin to get acquainted with the College, and if they attend that program they are assigned to meet with a faculty member in the department or program they plan to major in for advising and course registration for their first semester.

We are working to establish articulation agreements with regional community colleges. This includes a guaranteed transfer option for interested students that is bolstered with financial incentives. Transfer, and other non-traditional students are being more purposefully supported, especially those who commute to campus. Targeted outreach to veterans and those eligible for benefits under the post-GI 9/11 bill (including Yellow Ribbon-eligible veterans) are also being supported under this framework.

We are confident that these recent improvements in on-boarding of transfer students will be reflected in higher and more consistent persistence to graduation among this cohort of students. Going forward, Washington College needs to identify reasonable targets for enrolling transfer students and aim to enroll roughly the same number of transfer students each semester. We especially need to make sure that we enroll a critical mass of transfer students each spring semester, a number sufficient to ensure that this group of students can support each other in their transition to Washington College and to ensure that none of them slip through the cracks in the on-boarding process.
Conclusion

The arrival of a new Vice President for Enrollment Management in July 2013 provides an opportunity to refocus both our goals and our methods for recruiting students to Washington College. Better data collection and analysis—a project that the new Vice President has already taken up—should enable us to determine how reasonable it is to expect that we can recruit higher achieving students and further diversify our student body.

Over the course of the data-collection phase of the Self-Study, we determined that there are areas related to student recruitment, retention and experiences that could be improved and we have made adjustments accordingly. With attracting, recruiting and retaining outstanding students a centerpiece of the Strategic Plan, the College is superbly positioned to succeed in our objectives; with close analysis of data and trends, we are also confident that we are in compliance with Standard 8 and meet the Fundamental Elements contained therein.

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- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 52)
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- Tony Littlefield profile
Standard 9

Student Support Services

The institution provides student support services reasonably necessary to enable each student to achieve the institution’s goals for students.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College provides extensive support for students’ academic and social development, consistent with the College’s mission to offer academic rigor and self-discovery in a supportive, residential community of well-qualified, diverse, and motivated individuals. The student support we provide contributes to the development in our students of habits of analytic thought and clear communication, aesthetic insight, ethical sensitivity, and civic responsibility.

Academic Support

Academic support is provided primarily by the College’s faculty advising programs, by the academic resource areas (the Writing Center, the Quantitative Skills Center, and the Office of Academic Skills) and by offices that provide important learning opportunities such as the Global Education Office and the Center for Career Development. Support for students’ social development, emotional well-being, ethical sensitivity, and capacity for civic responsibility is provided primarily by offices and programs in the division of Student Affairs, such as Residential Life, the Health and Counseling Centers, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Office of Student Development.

There is considerable collaboration among staff in academic affairs and student affairs, consistent with the high value we place on unhurried conversation and close connections with an exceptional faculty and staff. Academic affairs staff, housed in the Provost’s Office, and Student Affairs staff worked closely and consistently together to provide as seamless as possible an experience of support for students. Exemplary but by no means unique in this regard are the Early Intervention Program, where academic affairs and student affairs staff meet bi-weekly to discuss students of concern and develop intervention plans, and the meetings held at least once every semester of academic affairs, student affairs and athletics staff to discuss issues of mutual concern, keep each other informed of new programs and services in each area and discover opportunities to collaborate on programs or projects designed to support students’ academic and social success.

The Advising Program

The College’s overall advising program is described fully in the College Catalog. Advising of degree-seeking students by members of the core faculty is one of the fundamental components of the College’s overarching academic program, and is formally embedded in each student’s major declaration and semester-by-semester registration process.

One of the major 2008 retention initiatives was the development of a comprehensive program for advising students before they have declared a major. Previously the Associate Provost and the Registrar’s Office would assign new students to faculty advisors, taking into account both new students’ anticipated majors and the current advising loads of faculty. The Provost’s Office provided training of faculty advisors and arranged a schedule in which advisors were to meet with their advisees early in the semester. But in the several years immediately preceding 2008, training offerings and follow up on early meetings with advisees were somewhat haphazard. One startling result of our 2007-08 retention study was that a significant number of new students reported never meeting their faculty advisor until early November, when they had to meet for spring course registration.

In 2008 the Committee on Academic Standing and Advising proposed a new program of first-year advising, which the faculty approved and initiated at the start of the 2008-2009 academic year.

Key components of the program are:

A first-year advisor is a member of the faculty who is trained for the role and rewarded for participating. Each advisor

- Is assigned either 8-10 or 16-20 first year students to advise
- Is paid a stipend ($800 for advising 8-10 students, $1200 for advising 16-20 students)
- Is required to attend a training session for first-year advisors
- Meets with his/her advisees as a group once and once individually with each advisee for 15–20 minutes during August orientation
- Meets individually with each advisee in the third or fourth week of the semester
- Meets at other times at the request of the student and for advisement for course registration
- Continues to advise these students until they declare a major.
The short individual meetings with advisees during August Orientation give advisors a chance to get to know their advisees and advisees a chance to get comfortable with their advisors. Any problems or concerns first-year students have at that point can also be addressed.

The purpose of meeting individually with each advisee during the third or fourth week of the semester is to check on students' progress, discover any problems students might be having, discuss any problems that faculty have reported to the advisor, and encourage students to start thinking long-term about their academic plans including a major. As a result of these meetings first-year students should be better prepared to register for spring courses later in the fall semester and to choose a major.

A goal of this first-year advising program is to ensure that students make good progress in choosing a major. In collaboration with the Student Government Association and the Center for Career Development, the Provost's Office has organized a Majors Fair, held every October in Hodson Hall, where freshmen and undeclared sophomores can meet faculty and students from all of the majors on campus to help them with selecting a major.

**Advising Groups**: Advising groups consist of all or most of the students enrolled in a first year writing course (either ENG 101 or GRW 101).

**First-Year Orientation**: During First-Year Orientation in August, faculty advisors meet with their advisees as a group on Thursday and also schedule individual short (15-20 minutes) appointments with their advisees. There are blocks of time set aside for these appointments on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, during times the students are not required to be at an orientation event, and within these time blocks advisors may schedule their individual appointments at their convenience.

**Other Advising Activities**: Any faculty member teaching a first-year writing course who would also like to serve as the first-year advisor to those students is welcomed to do so. For any first-year advisors who would like to organize a co-curricular or social activity with their advisees during the fall semester—such as an off-campus outing, a lecture, film, play, presentation or other event on campus with time together before or after the event, a community service project, a meal together, a social gathering at the advisor's home—the Provost's Office provides funds to cover the cost of the activity.

**Advisor Training**: The Provost's Office, in collaboration with Student Affairs staff, organizes training for first-year advisors. Training emphasizes practical strategies for connecting with advisees, engaging advisees in long-term planning for their academic and career futures, advising them about available academic resources, and helping them to recognize and deal with problems. The Provost's Office also provides advising materials with information about general education and graduation requirements, majors, academic resources, and other matters, to help advisors advise students with a wide range of academic interests and a variety of needs.

**Peer Mentor Training**: Peer Mentor training includes some of the same emphases so that peer mentors can be good partners to first-year advisors and so that the advising program can communicate a consistent message to first year students. Members of the Provost's Office, including the Associate Provost for Academic Services and the Registrar, are available to assist and collaborate with all first-year advisors throughout the year.

**Summer Advising**: The Provost's Office provides information on a first-year advising web site about available courses, graduation requirements, and other academic matters to first-year students before they arrive for their Summer Advising. We strongly encourage new students to review this material, make a plan for their first semester course selection including alternatives to their first four course choices, and bring this plan with them to their advising appointment. We assign students to summer advisors on the basis of the students' expressed academic interests.

Summer Advising also includes a 45 minute session for first-year students and their families entitled "College Academics: Your Professors' Expectations.” Three faculty members and one or two upper-class students speak briefly about experiences and expectations that distinguish college courses from high school courses, with time for questions and answers from students and family members.

The Provost's Office assigns students to their first-year advisor and informs advisors individually about their new advisees immediately after the Summer Advising. Provost's Office staff, particularly the Associate Provost for Academic Services and the Registrar, assist new students over the summer, but many first-year advisors contact their new advisees well before classes begin to introduce themselves and welcome the new students to Washington College. Additionally, Peer Mentor groups are aligned with advising groups and Peer Mentors (upper-class students who mentor first-year students during orientation and throughout their first year) are in contact with all first-year students over the summer, reinforcing the College's academic expectations.

**Major Advising**: Once students declare a major; the chair of their major department or program assigns them to a member of the department who usually remains the student's advisor until she or he graduates.

As discussed in Standard 8, whose second half dealt primarily with retention, the Student Satisfaction Inventory indicates that Washington College students, especially first year students, are very satisfied with their academic advising. And in the 2012 Orientation survey, 91% of first-year students indicated that their individual meeting with their academic advisor during orientation was "good" or "excellent.”

### Academic Resource Areas

In April 2009, the academic resource areas—the Writing Center, Math Center (since renamed the Quantitative Skills Center), and Office of Academic Skills—participated in a joint external review of their support services. Prior to this review, the College engaged in a major review of its writing programs, including the Writing Center. The Writing Task Force delivered its report, *Teaching Writing at Washington College*, in January 2007. And in 2007-2008, the Associate Provost and the then-Assistant Dean for Academic Resources conducted several focus groups with faculty in math, computer sciences, the natural sciences, psychology, economics, and business management to develop a better understanding of their students' needs for support and improvement of their quantitative skills. The concerns articulated in the Writing Task Force report and the focus groups on support for quantitative skills were echoed in the April 2009 external review of the academic resources areas.

The external reviewers provided a number of recommendations to insure the delivery of support services that would meet the demands of the current student population as well as prepare the centers to respond to requests for services as enrollment would grow. The Center directors
responded to the recommendations and presented the Office of the Provost with a list of priorities, steps for immediate responses, and a five-year plan that addressed the remaining recommendations for each support center.

The primary recommendations addressed staffing issues, budget support, and funding for professional development to meet the need for continued specialized training for professional staff in each center. To date, good progress has been made to address the recommendations and expand the services offered by each area. The progress of each center is discussed in the "Resources for Student Learning" section of Standard 3, the "Learning Resources and Facilities" section of Standard 11, and the "Basic Skills" section of Standard 13.

The Writing Center

The Washington College Writing Center offers individualized, peer facilitated writing sessions in a setting that encourages conversation, reflection and revision. It supports student writers by providing an environment within which they can grow and develop, build self-awareness and confidence, and form strategies for success in courses across the curriculum. Working with other student writers contributes to the peer consultants’ (writing tutors’) own intellectual growth, enriches their lives as students, and offers them valuable experiences that they take with them as they leave the College. Thus the Writing Center contributes to the College’s mission to develop in students the habits of analytic thought, clear communication, and aesthetic insight.

The Writing Center also works with other faculty and staff to provide support, professional development, and resources that contribute to the effectiveness of writing instruction at the College. By promoting writing as an essential element of instruction and learning, the Writing Center supports students’ intellectual development and contributes to the broader culture of writing at Washington College.

In 2012-2013, the Writing Center was staffed with two full-time professionals with advanced degrees in Literature and Composition, and seventeen trained peer-consultants. To prepare to apply as a peer-consultant, students must participate in and successfully complete a semester long course, EDU-490 Writing Center Theory and Pedagogy. The course is taught by the Director and the Assistant Director of the Writing Center.

To meet their mission and respond to the needs of the campus community, the Writing Center tracks trends in student usage through an online scheduling platform, WCOnline, which was implemented in 2011. This tool allows the Center to determine peak usage times from semester to semester and to collect demographic information about student users. Information about student usage is provided in the Center’s annual report each year. The data is used to drive decisions about staffing and schedules for each semester.

Over the past three years, the Center has experienced a consistent and significant increase in student usage. There was an additional 12% overall increase in 2011-12 and a further overall increase of 21% in 2012-13.

The Center continues to address the recommendations outlined in the External Review report from 2009 and has met the demand for increased services by expanding both locations and hours, and has received additional budget support from the Provost’s Office when necessary.

The Center has responded to demand for services by steadily increasing the number of tutoring hours offered each semester. In Fall 2010, the Center offered 65 hours of available tutoring time per week; in fall of 2012, 79 hours per week. The Center has also responded by making tutoring more accessible for students by adding new locations and times; drop-in evening hours Monday through Thursday in the Literary House from 6:30-8:30, and scheduled tutoring hours in the Miller Library on Sundays from 4:30-8:30 p.m.

Additionally, the staff of the Center has created outreach efforts that provide additional support for students and faculty beyond one-on-one tutoring. Peer consultants are available for in-class writing activities such as peer review, introduction to citation methods and rough draft instruction; this kind of support has been shown to be valuable to the First-Year Writing Program.

Peer tutoring is a high yield/low expenses proposition. As enrollment and demand for services increases, continued and additional budget support for tutor salaries and professional development need to increase accordingly. The College recognizes that it is essential to provide appropriate funding for the Center’s needs. Based on the projected total expenses for 2012-13, spending and budgetary support in this category increased by 62.5% over the past three years.

The Writing Center Annual Report 2011-2012 provides data about repeat student usage and usage among particular populations, indicates increased student usage of the Writing Center in general across three years (p. 2), survey data on general student user satisfaction (pp. 13-14), survey data on frequent users’ perception of improvement (p. 14), survey data on alumni who served as peer writing tutors and their perception of how the work influenced their performance during and after college (p. 15-16), and a statistical analysis of first-year frequent user performance compared to non-users in terms of current GPA and academic standing as well as High School GPA and SAT scores.

The Quantitative Skills Center

The Quantitative Skills Center provides support to students in any class that has a quantitative component. Students from Math, Computer Science, Physics, Business, Economics, Chemistry, Biology, Sociology and Psychology classes use the Quantitative Skills Center. In addition to individual appointments, the Center provides daily “drop-in” sessions Mondays through Thursdays as well as course-specific drop-in sessions in the evening.

The 2009 external review team made two recommendations for the QSC:

1. Reorganize the Center by placing the personnel and services under the auspices of the Academic Skills Center, or maintain a stand-alone Center with dual faculty appointment and Academic Resources appointment. The College chose to maintain the Center as a stand-alone Center and has successfully hired a full-time Director. The new Director is also a lecturer in the Department of Mathematics.

2. Hire more tutors who can facilitate the need for greater support in the area of quantitative reasoning across the disciplines.

3. The Center has increased the number of peer tutors from 5 in 2010-2011 to 17 in 2012-2013. Tutors are now available to cover
The addition of a full-time Director and more peer tutors has made it possible for the Center to respond to student needs and demands with expanded services and hours of operation providing greater opportunities for academic success.

The Center is centrally located on the first floor of the Miller Library, providing easy access to both staff and tutors as well as adequate space for students needing assistance. Current course textbooks and solution manuals are available at the Center, and new computer hardware and software have been added in response to student and faculty demands.

Using WCOnline, the on line scheduling platform, the Quantitative Skills Center tracks trends in student usage, collects data on peak usage times each semester, and collects demographic information about student users. The data helps drive decisions about staffing and schedules for each semester. The Center maintains records and data on class, course and weekly usage. Tutor evaluations are conducted on an on-going basis and surveys on student and faculty satisfaction with the Center are conducted.

The 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 annual reports indicate that, despite periods when the Center was staffed with fewer tutors and no Director, student satisfaction with the Center remained very high. The 2012-2013 annual report summarizes the efforts of the new Director of the Quantitative Skills Center to immediately improve services to students. Results from these surveys, data from WCOnline, and anticipated annual enrollment growth indicates that demand for services will continue to increase.

The Quantitative Skills Center had its highest usage in history in 2012-2013. A full time director, increased advertising, diverse staff and more course offerings led to this success. The following graphs are yearly totals for unique student visits and total number of visits for the last five years:

* Figure 9.1: Unduplicated Headcount of Visits to Quantitative (Math) Skills Center

* No data for the student-run 2011-2012 academic year.

* Figure 9.2: Number of Total Visits to Quantitative (Math) Skills Center
In response, the QSC is making plans to increase services, add peer tutors and expand the hours of operation in 2013-14. The College has also increased funding for the QS Center:

Table 9.1: Quantitative Skills Center Budget – 2010 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total QS Center Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>$ 6,049.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>10,215.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>10,915.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>18,663.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These additional funds have been used almost exclusively to support additional hours for student peer tutors in the QS Center.

The Office of Academic Skills

The Office of Academic Skills provides quality academic support services that enable students to become active and independent learners. In support of Washington College’s liberal arts mission, the Office seeks to create an environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, values and commitments necessary for academic success.

The 2009 external review team made a number of recommendations for improving services and professional development within the OAS. Recommendations included:

- Changing the College’s policy for obtaining and providing note takers who need such assistance
- Hiring an administrative assistant and additional student tutors and workers for students
- Continued professional development for the Director of OAS
- Creating formal policies and procedures for serving students with disabilities
- Establishing a campus ADA Committee
- Partnering with academic departments to provide study skills, test taking and time management skills for students
- Reorganizing the OAS website
- Developing a pre-fall learning strategies course for new students

Following a difficult period in Fall 2011, when the Director left unexpectedly and the Office of Academic Skills had to be staffed with temporary personnel while we searched for a new director, the OAS has implemented almost all of these recommendations. Most importantly, we added a professional staff position, the Assistant Director of Academic Skills, in August 2012 and reconceptualized the Director’s position to focus on providing services for students with disabilities, renaming the position Director of Disability Service and the Office of Academic Skills. The Assistant Director is responsible for most of the other academic support services, including peer tutoring and the Course Mentor (supplemental instruction) program.

The OAS has also changed the College’s policy for obtaining and providing note takers so that they are available only as an ADA accommodation for qualified students, are required to do online note taker training, and are paid a standard stipend each semester. In addition, note taking services are discontinued for students who fail to pick up their notes for more than three weeks. With the money saved by these changes to the note taker policy, the OAS has expanded its offerings in peer tutoring and the Course Mentor program.

The Director and Assistant Director have collaborated on a pre-fall learning strategies course for new students, which we have presented to students as one of several optional Pre-Orientation Experiences. This three-day program includes self-assessment and sessions on time-management, planning, study strategies and assistive technology. Student participants practice these strategies using materials such as syllabi and textbooks from the fall courses they are enrolled in. In the evenings, these students join the participants in the other Pre-Orientation
Experiences for fun social events.

The OAS has also been instrumental in the College’s work of creating a campus ADA Committee. The Director is the College’s ADA/504 Officer and we have recently appointed two 504/ADA Associate Coordinators, one of whom is the Associate Dean of Students and Director of Residence Life; the other is a staff member in Human Resources. In Spring 2013 an ad-hoc group consisting of the College’s Chief of Staff, Vice-President for Student Affairs, Associate Provost, Director of Human Resources, Director of Athletics, and the Director of Disability Service and the Office of Academic Skills conducted a thorough review of the College’s policies and procedures for disability services, including Title IX and disability grievance procedures. Procedures for accessing accommodations and services were reviewed and updated and a new grievance procedure was created and implemented. Plans for training for the Director of Disability Service and the Office of Academic Skills in her role as ADA/504 Officer and for the ADA/504 Associate Coordinators are underway.

Like the Writing Center and the Quantitative Skills Center, the Office of Academic Skills has seen considerable increase in demand for its services in recent years, as the chart below indicates on a number of measures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students w/ disabilities registered</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual ADA appointments</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams administered</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>1064</td>
<td>1369</td>
<td>1522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students peer tutored</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses w/ Course Mentors</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment data indicates Washington College students are generally very satisfied with the College’s support for their academic success. For example, the Spring 2010 administration of the Student Satisfaction Inventory showed that academic advising is second in importance only to instructional effectiveness, with student centeredness and concern for the individual tied for third in importance.

When comparing the importance of these areas and students’ ratings of their satisfaction with them, the performance gap (difference between importance and satisfaction) for academic advising was 0.62, the second lowest performance gap for eleven areas of importance. The lowest performance gap, 0.51, was for campus support services, which was ranked tenth in importance.

A comparison with other national, four-year private institutions (such as the Carnegie Classification) shows that Washington College students are significantly more satisfied with their academic advising, the College’s student centeredness and the campus support services. Among those areas identified as campus strengths (items with high importance and high satisfaction), second in this list was “My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major;” ninth was “My academic advisor is approachable” and eleventh was “My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.”

In the 2009 administration of the NSSE, “Among the highest rated areas for freshmen and seniors are that the College is successful in providing support needed for them to succeed academically.” And in the 2012 NSSE, 88% of first year students felt that Washington College “provides substantial support for their academic success.”

Outcomes measures also indicate that the academic resources areas are significantly contributing to students’ academic success. For example, in courses with Course Mentors, grades of students who attend the Course Mentor sessions are higher than those of students who do not. In Fall 2012, average course grade of those who attended the sessions was 2.83 and of non-attenders was 2.73. For Spring 2013, attenders’ average grade was 2.82 and non-attenders’ was 2.65. For 2010-2011, attenders’ average grade was 2.67 and non-attenders’ average grade was 2.55.

The Writing Centers’ Analysis of Writing Center Frequent User Performance, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, and Fall 2011, shows similar results for the freshmen cohort of Fall 2010 and Fall 2011. This detailed study of outcomes for those two groups of freshmen showed that:

“Frequent and infrequent participation in the Writing Center are statistically significant and positive predictors of overall term GPA in Fall 2010, controlling for high school grades, SATV, SATM and gender” and “infrequent participation in the Writing Center is a statistically significant and positive predictor of grades in either ENG-101 or GRW-101” (the two required first-year writing courses).

Global Education

The Washington College Global Education Office coordinates study abroad programs for currently enrolled students interested in spending a semester or academic year abroad and is the main support center for matriculated international students and visiting and exchange students.

Consistent with the office’s mission to provide opportunities and engagement with cultures and communities locally and around the world, Washington College offers qualified international citizens admission to our Chestertown campus, and has developed a variety of off campus and study abroad programs for all currently enrolled students. The College has partnerships with 32 educational institutions in 22 countries on 6 continents. These programs vary in length and academic emphasis with the goal of providing academic rigor in educational systems whose values and teaching methods are reflective of the host country.

While the College is committed to the philosophy that a “student’s educational experience is enriched by spending one or two semesters in a foreign country,” we also recognize that for various reasons, not all students are able to spend a full semester studying off-campus. With this in mind, the Global Education Office assists faculty in the developing and offering intensive travel/study experiences during the summer and semester breaks for which students can earn academic credit. The College currently offers six intensive study/travel programs led by faculty members and open to all majors.
The Modern Languages department and the International Studies program consider study abroad an essential component of the academic experience and require majors to spend at least one semester abroad. The Business Management department also requires that its majors complete a global capital requirement; a semester of study abroad is one way to satisfy that requirement. Each department identifies the programs that best fit the academic goals for their majors and works cooperatively with the Global Education Office to coordinate the academic coursework at the host institution for each of their majors.

The number of students and percentage of the graduating class who have studied abroad has varied somewhat, although recent increases in these numbers and percentages since 2008 have tapered off slightly for the classes of 2011 and 2012, which we believe is a reflection of changes in families’ economic situations since 2008 making it somewhat less financially feasible for them to afford students’ study abroad.

### Table 9.3: Unduplicated Headcount of Student Study Abroad Experiences – 2008 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Of...</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of grads who studied abroad</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of grads</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of class who studied abroad</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Global Education Office also provides proper preparation for departure and clearly articulated goals and expectations and thorough advising on appropriate academic coursework to be taken at the study abroad institution. The Global Education Office recently undertook three initiatives to promote study abroad and insure that students were making informed decisions about appropriate programs and were prepared for their time away from campus. (Please see Assessment Data, Student Support Offices, 2012, pages 16 – 20.) The Global Education Office was successful in streamlining the application process for study abroad applicants, provided transparency on the transfer of credits and grades from partner institutions, and revised both the pre-departure and re-entry offerings for participants.

Washington College has recently had a significant increase in the number of international students matriculating at the College to earn a degree.

### Table 9.4: Number of International Students by Type – 2009 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UG International Students</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matriculated</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Global Education Office has greatly increased its services to these students. The new Assistant Director for International Student Services, who came to the College in August 2012, has organized more events and trips off campus for these students, including our first ever overnight trip, to New York City, and has worked very closely with the Director, colleagues in the academic resources areas, and faculty to ensure that international students get the academic support they need.

The College has also created a part-time position for an ESL instructor and offered ELL 101: English for Academic Purposes, a two-credit course, for the first time in 2012-13. The students in ELL 101 were also enrolled in a section of ENG 101 set aside for them and taught by Professor Alisha Knight, who has a background in ESL and was able to adapt her teaching of a standard section of ENG 101 to their needs. The ESL instructor also provided training to Writing Center tutors on working with ESL students and the Writing Center assigned a tutor to Professor Knight’s section of ENG 101. Planning is underway to expand the ESL program by creating ELL 102: English for Academic Purposes II. A new Assistant Director of the Writing Center, who has considerable background and expertise in ESL, began in August 2013. But at this point, additional staff, such as a full-time instructor in ESL, will be required if the number of international students needing ESL support increases beyond its current level.

### Support for Health, Social and Life Skills Development

#### Health Services

Health Services is an on-campus clinic which provides medical services to full time students. All students are required to complete a health questionnaire, have a physical exam, and meet immunization requirements before their enrollment at Washington College. Since our campus borders that of the Chester River Hospital Center, we also rely on their services for dealing with student health and counseling emergencies. There is no charge for a visit to the Health Service. However there is a minimal charge for medications, vaccines and lab tests. Health Services operates in compliance with federal and state HIPPA requirements.

Health Services also provides health and wellness education. Many brochures, pamphlets and other publications are available for students in the Health Center and Health Services staff are available to help student groups with health-related programming. Health Services also provides health programs such as a smoking-cessation program. In 2008-09, Health Services instituted an annual Internal Student Satisfaction/Experience Survey, administered to all students who visited the Health Service in February. They also rely on the College’s Senior “Cap and Gown” Survey done each year at graduation rehearsal, specifically the item “Quality of Administrative Services.” They also do Medical Record Reviews to identify specific areas to target in the next year.

The most recent comprehensive Medical Record Review was done in 2009. This review determines whether Health Services is properly maintaining and managing student health records by evaluating forty randomly chosen student health charts on 23 benchmarks, such as “Tests are filed in chart and notation made the results were given to patient,” “Assessment plans noted by provider can be supported by clinical evidence,” and “Charts were clearly organized and easily accessible.” The second review is due in 2015.
findings,” and “provides and documents follow up when indicated.” Results show that 90% or more of these records met the indicated benchmark for ten of the benchmarks (100% of the charts met five of these ten benchmarks). Areas requiring improvement, as indicated by a low percentage of records meeting the benchmark, were “Entries dated and signed with title included,” “Snellen eye exam documented when cc: ‘eye complaint,’” and diagnosis on patient record matches the diagnosis on the encounter form.” In January 2013, the Director of Health Services also did a smaller-scale Medical Record Review of the charts done by the newest nurse practitioner.

As a result of these record reviews, Health Services implemented a new visit documentation form that better captures important medical information and better ensures its proper charting.

Health Services also surveys student users about their experience. The most recent Health Services Survey was done in February 2012, when 112 students completed the survey. The survey asks about the student’s experience of the waiting area, staff and services, including health education. Items include “The Health Services staff were courteous and helpful,” “My health care provider understood my problem and answered my questions,” and “As a result of my contact with Health Services, I am more likely to choose behaviors that promote health and reduce risks.” Results show that users are generally very satisfied with their experience, including important outcomes such as “I had to return to Health Services because my symptoms worsened,” on which only 15.18% said yes, and “As a result of my contact with Health Services, I have a better understanding of what to do when I get sick and I feel comfortable accessing health care,” on which 61.61% said yes.

In the past year, Health Services has improved its work with students by doing more to explain diagnoses and offering students written prescriptions (instead of dispensing medicine directly from the clinic) so that students can take more responsibility for their health care. They have also begun sending to students and parents an interactive wellness magazine, Student Health 101, to get health information topics out to as wide an audience as possible. Health Services staff has increased their interactions with key student groups by participating in the training of Resident Assistants and Peer Mentors, in orientation for international students and in the “Safe and Secure” orientation program that all new students attend.

Health Services has seen a steady increase in total number of visits since 2007-08.

Table 9.5: Visits to Health Services – 2002 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total HS Visits</th>
<th>Employee HS Visits</th>
<th>Counseling Center Visits (Students)</th>
<th>Counseling Center Visits (Employees)</th>
<th>Psychiatrist Visits</th>
<th>ER Visits</th>
<th>Alcohol-Related Visits</th>
<th>ER Admissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>3,508</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>702</td>
<td></td>
<td>99</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>3,119</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>603</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>2,211</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>2,727</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>714</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>2,963</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>732</td>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>2,432</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>829</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>2,679</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>1,023</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>2,904*</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>839</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>2,817</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>1,167</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>3,068</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Does not include H1N1 Vaccine Clinics held in Hodson Hall Commons

Despite the increase in student visits to Health Services—from 2817 in 2010-2012 to 3068 in 2011-2012, the staff was nonetheless able to continue their outreach efforts across campus.

Counseling Services

Counseling Services provides a safe and structured environment in which students can explore various aspects of their emerging adult lives—dependence, values, personal goals, intimacy and friendship. Counseling Services staff help students learn new coping skills, set goals, solve problems, make decisions, and manage stress. They collaborate with other campus departments (such as Academic Resources, Career Services, Residence Life, Health Center) when appropriate and with the student’s permission.

The staff is experienced in helping students who are depressed, anxious or have other psychological disorders; they also work with students about relationship issues, assertion, eating and body image concerns and trauma. Students who are lonely or homesick, who experience stress, who have concerns about their families and who want help in better managing their time also consult Counseling Services.

All services are provided without charge to students and are confidential. All information remains in the Center and is not shared with parents, faculty or other staff of the College without written permission from the student. Counseling Services operates in compliance with federal and state HIPAA requirements.

Counseling Services relies on several indirect indicators on campus-wide surveys for assessment of its work. These surveys include the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and our graduating seniors survey.

Counseling Services also mailed a survey to all students who received services from the Center at the end of spring semester, 2009. The following items were rated on a scale of 1-5.

- I was treated courteously by the secretary/receptionist
- I was treated courteously by the therapist I saw
- I felt the therapist was appropriately concerned about my problem
- The therapist seemed well trained and skilled in helping me with my concern
- The therapist helped me to be comfortable enough to express what I was thinking and/or
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Student surveys

In 2012, the Office of Residence Life reported the following assessment results: 69% identified that they were "satisfied" with the availability of their RA. 70% identified that they felt comfortable approaching any RA for assistance.

The grand mean was 4.56 out of 5, a very high level of satisfaction with service delivery.

The Cap and Gown survey asks our graduating seniors to rate their satisfaction with a variety of campus services, including Counseling Services, asking them whether they are "very dissatisfied," "generally dissatisfied," "generally satisfied" or "very satisfied." Over the last three years, student satisfaction with counseling services has remained consistently high with the mean scores (1 = very unsatisfied; 4 = very satisfied) as follows: 3.29 in 2011, 3.22 in 2012 and 3.32 in 2013.

The Noel-Levitz Satisfaction Inventory, administered in Fall 2007 and Spring 2010 showed a significant increase on the item "Counseling staff care about students as individuals," from a satisfaction score of 5.15 in 2007 to a score of 5.47 in 2010.

In 2011-12, the Counseling Center offered services to 308 distinct students. This accounts for only face-to-face scheduled/walk-in appointments, and does not include consultations with faculty and staff about student-related issues or after-hours calls or interventions. For our enrollment of 1450, this represents 21% of all students. The mean number of sessions per student was 4 and the median number was 5. Overall, counseling center visits have been increasing almost every year over the past decade and from 2010-11 to 2011-12 the number of visits increased from 1,167 to 1,367, an increase of 17%.

Residential Life

Washington College offers a residential experience for nearly all of its incoming students. During the 2010-2011 academic year, 99% of first-year students and 86% of the entire student population lived on campus in college housing. The residential experience is thus critical to inculcating students into a culture of the liberal arts.

Accordingly, the College offers residence opportunities for students in conjunction with curricular interests. There are theme-living opportunities for students interested in foreign language learning, the arts, international affairs, health and wellness. In addition, there has been a movement to equip study lounges with more materials (conference boards, projectors) to give students a place to explore collaborative learning.

The Residence Life staff is comprised of three professional staff members, one director and two area directors, as well as students who serve as resident assistants. Resident Assistants are selected as a result of their proven academic excellence and qualities of student leadership. A resident assistant must have a minimum 2.5 GPA overall, but the median GPA in 2011-2012 was 3.52. Four student committees oversee the residence life experience:

- Standards (which establishes expectations for student staff and clarifies policies)
- Training (which oversees training and training material for student staff)
- Programming (which defines expectations for resident assistant programming focusing on peer education, academic success, and student engagement)
- Recognition (which recognizes accomplishments to members of the community who contribute to the quality of residence life.)

Much of the process of establishing and overseeing protocols is student-driven, encouraging students to learn to live and work in partnership with others.

The Residence Life staff collaborates with Health Services, Dining Services, the Dean’s Office, Public Safety, and faculty in efforts to identify student needs, either academic or otherwise, and to connect students to the appropriate office for help.

The program is assessed through a student satisfaction survey distributed each semester, in which students rate their satisfaction with the community, programming, availability of support staff, and facilities. In 2009, the Office of Residence Life reported the following assessment results:

Resident Assistant Training Assessment: 98% of RA staff indicated they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with RA training. 96% felt that they were "very prepared" to do their jobs as a result of the training provided.

Housing Focus Group Assessment: The majority of respondents indicated that Chester and Sassafras Halls were the most sought after on campus. In second place were the Western Shore houses, including Hartford. This information shaped housing policy by precluding "squatting" from all houses in this area during the housing assignments process.

Resident Assistant survey by resident: 72% of respondents claimed that, if given the choice, they would like to have the same RA next year. 69% identified that they were "satisfied" with the availability of their RA. 70% identified that they felt comfortable approaching any RA for assistance.

In 2012, the Office of Residence Life reported the following assessment results:

Student surveys: Student surveys administered at the close of the Fall 2011 semester yielded the following (N=849 responses).

- 76% of respondents indicated that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the social quality of their floor community
- 68% of respondents indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their ability to do homework and study in their residence hall room with minimal to no distraction
- 84% of respondents indicated they were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with other students on their floor
- 80% of respondents indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the management of noise issues on their floor
90% of respondents who identified themselves as a “rising junior” or “rising senior” said they were “likely” or “very likely” to choose to live on-campus for the 2012-2013 academic year.

85% of students indicated they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” seeking out their RA for assistance for social or educational matters.

Resident Assistant programming: 139 programs were completed during the Spring 2012 semester with a combined attendance of 1540 (this includes participation in Spring Fling). The instrument was given out to 500 students at random who participated in RA programming. When tallied, the surveys yielded the following information:

- 82% of respondents said they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the RA program they attended.
- 73% of respondents who attended education programs said they were “likely” or “highly likely” to apply what they learned at the program in their academic or personal life.
- 92% of respondents said they were “likely” or “very likely” to attend another RA program and bring a friend.
- 86% of respondents who attended weekend programming reported they were “interested” or “very interested” in attending residence hall based weekend programming (an increase over 79% last academic year).

The Resident Assistants are evaluated by the Area Directors in cooperation with the AADs (Assistant Area Directors). The majority of the RA staff either met or exceeded expectations.

As the College’s enrollments increase, so does the demand for student housing and for professional staff. In 2011, the College began housing students at Kent Crossing, a nearby rental apartment complex that borders the College campus, which has provided the College some flexibility as it grows. In 2011, 60 students lived in Kent Crossing; in 2012, 76 students were in Kent Crossing and in 2013 that number will increase to 86. There is a blueprint ready for an additional 100-bed residence hall, should enrollments stabilize to justify the construction of a new hall and should the demand outstrip availability at the apartment complex.

The Peer Mentor Program

The Peer Mentor program, established in 2001, is designed to provide personalized support for new students (first-year, transfer, and visiting internationals) in their academic and non-academic transition to Washington College. Peer Mentors are current students selected through a competitive application process and who go through comprehensive training to prepare them for their role. They work with new students throughout the summer prior to enrollment and throughout the academic year, working in both small groups and individually, to provide guidance, advice, mentoring and referral. They communicate closely with the academic advisors of their mentees as well as with the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and the Associate Provost in order to optimize intervention and assistance for new students who are at risk of not succeeding in or out of the classroom. Every year the Peer Mentors are assessed by their mentees through the orientation survey where new students rate their mentor in the following areas: Their ability to inform mentees about resources and support; their ability to develop rapport with the Peer Mentor group; and their success at presenting themselves as a positive role model. They rate the Peer Mentors on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = very effective; 2 = effective; 3 = ineffective; 4 = very ineffective). Below are the results since 2007, demonstrating that our new students rank their Peer Mentors very highly in these areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9.6: Rating of Peer Mentors by Mentees, 2007 to 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer Mentor Ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to inform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a rapport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present as role model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center for Career Development

The Center for Career Development serves students during and after their time at the College. Incoming students participate in the First-Year Career Awareness Program, which helps students communicate their interests and skills as a means to connect their studies to a future of fulfilling and meaningful work. Other programs, like Washington College to Wall Street, internships, and alumni mentoring, enable students to learn how to work on their own and with others in a professional setting. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors who participate in internships that are not for academic credit are asked to complete an internship survey.

As noted in Chapter 7, in order to assess the post-graduate plans of our students, the offices of Career Services and Institutional Research administer the Cap and Gown survey every spring to the current class of graduating seniors. Career Services does a follow-up survey six months after graduation to obtain updated information. The College has also begun surveys of our alumni five years out to obtain information about students’ educational and employment outcomes.

Results from these various instruments show that our placement rates are quite high. Sixty-one percent of our students are employed or are enrolled in graduate school at graduation. Eighty-five percent of our graduates are employed or are admitted into graduate school six months after graduation. Based on a current survey of mid-career alumni, 37% hold executive leadership positions in government, business, and non-profit organizations and institutions. While in school, 65% of our students conduct an internship.

2009 Assessment and 2012 Assessment shows that the Center for Career Development has made progress in providing career services to students. In the future, however, the Center for Career Development will need additional staff if the size of the student body increases. The Center also regularly assesses its programs and workshops based on student learning outcomes. This information is included and reviewed in the Center’s annual report.

Student Activities

The Office of Student Activities (OSA) oversees on-campus student programming with a commitment to student learning, personal development, and the enhancement of student life. The OSA works with the Student Events Board (a student group), to engage students in the...
The OSA keeps track of student attendance at each of its events. Compared to its 2009 assessment activities, the Office of Student Activities has a more robust assessment plan in place since 2012. In 2012, the office documented attendance at 58 events, ranging from 1231 students at the Homecoming Dance and 1786 at Birthday Ball to several smaller-scale events with 20 students attending. In the spring of 2013 the office launched what will become an end-of-semester survey of students about their attendance at, perceptions of quality of, and suggestions for, future events.

Several campus-wide assessments have illustrated an increased student satisfaction with the student center and student social life since 2007. Not surprisingly, student satisfaction on the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) on the item “The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time” jumped from a mean of 4.78 in 2007 to a mean of 6.02 in 2010, the largest jump in satisfaction of the 73 items that comprise the inventory. This was primarily due to the renovations and construction of the new Hudson Student Center in 2008. Another area that showed an increase in satisfaction from 2007 to 2010 in the SSI included an item on the ease of involvement in campus organizations where the mean improved from 5.53 in 2007 to a mean of 5.73 in 2010. An item in the The Cap and Gown survey, administered to graduating seniors, asked students to rate their satisfaction with social life on campus. On the scale where 1 = very unsatisfied and 4 = very satisfied, the mean was 3.08 in 2011, 3.17 in 2012, and 3.15 in 2013.

In the future, if the size of the student body were to increase, the OSA will need increased funding for events and additional staffing. These increases will be especially important for developing additional programs to help students develop leadership skills.

**Office of Multicultural Affairs**

The Office of Multicultural Affairs is committed to creating an inclusive environment essential for all students’ cultural development and academic success. The office provides programming to guide students to develop an appreciation for other cultures through the five stages of the Racial/Cultural Minority Identity Development Model.

The Office uses data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to measure its influence on an institutional level. In addition, it keeps track of usage of the office with a sign-in policy, and it records the number of participants in its programs and surveys the participants with respect to its learning outcomes. Additional assessment efforts are taking shape as well. The office will utilize a student satisfaction survey at the end of each year starting in 2013-2014. The survey will ask students to evaluate the office’s programs and services. The survey will also ask students to make any recommendations for future programs and improvement.

Going forward, all programs and training through the office will be evaluated through online and paper surveys. The intent will be to monitor student progress with respect to the office’s learning goals: to develop in students an understanding of their own culture and an appreciation for other cultures and to help students engage in respectful and cooperative dialogues around issues of diversity and multiculturalism.

In 2012, the OMA reported that “as a way of keeping track of how many students, faculty, and staff utilize the office, the office has implemented a sign-in policy as an assessment tool. At the end of each month, the numbers are tabulated and included in the end-of-year report in June. This was started during the 2008-2009 academic year.” In 2012, there were approximately 120 individuals who visited the office. This number includes students who came in for academic advising, planning meetings, and student organization meetings, and visitors to the college.

The Office’s most pressing needs for future growth come from the lack of space for students to gather. Currently, there is no meeting space for student groups in the office; thus, there is no gathering place for underrepresented students to congregate, and this poses challenges for developing a sense of belonging and for retaining these students.

**Student Development Programs**

The Office of Student Development provides a wide-range of programming and support to students in the following areas: drug and alcohol education and prevention; sexual assault education and prevention; Greek Life; and community service. Alcohol and drug education begins for all new students when they take Alcohol.Edu, an online course which provides students with general information about alcohol and its effects and decision-making strategies about alcohol use. Students take the course over the summer before arriving on campus in the fall. Follow up education and programming regarding alcohol is delivered throughout the first year by Peer Mentors through a discussion session during orientation, by Resident Assistants through hall programs, and directly from the Office of Student Development through speakers and programs targeted directly at student groups. The Office also coordinates the annual “Remember the Ball” campaign in conjunction with George Washington’s Birthday Ball in February. The campaign includes campus-wide education about responsible alcohol consumption and an incentive program for students who commit to either abstaining from alcohol completely or consuming responsibly at Birthday Ball. The director also conducts educational meetings with students who have been referred because of low level alcohol offenses and, when appropriate, refers some of those students to the counseling center for additional support.

The office also provides significant and on-going support for students involved in Greek life and community service. The director meets regularly with student leaders in these areas and provides guidance and appropriate support for educational programming and the general administration of those student organizations. Additionally, the director of student development serves as the advocate for student victims of sexual assault, harassment, or discrimination.

The assessment plan for this office is somewhat complex given its many areas of focus. The director is responsible for completing the federally mandated biennial review of the College’s alcohol and other drug programs and policies. The office also administers the CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey every other year. This survey measures student use and perceptions around alcohol and other drugs and enables the office to develop and tailor education initiatives that will address students’ habits and attitudes. Students participating in community service complete a survey about their service hours and experiences and the office coordinates with the Student Government Association to track service hours for student clubs and organizations. In Greek life, members of each year’s incoming recruitment class complete a qualitative survey about their experiences, and the data is used by the director to work with Greek organizations on improving their recruitment practices.
Athletics Program

The athletics program offers a range of varsity and club-level sports at Washington College as well as physical fitness and recreational activities for the entire campus. Its motto is:

"Educate through sport."

Participation in varsity athletics has increased in recent years, from 310 total participants in 2007-08 to 343 participants in 2011-12, which represents 23% of the total student population. Additionally, the athletics program has an increased awareness of how its offerings in club-level sports and recreational activities impact student satisfaction and retention; over the past decade, the program has invested in facilities, coaches and staff members, programming and communication to better serve an expanded population as a result of growths in participation and student enrollment.

The facilities connected to the athletics program have seen significant changes since 2003. These include:

- Construction of new artificial turf, lit stadium facility (Roy Kirby, Jr. Stadium) for five varsity sports, intramurals, and other events
- Renovated Cain basement locker rooms
- Construction of new softball facility
- Significant renovations and upgrades to baseball facility (Athey Park)
- Renovations to various areas of Cain Athletic Center (including locker rooms, basketball/volleyball playing venue, offices)
- Resurfacing of Schottland Tennis Center Courts
- Expansion of Truslow Boat House
- Significant expansion of Johnson Fitness Center weight/cardio facility and equipment, upgrades to Johnson Fitness Center Field House
- Upgrades to Casey Swim Center
- Additional practice fields

By upgrading the facilities, the athletics program has been able to increase the kind and number of co-curricular activities for athletes and non-athletes alike. The program has taken advantage of the College’s waterfront location and expanded “Adventure Activities” related to the Chesapeake Bay region, including rockfishing, crabbing, waterskiing, camping and biking. Student interest waterskiing and skeet/trap shooting has led to expanded club sport opportunities, while the intramural sports program has grown to include nighttime practices and games on the turf at Kibler Field. Supplementing these activities has been the addition of a second full-time Strength and Conditioning position, an assistant trainer and a second full-time athletic communications position.

Students at Washington College work through the athletics program to facilitate the annual State Bocce Ball Tournament and annual Regional Kayak event with the Special Olympics as well as partner with Kent County-based Character Counts to introduce student-athlete Character Counts Coaches in local schools. In addition, the athletics program served as the nexus for the creation of the College’s first-ever mascot, “Gus,” designed to both boost school spirit and better integrate the College with the Chestertown community; Gus is available to visit schools, hospitals and other local organizations, all of whom have taken advantage of the service.

For student athletes, the program supports a total of 17 men’s, women’s, and coed varsity teams in the following sports:

- baseball (men’s)
- basketball (men’s and women’s)
- field hockey (women’s)
- lacrosse (men’s and women’s)
- rowing (men’s and women’s); sailing (coed)
- soccer (men’s and women’s)
- softball (women’s)
- swimming (men’s and women’s)
- tennis (men’s and women’s)
- volleyball (women’s)

There are seven head coaches for the men’s teams, nine head coaches for the women’s teams, and one head coach for the coed sailing team.

The Athletics Program supports student athletes’ academic performance in several important areas. Coaches monitor class attendance and mandate attendance in study halls. Furthermore, coaches receive the grades of student-athletes and follow up with those placed on academic probation; coaches may also encourage improvement in attendance and performance by taking away practice or playing time for those failing to meet expectations. Coaches receive training on academic resources, college academic policies, and ways of mentoring students with academic difficulties. The program also supports the social adjustment of new students by meeting with all freshmen athletes to discuss expectations; coaches also meet with the parents of incoming first-year athletes to discuss expectations and the adjustment to college life.

Recent improvements to the Athletics Program’s support for student athletes’ academic performance, as detailed below in response to a departmental external review, have shown good results. In Fall 2009, 187 (54% of varsity athletes) student-athletes achieved a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Nine student-athletes were named to the Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll for fall sports, and five student-athletes were named to the Fall All-Centennial Conference team for their respective sport. One fall-sport student-athlete also earned All-Region honors.

In comparison, in Fall 2012, 232 of 378 (61% of varsity athletes) student-athletes had a semester grade point average of 3.0 or above during the fall semester. Sixteen fall-sport student-athletes were named to the Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll and 11 winter-sport student-athletes have qualified for the Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll. To qualify for Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll, student-athletes must be a sophomore, junior or senior with a cumulative grade point average of 3.4 or above and have played in at least 50% of their team’s contests and/or competed in a conference championship event.

Primary assessment data for the Athletics program comes from:

- Assessment data and recommendations having to do with the recruitment of and financial aid for student-athletes from an external review of Admissions and Financial Aid done by consultants from Scannell and Kurz, Inc., in 2010.

Outcomes of the review and departmental assessment since 2011 include:

- The Athletics Department has developed a strategic plan and a fundraising plan and is developing a high performance Division II coaching plan. Additionally a summer recruiting fund was established to support coaches in recruiting efforts.
- Salaries of Head Coaches were raised and moved from 10-month to 12-month employees.
- Two new positions were created and filled so there are no two-sport coaches other than swimming and tennis (whose coaches coach both the men's and women's team in the same sport).
- Adjustments were made to the administrative structure of the Athletics Department so that the Senior Women's Administrator was made one of the College's Title IX Assistant Coordinators, was assigned an official role in the Student Athlete Conflict Resolution Process, has an official role in the annual student-athlete orientation process and is included in all head coach hiring searches.
- In order to facilitate greater communication between the Athletics Department and the academic program, the Sports Information Director was named Academic Liaison for the Athletics Department.
- A commitment was made to consistent branding and logos on athletic materials.
- A significant reduction in trips taken via vans by athletic teams.
- Restructuring of departmental organizational chart to broaden and extend administrative duties beyond only the athletic director.
- The Athletics Department uses the College's new employee evaluation form that better allows for the inclusion of coaches and staff's goals and objectives as measurements of success.

Recommendations having to do with the recruitment of and financial aid for student athletes in an external review of Admissions and Financial Aid done by consultants from Scannell and Kurz, Inc., in 2010 were:

1. As a pilot program, provide estimated packages based on the FAFSA for a subpopulation of students (for example, athletic recruits, low need students, etc.). In addition, ensure that Athletics is aware of that if there are teams who face stiff competition from early decision schools, “early reads” are available based on an early needs analysis form that includes appropriate caveats.

2. Admissions staff and coaches should be trained to more effectively present the case for affordability and value.

In response to this review and to campus-wide retention strategies, the Athletics Department has changed its recruiting efforts. Coaches have worked with Admissions to increase early decision recruits by targeting and expanding geographic boundaries. A recruiting trainer/consultant was hired and each sport has a recruiting coordinator within their staff while coaches have implemented use of Front Rush, a recruiting and communication software service. A key change in recruitment strategy has involved moving away from the practice of recruiting larger numbers of students, some of whom might then be cut early in their first year. Instead, the athletics program has shifted to focus on recruiting for athletics rather than for admissions. Coaches now clearly communicate with a prospective athlete whether he or she is considered a roster commit, a recruited walk on, or a walk on. A “roster commit” means that the recruit is guaranteed a spot on the team for the first year. Athletics has also introduced the Scholar-Athlete Career Development program, in partnership with the Career Center, to better track and articulate the career goals of student-athletes; the program has also established the “George Plays with Integrity” program to proactively prevent hazing among student athletes.

This refocusing of recruiting and attention to student satisfaction has improved retention among student athletes and has increased the coaches’ accountability for their recruiting. This result for retention is borne out by exit interviews and exit questionnaires done by withdrawing students. The number of students who in exit interviews with the Associate Provost cite dissatisfaction with their athletic experience as a result for their withdrawal has declined from eight students in 2009-10 and ten in 2010-11 to none in 2012-13.

As the athletics program has expanded with the increase in student enrollment, so too has the need to share game and meet outcomes as well as publicize the program as a whole. Staffing positions including Coordinator of Athletics Statistics and Media Services as well as a part-time communication software service. A key change in recruitment strategy has involved moving away from the practice of recruiting larger numbers of students, some of whom might then be cut early in their first year. Instead, the athletics program has shifted to focus on recruiting for athletics rather than for admissions. Coaches now clearly communicate with a prospective athlete whether he or she is considered a roster commit, a recruited walk on, or a walk on. A “roster commit” means that the recruit is guaranteed a spot on the team for the first year. Athletics has also introduced the Scholar-Athlete Career Development program, in partnership with the Career Center, to better track and articulate the career goals of student-athletes; the program has also established the “George Plays with Integrity” program to proactively prevent hazing among student athletes.

Student Grievance Processes and Statistics

Student grievance processes and procedures are published in the student handbook, available in its entirety online and in print in the “Handbook in Brief” distributed to all new students each year. After a review process conducted of the Honor Board (which consists of students, faculty and staff) that lasted over a year, these processes and procedures were revised in 2011-12. Another focus of this review was developing a more equitable and rigorous process for handling appeals of Honor Board findings and sanctions. Statistics on student grievances are kept by the Athletics Department.

Maintenance and Release of Student Records

The College's policies on maintenance and release of student records are published on the Registrar's Office website and in the College Catalog and the Student Handbook. These publications include details on students' rights under FERPA. The College Catalog and the Registrar's Office website also include information about transcript requests, enrollment verification requests and director information and privacy. Information about enrollment verification requests and director information and privacy is also included in the Student Handbook.
Students set their FERPA status and determine release of directory information via WebAdvisor, the online portal to their online records. Information about how to set these preferences is provided to all new students at Summer Advising in June or at the make-up Summer Advising day in August. Information about FERPA and directory information policies is also provided on WebAdvisor.

Student records in paper form are maintained in locked files in the Registrar’s Office and the Office of Student Affairs. Staff in these offices are trained to maintain the security of these files. In 2011-12, the Registrar’s Office upgraded its maintenance of student records on paper, including the purchase of fire-proof filing cabinets and the clarification of procedures for staff handling of student paper records.

Conclusion

Our Self-Study shows that Washington College has made significant improvements to student support since 2009. Increases in staffing and budgets have allowed us to provide more support to more students and the outcomes of specific offices and programs as well as measures such as the Student Satisfaction Inventory show that students are generally satisfied with the support they receive at the College, allowing us to be in full compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 9.

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Standard 10

Faculty

The institution's instructional, research, and service programs are devised, developed, monitored, and supported by qualified professionals.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College ensures a high quality faculty through our search process, our program of evaluation, and our program of faculty development. As discussed below, Washington College systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development. The effectiveness of all teaching faculty is evaluated by students and department chairs on a regular basis. The Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion (T&P) reviews tenure line faculty annually and tenured faculty when they are nominated for promotion.

Washington College's instructional, research, and service programs are developed, monitored, and supported by qualified faculty. In the Fall of 2012, the total number of faculty was 182. Of those, 102 were full-time faculty and 80 were part-time faculty. Ninety-four percent of those who are tenured or tenure-track hold terminal degrees (p. 15). In 2012, 51.6% of the faculty were tenured/FTE. The student faculty ratio has remained relatively constant over the period from 1998-2002 (12.5 to 12.7). As seen in Chart 10.1 below, the ratio increased from 12.0 in 2009 to 13.0 in 2010 but has steadily declined since to 12.2 in 2012.

Figure 10.1: Student/Faculty Ratio – Fall 2008 to Fall 2012

Ensuring a Faculty Comprised of Qualified Professionals

The Provost, who is advised by the Appointments Committee and faculty search committees, makes appointments of full-time faculty in consultation with the President as described in the Faculty Handbook. In the hiring of full-time tenure line faculty, every effort is made to ensure that offers are extended only to candidates with high potential for success in eventually earning tenure. The hiring of visiting full-time faculty on multiple year contracts mirrors the process for tenure line searches, but with singular emphasis on the quality of instruction. In consultation with the Dean and Provost, department chairs make part-time appointments. In hiring part-time faculty, department chairs are principally concerned with ensuring that the instructor will be successful in the classroom.

Washington College practices a rigorous process of review to ensure excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. This process, however, has lacked some clarity in recent years, and is therefore the subject of more focused attention in the Self-Study questions we take up below. In addition, the new Strategic Plan has identified the support and recruitment of "excellent teacher-scholars...committed to the distinctive character of a Washington College education" as one of eight focused goals. It is through these two lenses that we investigate ways we have been successful and unsuccessful at recruiting and developing our faculty.

In addition to its role in evaluating tenure line faculty, the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion is charged with advising the President on the size and shape of the Faculty as it relates to the quality of the academic program. In the past, this review was conducted annually within
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The working group collected data on each of the six questions from a variety of sources, including institutional data from the Office of

This self-study addresses six questions in ascertaining the College's compliance with Middle States Standard 10 - Faculty, and its success in meeting the goals, objectives and targets set forth in the College's Mission Statement and its 2006 Strategic Plan.

1. To what extent does faculty workload reflect an appropriate balance among teaching, service and scholarship? How have increased enrollments and academic expectations augmented faculty workloads?

2. To what extent does faculty workload impact our ability to have close connections and unhurried conversations with our students, as promised in our mission?

3. Are there sufficient financial and human resources available for faculty development at every stage of a faculty member’s career? To what extent do the available resources effectively promote or enhance faculty development?

4. How competitive are faculty salaries at every level? How does this impact recruitment and retention of faculty, as well as faculty morale?

5. Are the expectations for tenure and promotion clear and consistent? Is there sufficient guidance and mentoring for both tenure-track faculty and those who are post-tenure? How can these processes be improved upon and made more transparent?

6. Are the criteria for evaluating excellence in teaching clear and sufficient, and are they disseminated to the faculty regularly?

The working group collected data on each of the six questions from a variety of sources, including institutional data from the Office of
In addition to the volume of work, another concern is the makeup of that work. In the address workload pressures through release time have concentrated greater workload pressure on department chairs. Initiatives, the mentoring of senior capstone projects, junior leaves and sabbaticals. On the other hand, much of the work related to the hiring of non-tenure line faculty plays a similar dual role in relationship to course releases. On the one hand, adjunct hiring allows the disproportionate workload on tenure line faculty.

The student/faculty ratio rose to 13.0 but since that time has fallen back to 12:1 in 2012. While helpful in maintaining a low student/faculty ratio, members at Washington College were part-time, as compared to 51 of the 134 in 2006. In 2007 the student/faculty ratio was 11.4. In 2010 the desirable student/faculty ratio despite enrollment growth. According to the Washington College Fact Book, student enrollment increased from 1,222 in 2007 to 1,380 in 2010, and to 1,449 in 2012. Increased hiring of part-time and full-time non-tenure track faculty has, on the one hand, helped to maintain a relatively desirable student/faculty ratio despite enrollment growth. According to the Washington College Fact Book, in 2012, 77 of the 182 faculty members at Washington College were part-time, as compared to 51 of the 134 in 2006. In 2007 the student/faculty ratio was 11.4. In 2010 the student/faculty ratio rose to 13.0 but since that time has fallen back to 12:1 in 2012. While helpful in maintaining a low student/faculty ratio, part-time and non-tenure track faculty typically do not advise students, senior capstones, or perform other service work, creating a disproportionate workload on tenure line faculty.

The hiring of non-tenure line faculty plays a similar dual role in relationship to course releases. On the one hand, adjunct hiring allows the College to decrease faculty workload pressures by granting course releases for department chairs, chairs of major committees and college-wide initiatives, the mentoring of senior capstone projects, junior leaves and sabbaticals. On the other hand, much of the work related to interviewing, hiring, and reviewing non-tenure track faculty hired to replace these course releases falls to chairs. Thus the College’s efforts to address workload pressures through release time have concentrated greater workload pressure on department chairs.

In addition to the volume of work, another concern is the makeup of that work. In the 2012 faculty survey, faculty responded that they believed the appropriate balance between teaching, service and scholarship to be 55% teaching, 28% scholarship, and 17% service. When queried...
about their actual allocation of time to teaching, service and scholarship, faculty responded as follows: 57% teaching, 15% scholarship, and 29% service. While the responses indicated that faculty are spending about what they consider to be the appropriate amount of time teaching, they are sacrificing scholarship for service responsibilities by an almost inverse margin.

Faculty workload, particularly the time available for scholarship, was recognized in the College’s last strategic plan. The stated objective in Toward Eminence that, “Washington College will restructure faculty time and enhance faculty resources to increase the faculty’s engagement with individualized teaching and learning opportunities and its own research,” has been partially met (see discussion on Faculty Development below). However, faculty survey responses suggest that recent, unplanned growth and changes to the College’s governance structure have increased workload. Eighty-five percent of faculty responded that enrollment growth had noticeably changed their workload. The amount of time spent advising and grading were the most commonly cited reasons for increased workload. Though about half the faculty believe that the changes to co-governance have resulted in noticeable improvements in decision-making, nearly 60% of faculty surveyed indicated that recent changes to co-governance had significantly changed their workload. Only 31.4% said that increased academic expectations had impacted their workload.

Overall faculty workload was cited by faculty as the single greatest factor affecting negative morale. Forty-seven faculty ranked it as either first or second. Full professors identified workload and compensation (40.9% each) as the factors that had the greatest impact on morale, followed by service expectations and support for professional development. Associate professors overwhelmingly cited workload (65.4%), followed by compensation and service expectations, as the factors that had the greatest impact on morale. While there was greater variance among assistant professors, compensation (44.8%) was the most frequently cited factor impacting faculty morale, followed by workload.

Our Mission Statement declares that, “Un hurried conversation and close connections with an exceptional faculty and staff complement a broad curriculum of study.” Numerous institutional practices are in place to promote and sustain this mission objective including the following:

- Our Advising Policy as delineated in the Faculty Handbook
- Under the “Teaching ability” criterion relating to the granting of Academic Tenure, the Faculty Handbooks states, “Teaching will be understood to mean not only regular classroom teaching but also availability for informal instruction as well as supervision of independent studies, internships, and senior capstones.”
- The Senior Capstone Experience section of the Washington College Catalog states the following: “Faculty mentor students intensively as they work on the completion of their Senior Capstone Experiences.”

A number of academic departments encourage faculty-student collaborative research. Two examples drawn from the Washington College Catalog:

"The mission of the Chemistry Department at Washington College is to provide outstanding undergraduate education in the chemical sciences by integrating classroom instruction with laboratory experimentation, faculty-student collaborative research, and service opportunities.” - Department of Chemistry

"Students preparing for graduate or professional school are encouraged to work with Psychology Department faculty in a mentor-apprentice fashion no later than their third year; such work often culminates in faculty/student presentations at conferences or co-authored professional publications.” - Department of Psychology

Among the faculty who responded to the faculty survey, 94% indicated that the College is successfully delivering on its promise to offer students close connections with faculty. Seventy-two percent indicated that the College culture supported its stated mission of fostering student development through unhurried conversations. That said, faculty indicated that increased workload has raised concerns over whether the faculty can continue to honor these commitments. Specifically, increased student enrollment and increased college service obligations were identified in the 2012 faculty survey as the two greatest obstacles to honoring this aspect of our mission.

Given concerns over faculty workload and enrollment pressure, the College has added 12 new tenure track lines (plus 3 new full time teaching fellow lines) in the past 5 years. Further, our current strategic plan is centrally focused on advancing the distinctive character and quality of the academic program (see Goals 1, 2, 3, and 5, in particular). Enhanced administrative support for department chairs, increased faculty lines, and investments in the professional development of our faculty are therefore central elements of the Strategic Plan.

Faculty Compensation

Best practices related to salaries and compensation reflect our ongoing commitment to faculty and assist in the recruitment and retention of qualified tenure-track professionals. The College has a longstanding benchmark for faculty salaries. The current goal is for the all-ranks average of Washington College faculty salaries to meet or exceed the all-ranks average salary of faculty at private, independent undergraduate colleges (referred to as IIB private/independent in AAUP salary data).

In 2011-2012 the College gained a bit of ground over 2010-2011 in the all ranks comparison to national averages. The national all-ranks average for 2011-2012 faculty salaries was $77,849 and our all-ranks average was $73,511 (see 2011-2012 AAUP salary report). For the 2011-2012 academic year the College awarded across the board 4.0% salary increases to continuing faculty while the AAUP reports that increases at IIB private, independent colleges for continuing faculty were 2.9% for full professors, 3.4% for associate professors and 4.0% for assistant professors.

In April 2012 the Board of Visitors and Governors approved a change in benchmarking faculty salaries. The Board ratified a recommendation by President Reiss that the new benchmark be a rank by rank average of faculty at private, independent undergraduate colleges (IIB private/Independent in AAUP). In 2012, the faculty received a 1.5% salary increase. The 2012-2013 AAUP salary report shows that the College lost some ground in average salaries as increases at IIB private, independent colleges were higher than the College’s 1.5%. In addition an analysis of faculty salaries indicated that a structural adjustment should be made for 18 faculty in order to bring their salaries closer to the rank-by-rank benchmark.
An analysis of faculty salaries compared to the rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) since 2007 indicates that the CPI has risen 11.6% and Washington College faculty salaries have risen 11.35% plus a $750 flat rate increase and a $700 bonus indicating that faculty salaries have been keeping pace with inflation, on average, since 2007.

Washington College provides an extensive benefits package, which includes health insurance, retirement fund contributions, social security contributions, disability insurance, life insurance, and tuition waiver and exchange programs. Washington College’s 2012 contribution to health insurance, retirement, and social security averaged $18,212 per tenured and tenure track faculty member, or approximately 20% of the overall compensation package. Faculty may review their total compensation by logging onto the College’s secure website, WebAdvisor. In addition the College has a very generous parental leave policy of fifteen weeks for benefit eligible faculty and staff. A complete description of our benefits programs is available at the Human Resources website.

Washington College offers a retirement matching program through TIAA-CREF. The College matches on a one-to-one basis up to a maximum match of 7.5% of one’s salary. There is no vesting period in our program. In a recent survey of peer institutions the faculty found evidence that we may not be keeping up with our peers on matching contributions. The results are summarized as follows:

**18 Comparison Institutions (Aspirants, Peers, Chasers):**

- 17/18 institutions use a percentage from 7-15%. 1/18 contributes 15%.
- 10/17 (59%) of institutions contribute 10% or more to retirement for faculty.
- 12/17 (71%) institutions contribute 9% or more.
- 13/17 (76%) institutions contribute 8% or more.
- 4/17 (24%) contribute only 7-7.5% (This compares to Washington College at 7.5%)

The faculty committee on compensation will forward this report on to the Benefits and Finance Committee for their consideration. The 2012 survey of faculty suggests that compensation issues are negatively impacting faculty morale. Washington College is working to address the issues of morale and salary. Toward this end, Washington College has implemented the following:

- Creation of a faculty task force on faculty compensation
- Encouraging faculty to review their total compensation on Webadvisor
- Conducting open forums on our health care changes and retirement program changes
- Establishing cost of living adjustments as a top priority in the annual budgeting process

In the 2012 survey of faculty, respondents were asked to rank the factors that contribute to faculty morale. Among tenure line faculty, the highest ranked factors were “overall faculty workload” and “faculty salaries/compensation.” There was not a close third. Overall faculty morale can best be described as “moderate,” (with 79% of tenure line faculty respondents selecting “moderate,” 19% selecting “low,” and 3% selecting “high.” Among Tenure line faculty 54% rate their morale as declining, 39% rank their morale as stable and 8% rank their morale as improving. Again, along with overall faculty workload, salary and compensation represents one of the two most prominent factors impacting morale.

Washington College is working to address the issues of morale and salary. Toward this end, Washington College has implemented the following:

- Creation of a faculty task force on faculty compensation
- Encouraging faculty to review their total compensation on Webadvisor
- Conducting open forums on our health care changes and retirement program changes
- Providing salary adjustments which keep pace with inflation

**Faculty Development**

As articulated in the 2006 Strategic Plan and reaffirmed in the plan approved in Spring 2013, Washington College’s most important resource remains its faculty and staff. Washington College adheres to the teacher-scholar model in which faculty are encouraged to engage in continued professional development throughout their careers. Faculty development programs include 1) a Faculty Travel Fund, offering faculty annual conference travel support, 2) Faculty Enhancement Fund awards to cover expenses related to original research and curricular innovation, 3) Faculty Enhancement Fund awards for reassigned time to conduct research, 4) start-up funds 5) faculty-student collaborative research funds, 6) various speaker funds that attract visiting scholars to the College, 7) sabbatical awards, 8) junior leave awards, 9) faculty development programming through the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Writing Program, the First-Year Program, the Office of Information Technologies, and the Miller Library, and 10) Orientation and Faculty Mentors Programs.

**Faculty Travel Fund**

As stated in the Faculty Handbook, “Faculty members are encouraged to take part in the activities of professional societies related to their respective fields of work. ... Membership and active participation in professional societies promote the professional growth of the faculty member. A faculty member attending a professional meeting or traveling in the interest of the College may have his or her expenses paid in full or in part by the College upon recommendation of the Provost and Dean of the College."

In recent years, individual faculty members have been allocated up to $1,500 annually for conference travel. The total funds allocated to the Faculty Travel Fund have increased from $64,400 in the 2010-11 academic year to $69,500 in 2011-12 to $75,348 in 2012-13. As seen in Table 10.1 below, all travel fund requests (within a per capita annual allocation of $1,500) have been approved.

**Table 10.1: Travel Fund Actions – Fall 2010 to Spring 2013**

Chapter 5 - Washington College

In the 2012-13 academic year the College initiated a pilot project to expand faculty-student research/artistic collaboration to the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Three projects were funded at approximately $8,000/per project in this pilot phase. Three projects were funded at approximately $8,000/per project in this pilot phase.

**Faculty Enhancement Fund Awards:**
As stated in the the Faculty Handbook, “Faculty members may submit requests to the Provost and Dean of the College for Faculty Enhancement Funds, which are intended to defray out-of-pocket expenses for specific scholarly projects, such as research and writing for the purpose of publication, or the gathering of materials for the development of new courses or the significant revision of existing courses.” As part of this fund, up to four curricular innovation awards may be granted per year to provide a stipend and cover expenses related to the development of new courses or the significant revision of existing courses.

A fund was established by the Hodson Trust in 2010 with a gift of $250,000. It was augmented in 2011 with a gift of $412,500 and in 2012 with a gift of $337,500. It is now at $1 million. In the interim, while it was being built to the full $1 million, the Hodson Trust was provided an annual award equivalent to what a $1 million endowment would have generated. As seen in Table 10.2 below, this increased funding has enabled the College to significantly increase its support of faculty development. In 2012-13, the average Faculty Enhancement Fund award was $2,280, with over 50% of the full time faculty participating in the program. (According to the faculty survey, 81% of the faculty have received awards over the life of the program.) Specific outcomes of the awards, which include the completion of significant field investigation and archival research, the development and publication of peer-reviewed articles, and the completion and publication of book manuscripts, are reported in the Faculty Enhancement Fund Reports.

**Table 10.2: Faculty Enhancement Fund Awards – 2010 to 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEF Actions</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requests for funds</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully funded</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially funded</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total am't. requested</td>
<td>$98,024</td>
<td>$96,316</td>
<td>$122,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total granted</td>
<td>$89,862</td>
<td>$69,031</td>
<td>$114,232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lecturers and Adjunct Professors whose instructional load is at least ½ the normal load spread through the academic year and who have served without interruption at this level for five years are eligible to apply for Faculty Enhancement Funds.

**Faculty Enhancement Fund Awards for Reassigned Time**
A maximum of three $6,000 awards are available per year—one each for the natural science, social science, and humanities divisions—for research reassigned time. The funds are used to cover up to $2,000 in research expenses and up to $4,000 to hire an adjunct replacement for one course release. In a typical year, only one to two faculty members will apply for such an award. Unspent funds augment the funds available for other Faculty Enhancement requests. As per the Strategic Plan, in objective D, plans are in place to enhance the pool for both research and reassigned time while also increasing support for faculty conference travel.

**Start-Up Funds**
As part of our hiring and recruiting process, new faculty have the opportunity to request funding to cover start up expenses. These funds typically involve faculty hired in the natural sciences, mathematics, art, and music. Start up funds vary significantly depending upon the discipline and the research/artistic agenda of the individual faculty member.

**Faculty-Student Collaborative Research Funds**
The Hodson Science Scholarship Fund and the Toll Science & Math Fellows Fund covers expenses and provides stipend support for faculty and their student collaborators to conduct original research in the summer months. The program, begun in 2003 with $42,000, allowed 6 faculty members (in Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and 7 students to conduct research. In the summer of 2013, there were 10 faculty members (with the addition of Math/Computer Science and Environmental Studies) and 16 students. A typical award package is as follows:

- $3000 stipend plus room ($756) for students
- $3000 stipend for faculty, and additional $1000 for supervising a 2nd student
- $800 per student for research supplies

Full details on this program can be found in Chapter 6 (Standard 13).

In the 2012-13 academic year the College initiated a pilot project to expand faculty-student research/artistic collaboration to the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Three projects were funded at approximately $8,000/per project in this pilot phase.

**Speaker Funds**
A wide range of endowed speaker funds is available for special lectures by guest speakers. While the primary purpose of these funds is to
enhance the student experience and contribute to the intellectual life of the College, faculty are encouraged to leverage such opportunities in ways that can advance their professional development. For example, faculty are encouraged to invite speakers who may be willing to comment on their scholarly work or potentially collaborate on future research. Of the 7 endowed (non-Center related) speaker funds identified across the college, the annual spend rate is $27,000, offering significant opportunity for such engagement.

**Sabbatical Awards**

As stated in the Faculty Handbook:

"The basic purpose of a faculty leave program is to strengthen the College intellectually. We seek, as teachers of the liberal arts, scholar-humanists who are continually striving toward the expansion of their intellectual horizons and the fulfillment of whatever creative potential they may have. For such teachers, the privilege of exceptional freedom from teaching responsibilities is often a very real necessity. By providing for occasional release from ordinary duties, the College encourages members of the faculty to increase their professional competence."

Faculty sabbatical leaves provide full salary support for one semester or half-salary support for the academic year. As seen in Table 10.3 below, the number of sabbatical leaves granted over the previous three years has grown steadily.

**Table 10.3: Sabbatical Leaves – 2010 to 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Granted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied for lack of quality</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied for lack of funds</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Junior Leave Awards**

The College has two sources of funding (the Christian A. Johnson Fellowship Fund and the Kenan Trust Fund) to cover the costs of one-semester Junior Leaves for junior tenure line faculty who have successfully completed their third-year review. The junior leave program is designed to provide junior faculty in the tenure stream with the opportunity to engage in full-time scholarly activity for one semester at their normal salary, but it also permits recipients to arrange a three-course load reduction over two semesters. The College makes every effort to ensure that every eligible faculty member receives a junior leave. As can be seen in Table 10.4 below, for the past three years, all meritorious applications have been approved. Typically, faculty members use their junior leaves to develop articles for peer-reviewed journals, but in exceptional cases, faculty have used their junior leave to advance a major book project.

**Table 10.4: Junior Leaves – 2010 to 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Granted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied for lack of quality</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied for lack of funds</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Faculty Development Programming**

The College offers a wide range of faculty development programming through discussions and workshops sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the Writing Program, the First Year Program, the Office of Information Technologies (OIT), and the Miller Library. The primary emphasis of these discussions and workshops is the enhancement of teaching and learning. In particular, such programs focus on the innovative use of instructional technology within and beyond the classroom, the teaching of writing in the first year, and the development of assignments that enhance students’ research skills. The CTL has also hosted workshops that focus on broader faculty development themes, such as the challenges and opportunities associated with being a mid-career faculty member at a liberal arts institution. In the 2013-14 academic year, the CTL will expand its broader programming related to career development.

**Orientation and Faculty Mentors Programs**

Prior to the start of classes, the Provost’s Office conducts an orientation session for all new full- and part-time members of the faculty. Beginning in the 2013-14 academic year, the orientation program includes discussion of the College’s Mission Statement and the Faculty Expectations document, approved by the Faculty in Spring 2013. The documents and the discussion they generate are intended to underscore the particular qualities of teaching and learning, service, and scholarly development at a residential liberal arts institution, and in particular, the College’s commitment to developing citizen-leaders through close faculty-student connections and unhurried conversations.

In addition to the orientation and guidance offered by the Provost’s Office, the Faculty Mentoring Group was established in 1996 to offer advice and counsel for tenure-track faculty members throughout their first year. Two senior faculty members are appointed as leaders of the group for two-year terms with staggered appointments to allow overlap with incoming and outgoing group leaders. Along with a half-day orientation one week before classes begin, the Mentoring Group holds monthly meetings that are devoted to topics such as annual reviews, advising, service, teaching and faculty resources.

**Expectations for Tenure and Promotion**

The general criteria for granting tenure are formally outlined in the Faculty Handbook: the College seeks “men and women capable of furthering the ideal of a sound liberal education in a residential college community.” Excellence in teaching within and beyond the classroom, a sustained pattern of scholarly/artistic productivity, and a demonstrated commitment to college service within and beyond one’s department are the criteria under consideration in the tenure review process.
Teaching is evaluated on an ongoing basis. Departmental Chairs visit the classes of junior faculty to evaluate and provide feedback informally as well as by means of a formal review letter once per year. However, Washington College does not yet have a systematic culture of peer review of teaching. The Faculty Council is in the nascent stages of creating guidelines to facilitate this. In terms of student evaluations, at the end of every semester, all courses offering 4 or more credits are evaluated. The results of these evaluations are made available to the instructor of each course, to the department chair, and to the Provost. To provide a benchmark for individual self-assessment, summary statistics of student course evaluations are distributed to departments.

The review process for tenure-track faculty at Washington College is intended to be both developmental and evaluative in its approach. Annually, the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion reviews every junior faculty member on the tenure track. The Committee consists of four members of the faculty (one elected from each of the three divisions, and one at-large), the Provost (chair), and the President (non-voting ex officio). In the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of a faculty member’s service, the Committee reviews the candidate’s curriculum vitae, professional activities form, course evaluations, letter of evaluation from the chair, previous review letters from the Provost, and a brief self-evaluative statement from the candidate. In the third year and tenure reviews, the Committee reviews these materials in addition to course syllabi, the candidate’s scholarly materials, letters from all senior colleagues within the candidate’s department, and a full self-evaluative statement prepared by the review candidate. Tenure reviews also include letters from current and former students, review letters from colleagues outside the department, and scholars external to the College working within the review candidate’s area of expertise. After each review, the Provost writes a thorough and candid letter on behalf of the Committee, assessing the candidate’s record of teaching, scholarship, and service. After the first, second, fourth, and fifth year reviews, the candidate meets the Provost to ensure that the candidate is clear about what steps must be taken to meet expectations for tenure. After the third and tenure reviews, this meeting includes a faculty member of the Committee.

Aspects of the review process just described are relatively new, having been introduced in the Spring of 2013. The faculty survey administered in Fall 2012 indicated that the faculty were seeking greater clarity and consistency in tenure expectations. (Though 71% of tenured professors considered the expectations for tenure to be clear, only 32% of Assistant professors thought the expectations clear.) In response to calls for greater clarity the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion developed a substantive document describing the review process and expectations for tenure. The document is intended to serve as a road map for tenure-track faculty and their senior colleague mentors as they navigate the years leading up to their tenure reviews. Included in the document is logistical information junior faculty will find useful as they prepare the materials for the review process. The most important intent of this document, however, is to articulate the expectations for a faculty member deserving continuous tenure. In April 2013 the Faculty unanimously endorsed the document. The Faculty also approved a new policy to require review candidates to engage in self-assessment in each of the areas of performance in a full-length self-evaluative narrative in the third year and tenure reviews and a brief self-evaluative narrative in the annual reviews. To ensure that the Provost’s review letters discuss all the relevant areas of concern, drafts of the letter are circulated among the Committee for feedback and approval. Further, including a faculty member of the Committee in the post-review meetings with third year and tenure review candidates was instituted in response to the desire for greater transparency. Finally, the Provost now meets with annual cohorts of junior faculty for informal meetings to address questions and concerns. Informal feedback suggests that faculty believe that the new procedures have fostered greater clarity and transparency.

Results of the faculty survey also indicate that the College has a great deal of work to do in the area of post-tenure faculty mentoring and that the process surrounding promotion to (full) Professor is unclear. There is no formal feedback or mentoring process for post-tenure faculty and there are no timelines or expectations specifically related to promotion to the rank of full professor. Only 36% of respondents believed that the College provided sufficient faculty mentoring in the post-tenure years. Among the respondents, 73% of respondents viewed the guidelines for promotion to Professor as unclear; 66% responded that the process was inconsistent.

Qualitative survey responses confirmed that faculty members desire more mentoring support mid-career and clearer guidance as to the expectations for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor. In response to these concerns, the Provost held a workshop in Spring 2013 titled “Advancing as Teacher-Scholars Mid-Career,” specifically targeted to Associate Professors. Approximately 14 faculty members attended this session. Many remarked that the workshop sparked a dialogue that was long overdue and should be the focus of a faculty-wide conversation over the course of the 2013-14 academic year. In response, the Faculty Council, the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion and the Provost’s Office have developed a draft document that seeks to articulate the expectations for promotion to full professor. In addition, the Faculty Council recently approved a pilot program that will provide workshops to assist faculty navigating the academy in mid-career. Finally, the Faculty Council is in the process of working with the Provost’s Office to create a working group with the express purpose of training chairs, mentoring and evaluating future chairs and setting expectations for departmental succession.

We believe that the measures taken during the 2012-13 academic year have already clarified expectations for tenure and promotion to Associate Professor, and have rendered the tenure review process more transparent, with a clearer emphasis on the developmental (as well as evaluative) nature of our review process. Similar measures are being taken during the 2013-14 academic year aimed at clarifying expectations for and mentoring toward promotion to (full) Professor. These measures include: 1) a faculty-wide discussion of what it means to be worthy of promotion to Professor at Washington College, 2) continuation of group mentoring through workshops on moving from Associate to (full) Professor, and 3) targeted one-on-one mentoring by the Provost with Associate Professors setting a path toward promotion.

We plan to repeat the faculty survey in Fall 2014 and we will be looking for significant improvements in responses from Faculty along these lines.

**Excellence in Teaching**

Currently, student evaluations are elicited for all courses offering 4 or more credits. The results of these evaluations are made available to the instructor of each course and are accessible by the department chairs. To provide a benchmark for individual self-assessment, summary statistics of student course evaluations are distributed. There is also a College norm report that allows faculty to compare his/her statistics to the college norm for each question.

The department chair is responsible for evaluating all faculty within his or her department. Tenure line faculty are subject to the review process described above. Department chairs also review the course evaluations of short-term part-time adjunct faculty. Our review process for faculty on multiple year contracts varies according to particular circumstances. Teaching fellows and Visiting Assistant Professors are reviewed every
year in their first three-year term. For these faculty the department chair and Provost review course evaluations, the faculty member’s self-evaluative narrative, and curriculum vitae on an annual basis for the first three years of the service. If contracts are renewed, faculty are then reviewed every three years.

The majority of the faculty respondents indicate that they believe the criteria for evaluating excellence in teaching to be unclear (67%) and insufficient (73%). Seventy-three percent of tenure track faculty responding to the survey indicate that they believe the criteria for evaluating excellence in teaching are not disseminated regularly. Fifty-eight percent of faculty respondents indicate that they believe that the course evaluations used at Washington College do not promote teaching excellence.

Beginning in the 2013-14 academic year, the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion will propose that all credit bearing courses be subject to student evaluation. The Faculty Council will address the concerns raised in the Faculty Survey regarding the course evaluation instrument.

**Conclusion**

In order to address faculty workload and morale concerns, the addition of tenure track lines, reduced reliance on short-term part time adjunct hiring, and policies to ensure that the College is keeping pace with faculty compensation relative to peer-institutions are prominently included in the new strategic plan. Further, the Faculty Council has asked the Service and Scholarship Committee to review the committee structure and offer recommendations for reducing faculty service load.

The College has made significant strides in improving its evaluation of faculty in recent years. Fostering a culture of peer review of teaching would be a means of further advancing the College's commitment to teaching excellence. Developing a post-tenure mentoring program will be another important step in ensuring that faculty continue to flourish throughout their careers.

The College is committed to the teacher-scholar model and as such has embedded increased funding for conference travel and primary research/artistic development into the strategic plan. While we have identified areas upon which we hope to improve, it is our conclusion that the College meets or exceeds each of the fundamental elements of Standard 10.

**Sources**

- AAUP Salary Comparisons 2004-2012
- AAUP Salary Comparisons 2005-2013
- Advancing as Teachers-Scholars Mid-Career Presentation
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 155)
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 298)
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 52)
- College Mission Statement 2012
- Department Teaching and Credit Hour Report - Fall 2012
- Faculty Enhancement Report 2011-2012
- Faculty Expectations 2013
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 18)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 20)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 30)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 40)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 45)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 46)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 61)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 64)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 65)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 66)
- Faculty Handbook 2012-2013 (Page 68)
- Global Perspectives Seminars
- Human Resources Benefits page
- MS Faculty Survey 2013
- Staff Handbook 2011-2012
- Strategic Plan 2006 "Toward Eminence" (Page 6)
- Strategic Plan 2013 Goals and Objectives
- T&P Review Process and Expectations 2013
- Tenure Line Position Approval Process (Incremental) 2013
Standard 11

Educational Offerings

The institution's educational offerings display academic content, rigor, and coherence that are appropriate to its higher education mission. The institution identifies student learning goals and objectives, including knowledge and skills, for its educational offerings.

Purpose and Overview

Over the course of the 2011-2012 academic year, the Washington College community took the opportunity to reexamine and re-articulate our core mission (as discussed in Standard 1). In doing so, we reaffirmed that our central commitment is to "challenge and inspire emerging citizen leaders to live lives of purpose and passion." We do this, in part, by emphasizing the values we share with our founding patron George Washington: "integrity, determination, curiosity, civility, leadership, and moral courage." We believe that a liberal education is best pursued in a context in which rigorous academic expectations are matched with a supportive residential community. It is in such a context that we develop in our students the intellectual habits of a liberally educated person: "the habits of analytic thought and clear communication, aesthetic insight, ethical sensitivity, and civic responsibility" described in our Mission Statement. In keeping with the liberal arts tradition, Washington College's general education requirements balance the depth obtained within a major course of study with a breadth of diverse curricular offerings. Even though we have experienced enrollment growth over the past ten years, students continue to find Washington College to be a college of "human scale," supporting the development of citizen leaders through engaged learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom, through a rich and diverse co-curricular experience, and through unhurried conversations with faculty, staff, and fellow students.

While we regard our central mission of developing citizen leaders to be part of the distinctive character of the College, the content of our curriculum, its rigor and coherence, are on par with our peer and aspirant institutions. Over the past ten years, we have enhanced the caliber of degree programs through expanded faculty resources in many academic departments. Moreover, over the past ten years, the College has expanded and enhanced student support services (Standard 9) to ensure that the full student body—diverse in its learning styles, talents, and challenges—has every opportunity to gain the most from their Washington College experience. Finally, investments we have made in improving the College's physical facilities since our last decennial review (Standard 3) have aligned with and advanced the academic goals of the institution. The construction and renovations to the John S. Toll Science Center Complex, the major renovation and expansion of the Daniel Z. Gibson Center for the Arts, and the renovations of the Miller Library are three of the most visible recent improvements made to the academic infrastructure. Although these investments in the physical infrastructure are apparent, more significant are the improvements in curricular and support services that have accompanied these physical changes. For example, the recent library renovations were designed in part to centralize and enhance several student academic support services (e.g., the Office of Academic Skills, Media Production Center and Quantitative Skills Center).

Planned future investment in the academic infrastructure includes the creation of engaged teaching and learning spaces as part of the development of a waterfront campus, and the construction of a new academic building located on the grounds of the former Kent County Board of Education on Washington Avenue; the College recently received a generous gift that will fund the Center for Teaching and Learning and support its permanent location in this Washington Avenue space. The growth of appropriate academic resources to include the College's unique foothold to the Chesapeake Bay are both considered core principles of the College's 2006 Master Plan and are discussed in the new Strategic Plan (Goal 1, Objective E). The initial phase of construction is projected to include dedicated offices and classroom spaces for the Department of Anthropology and the newly-formed Department of Environmental Science and Studies. Each of these investments in the academic infrastructure will be explicitly designed to build on the College's emerging strength in providing engaged learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom.

Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum

As of Fall 2013, Washington College offers 23 majors leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree, 4 Bachelor of Science majors, 24 disciplinary minors, and 16 interdisciplinary minors or concentrations:

Table 11.1: Disciplinary Majors and Minors Offered – As of Fall 2013
Ensuring the Rigor of the Undergraduate Academic Program

Chapter 6 - Washington College

by Standard 12

Table 11.3: Brief comparison of changes in curricular majors and minors – 1994 to 2012

B.A. Majors Minor Offered | B.A. Majors Minor Offered | B.S. Majors Minor Offered
--- | --- | ---
American Studies ♦ | no | History | yes | Biology | yes
Anthropology | yes | Human Development | no | Chemistry | yes
Art and Art History | yes | Humanities ♦ | no | Physics | yes
Business Management | yes | International Literature & Culture ♦ | no | Psychology | yes
Computer Science | yes | International Studies ♦ | no | | |
Drama | yes (2) * | Mathematical Science | yes | | |
Economics | yes | Music | yes | | |
English | yes (2) † | Philosophy | yes (2) † | | |
Environmental Studies ♦ | no | Political Science | yes | | |
French Studies | yes | Psychology | yes | | |
German Studies | yes | Sociology | yes | | |
Hispanic Studies | yes | | | | |

* The Department of Drama offers both a drama and a dance minor
† The Department of English offers both an English and a creative writing minor
‡ The Department of Philosophy offers both a philosophy and a religion minor

◊ Denotes an interdisciplinary major

Table 11.2: Interdisciplinary Minors and Concentrations Offered – As of Fall 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interdisciplinary Minors/Concentrations</th>
<th>Course Subjects (Required Or Optional)</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary Minors/Concentrations</th>
<th>Course Subjects (Required Or Optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting &amp; Finance</td>
<td>BUS, ECON, MAT</td>
<td>Global Business Studies</td>
<td>BUS, ECON, MAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Studies</td>
<td>ANT, ECON, FRS, HIS, INT, POL</td>
<td>Information Systems</td>
<td>ANT, BUS, CSI, MAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Studies</td>
<td>CHN, HIS, INT, JPN, MUS, PHIL, POL</td>
<td>Justice, Law Society</td>
<td>ANT, BUS, PHIL, SOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Studies</td>
<td>ANT, ECON, ENG, FRS, HIS, MUS, POL, SOC</td>
<td>Latin American Studies</td>
<td>ANT, HIS, HPS, INT, MUS, POL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chesapeake Regional Studies</td>
<td>ANT, ART, BIO, CHE, CRS, ENV, HIS, PHIL, PHY</td>
<td>Near Eastern Studies</td>
<td>ARA, FRS, HIS, INT, POL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth and Planetary Science</td>
<td>ANT, CHE, CSI, ENV, MAT, PHY</td>
<td>Peace and Conflict Studies</td>
<td>ANT, ECON, HIS, INT, PHIL, SOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Studies</td>
<td>ART, ENG, FRS, GRS, HIS, HPS, ILA, INT, MUS, POL, POR</td>
<td>Secondary Education Studies</td>
<td>ANT, EDU, ENG, PSY, SOC + home department for teaching discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Studies</td>
<td>ANT, ENG, FRS, HIS, POL, PSY, SOC</td>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td>ANT, PSY, SOC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a detailed discussion of the learning goals pertaining to individual majors and minors, see discussion of Standard 7 in Chapter 7.

Each of the major degree programs advances the central mission of the College by developing citizen leaders who possess a depth of knowledge sufficient to succeed in graduate study and/or professional life. Further, all major degree programs challenge students to cultivate the habits of critical thought by mentoring students through a curriculum that offers increasing intellectual challenge—helping them to make the transition from receivers of knowledge to synthesizers and discoverers of knowledge. Disciplinary minors offer students an opportunity to gain a breadth of knowledge beyond their major course of study. Interdisciplinary minor programs challenge students to develop their critical thinking skills by stepping outside the boundaries of the traditional disciplines, thereby cultivating the capacity to challenge received wisdom.

Throughout the four-year academic program, students are encouraged to synthesize knowledge from multiple sources. For example, the first year Global Perspectives (e.g. Global Research and Writing / GRW-101) seminars, because they sit outside the boundaries of traditional disciplines, encourage students to explore the synergies of overlapping spheres of knowledge. By the time they reach their senior year, every student is challenged to explore the synergies of knowledge they have received and discovered within their chosen field of study in their Senior Capstone Experience (SCE).

The College’s General Education requirements are a key component of the academic program, ensuring that students are challenged to achieve a breadth of knowledge consistent with the liberal arts mission of the College. A more detailed discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the general education program are offered in the discussion of Standard 12.

Relative to our 1994 and 2003 decennial self-studies, the 2004-2013 review period has been characterized less by the addition of new majors than by the expansion of our interdisciplinary programs. Since 2003, the most significant additions include:

1. The transformation of the department of Anthropology and Sociology into two separate departments
2. The creation of a concentration in Biochemistry
3. The addition of a concentration in Chesapeake Regional Studies
4. New interdisciplinary majors in Environmental Studies and Environmental Science

Table 11.3: Brief comparison of changes in curricular majors and minors – 1994 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Departments</th>
<th>Majors/Concentrations</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary &amp; 3:2 Or 3:4 Programs</th>
<th>Full-Time Enrollments</th>
<th>Full-Time Student: Faculty Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,341</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ensuring the Rigor of the Undergraduate Academic Program
The College has always prided itself on the quality of the education that is provided, particularly with regard to both nurturing and challenging young scholars. Specific learning outcomes pertaining to major courses of study and general education are addressed in the discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7, and in the Standard 12 narrative which follows. In addition to the systematic program of assessment we pursue on an annual basis, clear evidence of rigor can be seen in the establishment of the Theta Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa (PBK) at Washington College in 2007. This was a long-time institutional aspiration that was achieved in great measure by instituting several major curricular reforms during the previous decade. The vitality of the chapter stands as testimony to the rigor of the curriculum. Our PBK chapter was singled out for being one of the chapters within our district that was doing exceptionally well. In addition to PBK, the College hosts active chapters of Sigma Xi and Omicron Delta Kappa, as well as a total of 16 disciplinary honor societies.

To best reflect the standard of academic performance to which the College wishes all students to aspire, beginning with the Class of 2013, the College has adopted a new standard for recognition on the Dean's List (raising the requirement from 3.4 to 3.5). The cumulative GPA standards for recognition with honors at the time of graduation have also been revised, beginning with the Class of 2014:

- *cum laude* has been raised from a 3.437 to 3.625
- *magna cum laude*, from 3.625 to 3.75
- *summa cum laude* GPA requirements will remain the same at 3.875

In the summer of 2008, Washington College joined three other academic institutions in planning a major assessment of the impact of the required capstone experiences at each of these four schools. The Teagle Foundation agreed to fund the project, and data collection via surveys of the faculty, students and alumni began in the 2009-2010 academic year and continued through the 2011-12 academic year. Results indicated a number of ways in which the SCE at Washington College successfully support our institutional learning objectives and improves abilities in such areas as: thinking critically, analytically and creatively; writing in a clear and articulate manner; persisting in the face of difficulties; supporting arguments with evidence, and as well as other abilities. Survey results also indicate that improvements could be made. The Curriculum Committee has considered the Teagle Study recommendations in its 2012-2013 curriculum review deliberations, and has included many of the recommendations in the proposed curricular design.

### Ensuring the Academic Quality of Accelerated Degree Programs

The Accelerated Second Degree (3:2) programs provide opportunities for qualified undergraduate students to earn a Bachelor of Science degree from Washington College and a doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy, or dual baccalaureate degrees from Washington College (B.A.) and University of Maryland, or University of Delaware in Nursing (B.S.). Until recently, a similar 3:2 program in Engineering was offered through an agreement with the University of Maryland-College Park. Changes in the University of Maryland curriculum, and the relatively few students taking advantage of the program overall led the University of Maryland to discontinue this program.

Qualified students in the nursing and pharmacy 3:2 programs receive a degree from Washington College after successfully completing their first year of study at the affiliated institution. Students who seek accelerated second degree program are motivated and engaged learners and hold themselves to high academic expectations. The Washington College Catalog includes well-defined pre-requirements, advising, and application procedures for students to meet the program requirements. The required courses that students must complete are established by the affiliated institutions but are integral components of our undergraduate curriculum in Biology and Physics. Therefore, whether a student is pursuing a track in a 3:2 program or not, the learning goals, objectives, and assessment methods to evaluate student learning outcomes for those courses we offer are comparable for all students. (For more information on student learning outcomes in these programs, including sample syllabi, see the discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7.) Students in 3:2 programs are not required to complete a Senior Capstone Experience (SCE) since satisfactory performance during the first year at the affiliated institution in pursuit of a dual degree is considered a comparable accomplishment.

### Ensuring the Quality of the Academic Program in Credit Transfer Procedures

The Office of the Registrar at Washington College has established procedures for transferring credit from other institutions that are published on its site. In particular, “all courses must be pre-approved by the student’s faculty advisor and any relevant department chair(s) to guarantee transfer.” Department chairs take responsibility for examining the prerequisites, syllabus, course reading and writing assignments, and student learning outcomes, for each course being considered for transfer credits to determine the level of rigor, the content of the course, and alignment with Washington College curricular standards.

### The Graduate Program and Curriculum

The primary focus of the College’s mission is its undergraduate program. The graduate program, with Master of Arts degrees in Psychology, History, and English, was instituted with the goal of serving professionals on the Eastern Shore who were interested in gaining a graduate degree, often an employer requirement for advancement or promotion. Individuals who enrolled were typically primary and secondary teachers. With changes in the continuing education requirements for primary and secondary teachers in the public schools, the number of teachers who enrolled in graduate courses has dwindled. (Presently, the College’s undergraduate program in education offers coursework and experiential placements to prepare students to pass the certification requirements in the State of Maryland. The College’s licensure for its undergraduate education program was most recently renewed in May 2013.) Further, external reviews of the Departments of Psychology, History, and English have raised questions regarding the sustainability and quality of the graduate programs.

In 2010 the Provost and the Graduate Council established a task force comprised of faculty within and beyond the participating departments. It charged the task force with reviewing the status of the graduate programs and drafting a report summarizing their assessment of the program’s status and recommendations for the future. Their review included a survey of other graduate programs and their offerings at institutions (including the M.A. in Liberal Studies) in the region as well as those with innovative models that were identified by members of the task force. In the summer of 2008, Washington College joined three other academic institutions in planning a major assessment of the impact of the required capstone experiences at each of these four schools. The Teagle Foundation agreed to fund the project, and data collection via surveys of the faculty, students and alumni began in the 2009-2010 academic year and continued through the 2011-12 academic year. Results indicated a number of ways in which the SCE at Washington College successfully support our institutional learning objectives and improves abilities in such areas as: thinking critically, analytically and creatively; writing in a clear and articulate manner; persisting in the face of difficulties; supporting arguments with evidence, and as well as other abilities. Survey results also indicate that improvements could be made. The Curriculum Committee has considered the Teagle Study recommendations in its 2012-2013 curriculum review deliberations, and has included many of the recommendations in the proposed curricular design.

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Following further discussion with the chairs and faculty of the participating departments, the decision was made to phase out the graduate programs in History and Psychology so as to focus greater attention on the quality of the undergraduate program in each department. The English program elected to continue for the present and re-evaluate their status after further review by the Curriculum Committee. By the end of the fall 2013 term, the Curriculum Committee will make its recommendation for phasing out, temporarily suspending, or enhancing the quality of the graduate program in English.

As of January 1, 2013 there have been no additional admissions to the graduate programs in History and Psychology. The current students who are enrolled as matriculating students as well as non-degree students were informed that the programs would be terminated once all actively enrolled matriculated students have completed the required graduate coursework for their degrees. The complete phase out of these programs is anticipated in 2015. As of the end of the current academic year the number of students remaining in the three programs is projected to be 13 (History), 9
Chapter 6 - Washington College

Many aspects of the proposed curriculum are familiar as it retains successful elements of the existing academic program. The proposed curriculum, better align with the College's articulated mission.

Chapter 2, Standards 1

Services for Non-Traditional Students

With the vast majority of Washington College students matriculating in the year following their graduation from high school, non-traditional students constitute only 2% of the student population. Adult learners/non-traditional students receive a slightly customized orientation experience when entering Washington College. Instead of a traditional-aged Peer Mentor; they are assigned to the Associate VP for Student Affairs who meets with them during orientation to discuss issues of transition and out-of-class concerns. Academic concerns are referred to the Associate Provost's Office. They are also connected with a group of other non-traditional aged students who meet throughout the year on an informal basis to provide support for each other. Otherwise, adult learners/non-traditional students are assigned an academic adviser and offered the same support services available to any Washington College student.

Curricular Oversight and Review

Departmental Oversight and Review

Because the academic program at Washington College is designed and carried out by highly qualified teacher-scholars, it is appropriate that academic departments hold the primary responsibility for ensuring the quality of the major and minor degree programs and assessing the associated student learning outcomes. For discussion of recent changes to the structure of departmental assessment and review, see Self-Study Question 1 below.

Each department and program at Washington College has developed goals that are stated in terms of student learning outcomes as part of their assessment plans developed by the respective department/program (see the Document Directory folder for Chapter 7, Standard 14 entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”). In turn, these learning outcomes are evaluated through both direct and indirect measures at different stages as the student progresses through the required courses for the major. Discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7 includes sample syllabi from most academic programs and majors, including learning goals and objectives, as well as ongoing assessment practices.

Curriculum Committee Oversight and Review

Situated at the intersection between academic departments and the Faculty as a whole, the Curriculum Committee plays a critical role in the faculty governance of the curriculum.

The Curriculum Committee is charged with reviewing all curricular proposals for new courses and programs and making recommendations to the Faculty as a whole. Before making a recommendation to the Faculty, the Curriculum Committee ensures that proposed changes to the academic program are appropriately rigorous and coherent, and do not impair the quality of other academic programs. All proposals for permanent additions, revisions, and deletions to the curriculum are first vetted within each Division before coming to the Curriculum Committee for deliberation. The Curriculum Committee may refer proposals back to the Department/Program and Division from which they originated for further discussion, development, and refinement before recommending approval to the Faculty.

The Curriculum Committee is also charged with ensuring that the general education program is sufficiently rigorous, coherent, and in alignment with the College's mission. The Faculty as a whole has final authority on changes (additions, deletions and revisions) to all curricular policies and permanent offerings. Exceptions are those covered by the By-Laws on Program Change and Financial Exigency.

The Curriculum Committee is comprised of the following:

- Provost and Dean of the College (chair)
- Chairs of each academic Division of the College (Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences/Mathematics)
- Second member of each Division elected by the Faculty
- Representative from the library
- College Registrar
- Three students elected by the Student Government Association (SGA), one representing majors from each of the three Divisions.

Course/Program proposals are submitted in accordance with requirements outlined within the College's course proposal form. Typically, and in every case where the proposed course has been previously offered as a special topics offering, the proposal includes a course syllabus, which contains a description of the student learning goals and objectives.

During the 2011-2012 Academic year, the Curriculum Committee, with assistance from the Office of Institutional Research, reviewed the breadth of majors offered at our comparison institutions. The purpose was to help the committee differentiate between those majors/programs that might be both consonant with our mission and relatively easily implemented, from those that would require substantially greater investments in faculty, staff, or infrastructure if they were to be implemented. These discussions were preliminary to similar discussions that have since been a part of the College's strategic/comprehensive planning process.

Among those majors that had been identified as potential additions to the curriculum prior to the review were Communications/Media Studies and the potential for an Environmental Science major. The Committee did not support the former at that time. However, in Spring 2013 the College approved a major in Environmental Science to complement the existing major in Environmental Studies. Together these two majors form the core components of one of the anticipated areas of academic distinction that has emerged as part of the strategic planning process in which the College is currently engaged (discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 2, Standards 1 and 2). Faculty affiliated with the newly created Department of Environmental Science and Studies will coordinate these major programs of study. As a freestanding department, the Department of Environmental Science and Studies now has the ability to propose the addition of new faculty lines, ensuring a diverse and rigorous selection of courses in the majors.

Over the 2012-2013 academic year, the Curriculum Committee reviewed the existing all-College curriculum (i.e., graduation requirements beyond the major) for its strengths and weaknesses. The Committee tasked a small Curriculum Design Working Group which convened during summer 2013 to develop a proposal for a new curriculum that would retain the virtues of the current academic program, build upon the distinctive strengths of the College, and better align with the College’s articulated mission.

Many aspects of the proposed curriculum are familiar as it retains successful elements of the existing academic program. The proposed curriculum,
Co-curricular and Extra-Curricular Oversight and Review

Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities are assessed through a number of instruments. These include the annual Senior Survey (Cap and Gown, 2011-2012), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Beginning Student Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE), the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and the Student Satisfaction Survey, which is administered every three years. The Beginning Student Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) serves to benchmark the NSSE and FSSE (see links to these materials in the Institutional research folder). Student academic support services are evaluated for the purpose of ensuring their effectiveness and planning to address specific need of our student population via annual reports and periodic external review. The Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion reviews annually the size and shape of the faculty to address enrollment pressures and curricular needs of existing academic programs and trends within higher education that might impact faculty-hiring decisions.

Learning Resources and Facilities

Since our last decennial review, the College has strengthened significantly our Academic Support Services. These include, but are not limited to:

- Increased support for the Writing Center
- Increased support for the Office of Academic Skills (OAS)
- Increased support for the Quantitative Skills Center
- Expanded instructional technology and student support resources in the Office of Information Technologies (OIT)

These services are addressed in greater detail in the discussion of Standard 9 in Chapter 4.

The Miller Library

The academic resource at the heart of the College remains the library. In our space-use planning, Washington College emphasizes creating environments that support collaborative and engaged learning. The recent renovations of the Miller Library are in keeping with this principle and have created a learning commons by centrally locating academic services offered by the Office of Academic Skills, Multimedia Production Center, Beck Multimedia & Technology Learning Center and Quantitative Skills Center, in which students seek and receive a wide range of academic support services in a single building. Co-locating these services has helped to recast the library as a lively, interactive, and animated learning space.

Miller Library provides many different types of materials to support teaching and learning. The library is open 7 days per week and library users have 24/7 access to electronic resources, a summary of which is provided in Table 11.4 below. The Inter-Library Loan service expands student access to information services beyond the Miller Library collection. The library encourages the participation of faculty and students to develop collections for their programs by setting aside resources to purchase information and materials suggested by faculty and expanding databases of professional journals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Of Materials</th>
<th>Number Of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print books</td>
<td>183,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Books</td>
<td>216,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government documents</td>
<td>32,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bound print periodicals</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-Journals</td>
<td>30,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media (CD, DVD, VHS, micro-format)</td>
<td>5,431</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Miller Library offers a variety of study spaces to accommodate different teaching and learning needs. The Newlin Room, equipped with dual-system computers, is the instructional classroom used by faculty-librarians to teach information literacy. In the Newlin Room, students can also use statistics software SPSS/Minitab, business management solution SAP and planetarium software Stellarium to conduct research in mathematics and a variety of science and social science disciplines. Collaborative learning spaces with a smart board or a white board are available for group study. Seniors working on their senior theses can reserve individual quiet-study spaces. The library also provides research help, printing and faxing services for students.

Librarians have faculty status and are evaluated according to faculty evaluation criteria. Librarians have published and presented their research at national and international conferences, and work collaboratively with faculty to develop collections and teach information literacy to support educational programs.

The librarians collaborate extensively with faculty to provide Information Literacy Instruction for students, as explored in the 2012-2013 Information Literacy Annual Report. First-year students are introduced to basic library resources and research skills. Sophomores, juniors and seniors are introduced to discipline-specific resources and advanced research skills are taught in collaboration with faculty according to the curriculum requirements. The librarians have taught 2,256 students information literacy at different levels of research skills over the past two years (2011-2013). In a First-Year Program survey by Global Perspectives Program, the library was viewed very favorably by students in terms of learning research skills. In the fall of 2011, a pilot assessment instrument was launched in collaboration with GRW professors via the Blackboard Course Management System (since replaced with Canvas) to test whether students’ information literacy skills are well aligned with the competency standards of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Based on the results of the pilot involving 54 students, the instrument was revised to focus on direct assessment of the library instruction in improving problem-solving skills. Pre- and post-test analysis of the 2012-2013 academic year (n=90 students) showed student scores doubling from the median score of 20 out of 50 to a median score of 40 out of 50, or a 100% increase in scores (2012-2013 Annual Report).
Self-Study Questions

In addition to the fundamental elements of Standard 11, the Self-Study Steering Committee addressed the following questions related to the quality of educational offerings at Washington College.

**Question 1.** How effective are current mechanisms at ensuring that academic departments are provided with support (staffing, funding, etc.) adequate to maintain appropriate academic content, high academic expectations, and coherence with the College mission?

Note: The answers to this Self-Study Question are also examined fully in Standard 14 within Chapter 7.

Annual Department/Program Reports

At the end of each academic year, departments have been asked to provide a review of the department’s activities. The report covers program and curricular changes, staffing changes, teaching loads, working conditions, budgets, five-year trends of majors in the department, a list of courses in the catalog that have not been offered for five years, and future plans for the department. Finally, departments are asked to assess student learning outcomes from the previous year and indicate how the department plans to respond to the assessment data.

Upon her arrival, the new Provost and Dean of the College identified several problems with this approach:

1. Because the report called for both departmental planning and assessment of student learning outcomes, the two forms of assessment were often conflated, often with student learning outcomes falling by the wayside.
2. Almost all of the data we were asking chairs to assemble could be provided by the Office of Institutional Research, the Registrar, or were captured in Curriculum Committee actions.
3. Serious departmental planning requires a great deal of effort. Repeating the exercise every year tends to water down its value and meaning.
4. Because the reports have no place within the governance structure of the College, there is no systematic process by which departmental plans and resource requirements are vetted and prioritized. Further, because there is no Assessment Committee, departments receive no systematic feedback regarding the quality of or lessons learned from their student learning outcomes assessment.

In the spring of 2013, the Provost announced a change in this process. The Offices of Institutional Research and the Registrar will now offer departments data regarding trends in enrollment, numbers of majors, FTEs, courses that have not been taught in five years, and so on. Departments will now submit a departmental planning report once every three years. Departments will continue to submit annual Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) reports. Further, in hopes of greater consistency in reporting, expectations for SLOA reports have been clarified. (Please see the Document Directory folder for Chapter 7, Standard 14 entitled “SLOA Reports 2013” for the first year’s submission of SLOA reports from each academic department and program.)

Periodic External Review of Departments/Programs

The institution’s current policies regarding external peer review of academic departments and programs are described in Section II.D of the Faculty Handbook. Prior to 2008, it was typical for departments to undergo external reviews every seven years. As part of their review, departments and programs drafted a self-study document and hosted a visiting team to provide impartial feedback and recommendations aimed at ensuring appropriate academic content and rigor, high academic expectations, and coherence with the College mission. In most instances such reviews have been instrumental in instigating curricular reforms or innovations. For example, the most recent external teams hosted by English, History and Psychology all called into question the investment that these departments had in their respective graduate programs. Based in part upon this, the Graduate Program Task-Force was established and influenced the decision to phase out the graduate programs in history and psychology, as discussed in the section on “The Graduate Program & Curriculum” above.

While the College avoided significant financial difficulties during the 2008 crisis, some budgets were trimmed. External reviews were one casualty of this trimming. The new three-year cycle of Department Program Assessment and Planning (DPAP), in which department are asked to reflect on the programmatic strengths and challenges of the previous three years and to establish strategies for moving forward, provide an opportunity to phase external reviews back in.

External Accreditation Other Than Middle States

The Department of Chemistry is required to submit a report to the American Chemistry Society (ACS) to maintain ACS approval of their undergraduate baccalaureate program. The ACS requires both annual reports and a more comprehensive report every five years. The College continues to remain in good standing with regard to its ACS accreditation and submits an annual report to the ACS’s Committee on Professional Training about the number of chemistry degrees awarded to students on the ACS track.

The Education Department is one of 23 four-year teacher preparation programs approved by the Maryland Department of Education. The Education Department’s teacher education programs are evaluated by the Maryland State Department of Education every five to seven years. The criteria on which the Department is evaluated are drawn from the "Maryland Redesign of Teacher Education" and the Standards for Maryland Professional Development Schools. The Education Department passed the 2013 review with full program approval, meeting all standards of assessment.

**Question 2.**

Given anticipated trends in enrollments, what will be the needs for new academic courses, majors, minors, programs and the resources required to implement and sustain them?

As is apparent in the table below, the College has accomplished a significant rate of growth in its degree-seeking, undergraduate enrollments since 1994. During the past two decades, the greatest growth against the five-year rolling average occurred between 1994 and 2003 when the College averaged a 9.3% growth rate each year. During this time, actual enrollments increased 58.7% (from 836 in Fall 1994 to 1,327 students in Fall 2003). From 2003 to 2009, the College’s rate of growth slowed significantly to an average of 0.1% against the five-year rolling average and a net loss of students per year (from 1,298 enrolled in Fall 2004 to 1,268 enrolled in Fall 2009). The College’s five-year average rate of growth rebounded from 2010 to the present, growing at an average rate of 8.9% against the five-year rolling average from Fall 2010 through Fall 2012 (1,385 to 1,458...
Chapter 6 - Washington College

curriculum and that there is no reliance on any single method:
are commonly employed by faculty. The results summarized briefly below indicate that a variety of modes of instruction are employed across the

A faculty survey conducted in the 2012-2013 academic year was implemented in order to obtain a snapshot of the current modes of instruction that

Given planned replacement of visiting and adjunct faculty, only the Environmental Science line will require significant renovation of existing space.

What is already clear is that there will be expansions along the waterfront campus that should enhance current curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular and athletic programs. Similar investment in multi-use academic facilities on the site of the former Kent County Board of Education Building is intended to enhance programs offered by Anthropology and Environmental Science and Studies in Phase I of the project, and Mathematics/Computer Science and Education in Phase II of the project. Planning for Phase I is well underway with a targeted completion date of Summer 2017. Planning for Phase II will commence in 2016. (Please see Goal 4, Objective C of the Strategic Plan.)

Several programs/majors have experienced increased enrollment growth and have recently received incremental faculty lines to address their instructional and programmatic needs, including Anthropology, Biology, Drama, Mathematics/Computer Science, Modern Languages and Psychology. In some instances increased faculty lines have stretched the capacity of existing infrastructure, particularly in the sciences.

To accommodate the growth in faculty, we have re-purposed underutilized classroom space and common areas for the new offices and research spaces in the Toll Science Center.

A space usage audit of the Toll Science Center conducted in 2012-2013 (document 1, 2, and 3) indicated that the classrooms and laboratory spaces within the center could be more efficiently used to reach the facility's maximum instructional capacity. Establishing a practicable plan to do so has not yet been discussed within the division.

Offices for additional faculty in the Social Sciences and Humanities Divisions have been created in space formerly occupied by the Office of Information Technology in the foundation level of Smith Hall. Included in these renovations is a new studio space for Art and Art History. The limitations of the Larrabee Arts Center, and other spaces assigned to the Studio arts, remain a major obstacle in effective teaching, and are negatively impacting the student experience in the Art & Art History department. Larrabee lacks adequate space for students to work, is deficient in up-to-date technology, and has regular flooding in the basement, contributing to serious teaching, health and safety concerns. Additionally the current building and spaces in use are incapable of meeting the minimum requirements necessary for the students to engage in some of the most basic mediums and principles necessary of the discipline. From the standpoints of safety, facilities, tools and technology, improvements in classroom spaces and facilities for the Art and Art History Department are of great need.

However, in general it has been a greater challenge to increase the number of spaces dedicated to instruction. Indeed, we have not always been able to replace such spaces that we have re-purposed, making the construction of the new academic building on Washington Avenue all the more important.

Based on comprehensive proposals submitted by departments regarding the need for clarity in the hiring process for tenure track incremental and replacement lines (as discussed in Standard 10), the Advisory Committee on Tenure and Promotion has recommended approval of five new tenure track lines:

- Tenure track line in macro and monetary economics (to replace adjunct line) in the Department of Economics
- Tenure track line in religious studies in the Department of Philosophy and Religion
- Tenure track line in environmental psychology in the Department of Psychology
- Tenure track line in social media marketing in the Department of Business Management
- Tenure track line in environmental science in the Department of Environmental Science and Studies

Given planned replacement of visiting and adjunct faculty, only the Environmental Science line will require significant renovation of existing space.

Question 3a.

How well do our educational offerings incorporate a variety of effective modes of learning in order to provide rich learning experiences for a diverse student population?

A faculty survey conducted in the 2012-2013 academic year was implemented in order to obtain a snapshot of the current modes of instruction that are commonly employed by faculty. The results summarized briefly below indicate that a variety of modes of instruction are employed across the curriculum and that there is no reliance on any single method:

Table 11.5: Headcount of Degree-Seeking Undergraduate Students – Fall Census Data, 1994 to 2013

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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>836</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,112</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>1,104</td>
<td>1,144</td>
<td>1,251</td>
<td>1,327</td>
<td>1,298</td>
<td>1,292</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>1,162</td>
<td>1,275</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td>1,385</td>
<td>1,453</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>1,424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11.1: Percentage of Instructors Employing Types of Instructional Modes of Inquiry

Other modes of inquiry and discourse identified included guest speakers, use of blogs, course wikis, computing workshops, individual problem-based projects, laboratory investigation, field work, problem-based instruction, debates, role playing, peer-review. Other assessment practices include critiques, homework assignments, student-led discussions, multiple written assignments, graded reading logs, opinion or research papers, video projects, in-class problem solving sets, and conference presentations. Further detail on academic assessment can be found in Chapter 7, Standard 14.

The 2012-2013 faculty survey also asked instructors to offer various methods commonly used to assess student learning within their courses. The results summarized briefly below indicate, again, the variety of assessment instruments and non-reliance on any one particular method of assessing student learning in classes:

*Figure 11.2: Percentage of Instructors Employing Modes of Assessing Student Learning*

Among other assessment practices were critiques, homework assignments, student-led discussions, multiple written assignments, graded reading logs, opinion or research papers, video projects, in-class problem solving sets, and conference presentations.

As the Academy considers the role of MOOCs and other online modes of instruction, Washington College remains committed to a highly personalized educational experience. Students are actively engaged with professors through individual research projects as well as classroom activities. Although we do not expect Washington College to be a provider of open online courses, we nonetheless continue to develop and incorporate pedagogical approaches that deploy instructional technologies that enhance the quality of teaching and learning. These efforts are supported by a discussion series titled *Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age*, sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), aimed at sharing lessons learned...
from pedagogical innovation and best practices. Further, as a community we have been considering the implications technological change is having on higher education generally. For example, in spring 2013 the College invited three speakers to campus to facilitate a campus-wide discussion about the role of technology in a liberal arts education. Andrew Delbanco, distinguished scholar of American literary and religious history, presented his work on “College: What it Was, Is, and Should Be.” Ben Gaucherin, the Chief Information Officer at Harvard Law School, spoke on “Higher Ed: A Transformation in Progress.” Finally, Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, from Duke University, presented his work on “What Liberal Educators can Learn from Coursera.”

In addition to these speakers, the College has formed a task force on “Liberal Education in the Electronic Age.” The priority of this task force has been to focus the campus’ discussion on how technological change can be leveraged so as to build upon the core strengths of the Washington College education, i.e., making use of technology in ways that strengthens our ability to develop close relationships with students and meaningful and engaged teaching and learning opportunities.

**Question 3b.**
Given goals for increasing diversity among students, faculty and staff, what resources will be required to ensure that the most effective practices continue to be incorporated?

Data regarding the ethnic diversity of the College's annual applicant pool, acceptance, and enrollment trends from 2005-1012 are summarized on pages 1 and 5 of the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 Fact Books. The overall picture suggests that there was an initial increase in minority enrollments during this period that has leveled off at approximately 9% of each entering class. This has occurred as the enrollments of the matriculating undergraduate student body have increased by approximately 14%. Drilling down through the data reveals two general patterns: 1) The yield within a specific ethnic group is highly variable from year to year. 2) In 2012 the yield rate among Asians and African-Americans was the lowest it has been. The latter appears to have occurred in part because of the increase in the size of the entering class in 2012 and the annual fluctuations in yield within these two ethnic groups. So it is difficult to say whether there has been a clear trend either toward increased diversity or decreased diversity in the entering class.

One means of promoting diversity within the student body is to increase the proportion of international students who enroll as full-time matriculating and exchange students. With the class of 2016 there has been a dramatic increase in the number of international students who have applied, accepted, and been admitted as matriculating students in the entering class (6%). With the international exchange students, this cohort is comprised of citizens from 30 countries.

Another factor to consider with regard to ethnic diversity is the comparative persistence rates among ethnic cohorts. The 2011 Retention Reports for both entering and transfer students provide a snapshot for these comparisons. The overall College retention rate from the first to the second year has been as high as 89.1% in 2003-2004 and as low as 79.9% in 2006-2007; and for the period between 2005 and 2010 has averaged 82.9%. Among the cohort of entering first-year students in 2011 the overall retention rate was 84.7%. The average retention figure among all ethnic minorities in this entering class was 73.4%, compared with 87.0% for whites. The poorest retention rates were among the African-American students 46.2%; just 6 of the 13 African-American students in the entering class returned the following fall. Hispanics were the ethnic group with the highest retention rate 85.7%. The work of the Retention Committee and the recently implemented online Retention Alert case management system, both discussed in Standard 8, should help to identify factors that may adversely affect the persistence of minority students.

In the annual Cap & Gown Survey graduating seniors are asked to rate the quality of campus life with regard to a number of factors, among these, Ethnic/Racial Diversity and Climate for Minority Students on Campus. While the majority of graduates regard the quality to be generally or very satisfying, the percentage that do so tend to be the lowest in comparison to the other aspects of campus life to which they are asked to respond:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Quality Of...</th>
<th>2009-2010</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic/racial diversity</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate for minority students</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another aspect of diversity among the student body is socio-economic diversity. Concerns over the expense of a four-year college education and families’ willingness and ability to pay have increased, particularly since the 2008 financial crisis. The College does its best to help families find ways to cover the costs through a variety of means. The percentage of first-year students receiving financial aid has steadily increased (see Chapter 4, Objective C in the College’s Strategic Plan). The most recent data regarding the ethnic diversity of the faculty can be found in the 2011-2012 Common Data Set. Minority ethnic groups are represented among 12.1% of the full-time faculty and 11.9% of the part-time faculty. Details regarding the ethnic diversity of full-time non-instructional staff and part-time staff for years 2009 to present are provided in the respective IPEDS reports [2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013]. The 2012-2013 IPEDS survey results are included below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012-13 Category</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Hispanic/Latino</th>
<th>Amer. Indian/Native Alaskan</th>
<th>Black/African Amer.</th>
<th>Native Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>&gt; 2 Races</th>
<th>Caucasian</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>0.63%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>87.42%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>1.77%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
<td>1.77%</td>
<td>3.54%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>92.04%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In general, these data indicate that the ethnicity of the staff is similar to that of the faculty. In 2012-2013, 11.6% of the staff reported that they are of an ethnic group other than white/Caucasian. Of these the overwhelming majority are of African-American ancestry. Although many of the professional administrative positions are filled following regional and national searches, the majority of non-professional staff are recruited primarily from the surrounding community, chiefly from Kent and Queen Anne’s Counties.

Demographic data obtained from the most recent U.S. Census indicate that the ethnic profiles of these two counties are similar to the ethnic profile of our staff, with the possible exception of the proportion of Hispanic/Latino members of the staff.

Table 11.8: Diversity of Maryland Counties Near Washington College – From the 2010 U.S. Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County/State</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
<th>Native American/Alaskan</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Native Pacific Islander</th>
<th>≥ Races</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>HS Grad or higher &gt;25</th>
<th>Bachelor’s degree or higher &gt; 25 yr of age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queen Anne’s</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>87.1%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

US Census Ethnic Demographic Data

Another way in which the College might attend to the needs of a diverse student body is to ensure that all students have opportunities to develop their capacity to navigate cultural contexts that are not their own.

Question 4.
To what extent are high academic expectations shared among students and faculty?

The best data in our possession for addressing this question are comparisons between the outcomes of the BSSE, NSSE and FSSE surveys over recent years. This table compares the proportion of respondents who answered either “very much” or “quite a bit” to a question asking how much time is expected to be invested in studying and on academic work:

Table 11.9: NSSE-FSSE Joint Data on Student Investment in Studying and Academic Preparation – 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>First-year</th>
<th>Senior-year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012 NSSE</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 FSSE</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, time invested in work is at best an indirect measure of rigor and is just one of numerous components that comprise rigorous intellectual pursuits. It is not the time required to invest in the task that defines its rigor, but the nature of the task and the learning outcome(s). What is needed are appropriate measures of academic rigor that are conducive to direct assessment and are judged to be reasonably valid by both faculty and students. Some departments (e.g., Psychology, Biology, Chemistry) have employed the ETS Major Field Test or similar assessment tool as a summative assessment of the rigor of their programs. (Please see discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7.)

As gains in learning are facilitated when both faculty and their students share the meaning of and appropriately high expectations for a four-year liberal arts curriculum, the College should promote discussions among faculty and students regarding their anticipated learning outcomes through the academic advising program, Phi Beta Kappa programming and the Douglass Cater Society of Junior Fellows program.

Question 5.
How well do co-curricular activities and/or programs (e.g. International Programs) complement or enhance the learning goals that comprise the curricula of departments and programs and the institution’s expectations regarding student/faculty academic achievement?

Some extra-curricular, co-curricular and experiential learning activities are discussed later as they relate to Standard 13. Add to these, faith-based groups (Hillel, Catholic Campus Ministry, & Campus Christian Fellowship), choral groups, concert band, clubs (Lacrosse, Photography, Dance, Psychology, HOSA, etc.), international student organization, jazz band, literary magazine, music ensembles, Musician’s Union, student government, student newspaper (The Elm), and yearbook (Pegasus). A full listing of all 82 groups can be found here. Given that there are so many varied student groups available, and that many have originated with the students themselves it seems reasonable to assert that every student is likely to find an affinity group that complements their academic as well as social interests.

Approximately 25% of the student body belong to a varsity athletic team; this number includes students who are dual varsity athletes. In addition, the department and staff of athletics supervise programs in intramural sports, club sports, Health & Fitness and outdoor adventure for the entire campus community, including alumni and patrons of the 1782 Society. The most recent self-study conducted by the Department of Athletics indicates that participation in these programs has increased significantly since 2004.

Several programs supervised by the Department of Athletics are geared specifically to help ensure that student athletes excel in the classroom. These efforts include a CHAMPS/Life Skills Program, a Student Athletes Mentor Program, and Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) Program.
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Question 6.

What challenges/opportunities will enrollment growth have with regard to the goal of increasing academic expectations for a diverse student population?

According to numerous reports, current trends suggest that we can expect the following regarding the characteristics of diversity, socio-economic background, and special needs within our student population:

- There is likely to be a greater proportion of students entering college who are of Hispanic ethnicity. According to a report by the American Council on Education, this population faces unique barriers that may make it difficult for them to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities. These include:
  - Many Hispanic families do not possess adequate income to invest in post-secondary education opportunities.
  - Those who arrived in the United States later in their lives and have not had extensive experience within American school systems are four times as likely to drop out of school as those who arrived early in childhood (33% vs. 8%).
  - Of those “late arrivals” aged 18-24 years, 46% never obtain a high school diploma.
  - For many, the language barrier between Spanish and English is significant unless they were born and educated in the United States.
  - Immigrant youth that do not have full legal status to be in the United States may be unable to secure admission into the college of their choice.

- According to a study by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), we may anticipate a greater proportion of students who matriculate at the College after first graduating from or completing the equivalent of two years’ of their education at a junior or community college.

- There will continue to be students with various physical impairments, health concerns, and learning differences for whom the College will need to deliver appropriate and effective accommodations. The results of a recent online survey of college students conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness indicated that 50% of those students who have a psychiatric disorder fail to disclose their diagnosis. This is despite the fact that 73% reported having a mental health crisis at some time while at school. As we have seen (and discussed in the Chapter 4 narrative, Standards 8 and 9), Washington College has already seen a noticeable uptick in the number of counseling visits to Health Services for mental health-related issues, as well as a demonstrative increase in the number of approved learning accommodations and appointments reported by the Office of Academic Skills.

- There is likely to be a continuing increase in the number of international students who gain admission to the College, particularly from China, Japan and other parts of Asia. We may therefore expect a greater proportion of our students for whom English is their second language. As discussed in Standard 8, the College has already seen an increase in admission of students who claim citizenship in another country (up from 1-2% between 2009-2011 to 4% in Fall 2012 and 7.3% in Fall 2013). The College has already anticipated these changes by improving its student support services to assist four-year matriculated international students entering on an F-1 visa, as well as adjusting certain procedures to streamline such concerns as pre-approving non-native English speakers for a waiver of the Foreign Language requirement (part of the General Education program discussed in Standard 12) based on their reported native language.

- The current cohort of "millennial" students will one day be replaced by a cohort with its own habits and styles of learning, interests, and academic ambitions.

- The gender gap among our student body is likely to continue hovering around 60/40% (women:men).

These projected shifts and trends in the college-bound population suggest opportunities in the area of enrollment growth from international and domestic minority populations that have not been traditional areas of strength for the College. A more diverse student population, and the widening gender gap will positively challenge the college community to develop capacity for navigating culturally diverse contexts and for broadening our understanding of citizen leadership.

Question 7.

Are the curricula within the graduate programs coherently structured, appropriately staffed, and do learning objectives of the programs reflect the minimum rigor required within their disciplines?

At present this question seems to have been considered by the ad hoc graduate program task-force, the Graduate Council and the Curriculum Committee. The task-force recognized that there had been significant questions as to the sufficient coherence, staffing, and rigor of the three existing programs. These have ultimately resulted in the phasing out of the psychology and history graduate programs. The graduate program in English is currently under review by the Curriculum Committee, which will make its recommendation for phasing out, temporarily suspending, or enhancing by the end of the fall 2013 term.

Question 8.

How complete and effective are the policies in place regarding transfer credit from other institutions?

The existing policies and procedures for transfer credits, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate course credits, are largely clear and workable with regard to the traditional transfer student entering from another four-year institution or community college. However, there is no clear consensus across departments and programs with regard to transfer credits from online courses. Furthermore, registrars are not required to indicate on transcripts whether a course is an online course or a traditional course; therefore it may be more common than not, that we currently award credit to some transfer students for coursework they accomplished entirely online without realizing it. (To combat this possibility, our Registrar recently rebuilt the Transfer Credit Request Form used by students to obtain pre-approval for prospective transfer courses; the form now requires students to identify if the course they intend to take is taught online.) A second issue of possible concern relates to incoming international students who have completed undergraduate coursework prior to admission that are prerequisites in our curriculum. In these cases the mode of delivery and teaching pedagogies may differ substantially from those that may prepare students for success in courses. Visiting international students may encounter similar circumstances.

Conclusion

Since our last Self-Study, Washington College has undergone a significant enrollment growth. However, we have not lost sight of the core element of our mission: to educate students. Through the careful integration of our mission with excellent academic support staff, the educational offerings of the College remain robust and attentive to the needs of our students. After a close analysis of the campus-wide answers to our Self-Study questions and the Fundamental Elements, we have thus determined that we are in full compliance with Standard 11.

Sources
Standard 12

General Education

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency.

Purpose and Overview

The recently redrafted Mission Statement of the College states that "[w]e develop in our students habits of analytic thought and clear communication, aesthetic insight, ethical sensitivity, and civic responsibility." The academic program at Washington College consists of a liberal arts curriculum that focuses on educating the whole student:

"The College’s commitment to the liberal arts and sciences encourages students to explore many areas of interest and to develop the capacity to reason, to appreciate literature and the arts, and to make the connection between courses of study and their implications in society." - Washington College Catalog, 2013-14

Below we describe the ways in which the General Education requirements are key to fulfilling this promise.

The Middle States Commission’s Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education identifies proficiency in oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency as the principal elements that an institution must demonstrate to be in compliance with Standard 12. The General Education program at Washington College is clearly aimed at addressing these elements as well as other intellectual habits we consider essential to a robust liberal education.

The General Education requirements include:

- The first-year requirement of Literature & Composition (ENG-101) and a Global Perspectives Seminar (Global Research and Writing / GRW-101) (2 courses)
- The Writing Obligation (2 writing-intensive courses)
- The Foreign Language Requirement (0-2 courses depending on incoming proficiency level)
- 3-3-3 distribution requirements:
  - 3 courses in the Natural Science & Mathematics Division
  - 3 courses in the Humanities & Fine Arts Division
  - 3 courses in the Social Sciences Division

Note: Two of the three courses taken in the Social Science Division to meet the General Education requirement must be courses taken from the same academic department and from within a prescribed sequence, emphasizing the depth and breadth of the student's expected learning.

The 3-3-3 distribution requirement can be taken at any point in the student's career, but most students complete these 9 courses by the end of the sophomore year. Together, General Education requirements constitute 11 to 15 courses, or 44 to 60 credit hours. All students receiving the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees must fulfill these general education requirements in order to earn their degrees.

Students who wish to adopt alternative plans to accomplish the learning objectives of the General Education Curriculum may do so by preparing a written proposal to be submitted initially to their faculty advisor. Based upon discussions with the advisor to arrive at an initial determination of its feasibility, the final proposal is submitted to the Committee on Academic Standing and Advising for their consideration and final determination of the plan's appropriateness and effectiveness. However, there have been no instances in the past 10 years in which any student has pursued an alternative path for satisfying general education requirements.

The general education requirements at Washington College can be found in various official publications, including the College Catalog in the chapter titled The Academic Program. The College Catalog is also accessible through the College's website.

For entering students, the first and second years are periods of significant adjustment. For many this is the first time they may be away from home and family for a significant period and it may be the first time that they have had to share a room with anyone. Moreover, this may be the first time that they have had independent responsibility for managing their time and prioritizing academic goals and objectives, and developing strategies for academic success. The Residential Life Program and Student Support Services, discussed at length in Standard 9, Chapter 4, play a significant role in addressing these aspects of the transition to college.

The academic expectations students encounter are also likely to differ substantially from what they experienced during the previous four years.
Chapter 6 - Washington College

The first and second year General Education requirements are designed to introduce students to an intellectual community in which they will be expected to take primary responsibility for their own educational experience. The General Education requirements are also designed to ensure that all students cultivate a broad intellectual foundation in the arts and sciences. Taken together, the General Education program helps students to successfully navigate the transitions from high school to college and from undeclared to declared major status that focuses on one or more disciplines.

The goals and objectives for specific elements within the General Education Requirements have evolved over time. For example, for the period of our previous two Middle States decennial reviews, the first and second year components of the general education curriculum have undergone two significant revisions; the first in 1994-95 as the revision of the Community, Nation, and World (CNW) curriculum. The second significant shift took place in 2009-10 with the introduction of the Global Perspectives: Research and Writing (GRW) seminar curriculum.

Faculty from across the curriculum offer GRW courses with a correspondingly diverse range of academic topics, allowing first-year students to select a field which interests, intrigues or challenges them. Examples of GRW subjects and their contributing departments during the 2012-2013 academic year include: Childhood Around the World (Psychology), Cold War Cultures (History), Pathogens and Plagues (Biology), Encounters: World Art (Art & Art History), Global Theater (Drama), Islam, Muslim-Christian Experiences (Philosophy & Religion), Navigating Maps (GIS - Environmental Studies). Current examples of GRW course descriptions can be seen on the GRW website. To review sample syllabi for GRW courses provided, please see the Document Directory folders for Standards 7 and 14, "Academic Department Syllabi".

The process of revising our Mission Statement, the ongoing Strategic Planning process (both discussed extensively in Standard 1, Chapter 2), an ongoing curricular review, and this Self-Study have allowed us to examine our General Education program from multiple perspectives providing opportunities to see the strengths and potential weaknesses of the existing program. That said, we must admit that the process of preparing this Self-Study has alerted us to the fact that our assessment of general education as a category—i.e., oral and written communication, breadth of knowledge, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, foreign language skills and cross-cultural understanding, moral and ethical insight, and technological competency—has been uneven.

With the appointment of a Director of Writing in 2008, assessment of writing, particularly in the First-Year Writing Program, has improved significantly. But it is also clear that we have not focused enough attention on identifying and deploying common measures of direct assessment in courses typically taken to fulfill General Education requirements beyond the First-Year Writing Program. This is not to suggest that these courses are not being assessed for specific student learning outcomes. Rather, such assessments have tended to be discipline-specific rather than focused on the general characteristics of learning cited above. Recent efforts in some departments have moved us in a better direction, but it does mean that our best examples of direct assessment, particularly in distribution requirements, are relatively recent and tend to reflect the efforts of single departments rather than an entire academic division. As we move forward, our goal is to build on these successful examples across departments. Further, developing common rubrics, such as a rubric assessing scientific and quantitative reasoning in courses typically taken to fulfill the Natural Science and Quantitative distribution requirement, would be a critical responsibility of the proposed Assessment Committee.

Learning Objectives of General Education Program Elements

Oral and Written Communication

Given the College’s commitment to writing across the curriculum, oral and written communication skills are addressed throughout the four-year experience. The student is introduced to these skills in the first-year program with the heavy emphasis on writing in GRW- and ENG-101, and required oral presentations in GRW. Writing skills are reinforced through the two required Writing-Intensive courses and other writing across the discipline, culminating in the Senior Capstone Experience that most often (outside of comprehensive exams) requires intensive writing and often incorporates an oral presentation of the thesis. A proposal from the Curriculum Committee based on suggestions resulting from the Teagle Senior Capstone survey may formalize the presentation phase of the SCE as part of a campus-wide annual celebration of the SCE.

First-Year Writing Program

Developing proficiency in oral and written communication is the primary learning objective in the First-Year Writing Program. The First-Year Writing Program requires all students to complete a Global Research and Writing course (GRW-101) in the first or second semester and Literature and Composition (ENG-101) in the other semester of their first year. Each course satisfies the first-year General Education requirements and therefore does not satisfy other distribution requirements. All ENG-101 and GRW seminar courses are reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee. Although the specific instructional method of the Literature and Composition courses varies from instructor to instructor, the course content is largely comprised of the same standardized elements approved by the Director of Writing in consultation with members of the Department of English. Similarly, one finds the same fundamental elements lodged within the Global Research and Writing courses; although the topic of each course is chosen by the instructor, it always includes a dimension of multicultural or intercultural inquiry or global phenomena.

GRW seminars are intended to serve as models of the type of learning experience and the academic expectations that students should anticipate across the curriculum, including the expectation that students will regularly contribute to the quality of their courses by actively engaging in class discussions. This expectation of regular course participation acculturates students into the unhurried conversations that characterize a liberal education. GRW courses also focus on developing presentation skills, including proficiency in the use of presentation technologies to further develop their oral communication skills.

GRW courses link the writing process to the research process. Guided by the principle that clarity of writing requires sharp critical reasoning and coherence of analytic thought, the research and writing components of the GRW course are treated as iterative parts of a single whole. Thus, information literacy instruction, including the development of proficiency in the use of online research resources and databases available through the Miller Library are necessary complements to writing instruction in the context of this required first year course. GRW courses require students to complete at least one assignment that involves extensive use of research skills to examine key issues or questions from multidisciplinary and/or multicultural perspectives.

Through the study of literature, ENG-101 courses develop the student's capacity for intelligent reading, critical analysis, and clear written communication. Like the GRW seminars, ENG-101 courses are intended to model the type and quality of writing, critical and analytical reading skills, and in-class discussions that students should anticipate during their time at Washington College.
The common learning objectives for the First-Year Writing Program (ENG-101 and GRW) include:

**Critical Thinking:** Close Reading: Students read and analyze texts carefully
- Research: Students research and use scholarly materials effectively and appropriately following one system of academic citation

**Rhetorical Knowledge:**
- Thesis: Students establish an argument with a controlling purpose and thesis
- Evidence: Students develop an argument with depth and specificity in the use of evidence

**Writing Processes:**
- Composition: Students organize their writing effectively, including clear paragraph structure
- Revision: Students revise and clarify writing based on self-reflection and feedback from others

**Awareness of Conventions:**
- Style: Students write with awareness of effective phrasing and word choice
- Grammar and Usage: Students follow conventions of Standard Written English
- Communication: Students organize and deliver an effective oral presentation (GRW-101)

### The Writing Obligation

Beyond GRW and ENG-101, the academic program at Washington College promotes the development of written communication skills through the Writing Obligation. A writing-intensive course recognizes two principles:

1. Writing is a way to learn, not only a demonstration of mastery of material.
2. Writing is a process that benefits from being made visible, i.e. the various stages of writing are recognized and supported in the classroom.

The current principles and guidelines for writing-intensive courses were established by the Curriculum Committee after review of the College's Writing Task Force 2007 report, *Teaching Writing at Washington College*. These guidelines suggest that written assignments should be varied and numerous, involve review (peer and/or instructor), and incorporate revision and refinement. Students in these courses may be required or at least encouraged to utilize the Writing Center as a resource.

As described by the Director of Writing in Appendix 5 of the Writing Program's 2012-2013 Annual Report:

“Our current writing intensive (WI) courses are very loosely modeled on a best practice principle of teaching writing (including elements of research and information literacy) across the curriculum in disciplinary contexts—known as WAC and WID: Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines.”

Further, “our WI courses have that principle in theory, since they are courses that are taught within departments—not in a Writing department or limited to an English department (the old model that WAC replaced) at many colleges.”

One writing-intensive course is to be taken during the sophomore year and the second during the junior year. As described above, courses that meet the Writing Obligation are offered across the curriculum, making it easier for students to fit these courses into their major-heavy junior year schedules and reflecting the College’s policy of *writing across the curriculum*. However, the majority of these courses are offered within the Humanities & Fine Arts Division and increasingly, within the Social Science Division. While some courses within the Natural Science Division are listed as writing-intensive on average this represents 10% of all writing-intensive courses.

### Assessment of Oral and Written Communication within the First-Year Writing Program

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the GRW/Literature and Composition curriculum completed a third-year review compiled by the Directors of Writing and the GRW Program. The results were presented to all faculty who attended a special session that preceded the October 2012 faculty meeting. As part of the assessment, freshmen students completed a First-Year Writing survey annually (2011-2013) to obtain a snapshot of the benefits that they felt they gained from their GRW/Literature and Composition experiences. The survey results, discussed in Appendix 3 of the 2013 First-Year Writing Report, showed that students perceived that they experienced a general improvement in those abilities comprising the learning objectives of the GRW/Literature and Composition sequence.

The students were also asked to identify the various resources that contributed most to the improvements they experienced. The majority of all respondents identified their professors, the library, and their classmates as important resources contributing to their learning gains. The Writing Center was identified as a key resource by 44% of the respondents.

Out of the 76 sessions the Miller Library instructional staff held over the 2012-13 academic year, 46 of those sessions were GRWs. The library instructional staff worked closely with the Director of GRW to refine the outreach strategies between the Library and GRW instructors, including the creation and distribution of an informational pamphlet designed for the GRW program. The 2012-2013 academic year was the first in which 100% of GRW sections included dedicated library instruction, with particular emphasis on technological competencies related to information literacy.

Over the course of the 2012-2013 academic year, ten sections of GRW participated (for a total of 180 students) in a Blackboard-generated pre-test and post-test of information literacy problems to directly assess the learning outcomes of embedded library instruction. With the learning analytics feature of the course management system, library staff were able to gauge how well each individual student improved on a question-by-question basis. Refinements made after the Fall 2012 trial improved the instrument. For four out of the five Spring 2013 sections, median scores were raised from 20/50 in the pre-test to 40/50 in the post-test. Beyond the “single-session” library instruction, library staff are also embedding themselves in a growing number of courses, including GRW courses, as dedicated librarians who attend classes, engage in class.
Additionally, during the summer of 2012 the faculty in the ENG-101 program conducted a pilot project to assess the quality of writing from samples (5%) obtained from students enrolled in sections of ENG-101. The scoring team rated student writing according to a rubric designed around the student learning outcomes of the First-Year Program. The 2012 survey results generated a wealth of direct assessment data. Scores are based on a 5-point scale (1 = failing, 3 = proficient, and 5 = excellent). On average, these samples were judged to demonstrate proficiency in all objectives (3.0 or greater on a 5 point scale) except the ability to develop and employ a central rhetorical thesis, which was rated lowest of these goals (2.94). Over the course of the 2012-13 academic year, the Director of Writing organized two faculty development workshops aimed at advancing the ability of ENG-101 and GRW faculty to teach students 1) the art of the critical essay and 2) how best to advance an argument. The Director of Writing also directly mentored faculty newer to the ENG-101 program. In a follow-up to this pilot program, writing was assessed again in June of 2013. Across all the rubric points, scores were above the 3.0 criteria and rose from the 2012 values in 5 of the 6 rubric points.

The report and presentation to the faculty offered various suggestions as additional or alternative means of assessing the First-Year Program. In short, the third-year review of the GRW/Literature and Composition program indicates that it appears to be successful in achieving its intended learning objectives. In the interim, refinements to the process of assessing the first-year component of the general education curriculum have been discussed and will be initiated by the first-year program directors, as discussed in Appendix 4 of the Writing Program's 2012-2013 Annual Report 2013.

The Curriculum Committee, during the first stages of its curricular review in academic year 2012-2013, found that ENG-101 (as an integral part of writing across the curriculum) and the GRW program were both academically effective at meeting their learning outcomes. It was also noted that the GRW program fostered interdisciplinary thinking, though this is not an explicitly stated goal of the program.

The First-Year Writing Program report and the Curriculum Committee have concluded that faculty staffing of both GRW and ENG-101 presents a significant challenge if both are to be staffed by full-time continuing faculty. Currently only approximately 50% of the sections are taught by tenure-track faculty. The Teaching Fellows program, started in Fall 2012, and other multiple-year visiting appointments provide dedicated support from continuing full-time (though not tenure-track) faculty for the First-Year Writing Program, but the staffing challenge persists nonetheless.

Assessment of Oral and Written Communication within the Writing Obligation

The Registrar, as part of the annual audit of our graduates’ transcripts, verifies that 100% of all students have fulfilled the writing-intensive course requirement—at least two writing-intensive courses in addition to those integrated in the first-year program. In the past three years, the average number of writing-intensive courses offered each semester is roughly 78. During each of the past six semesters the average total student enrollment in writing-intensive courses has been 1,083 (note that some students may be enrolled in more than one writing intensive course). There are clearly many opportunities for students to fulfill the requirement. It should be noted, however, that some students inevitably do not complete the second course until the senior year.

Writing-intensive courses are not assessed as a specific category of courses but instead are assessed as part of individual departmental curricula. Though the Writing-Intensive designation is meaningful in principle, in its review of the College’s General Education requirements, the Curriculum Committee observed that the current requirement is somewhat anemic. This may be due in part to the fact that the requirement is not tied to any particular place within a coherent structure. According to the 2012 NSSE survey, we do not distinguish ourselves from our peers in terms of students responding that they prepare two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in. Among students who participated in both the 2009 survey as first years and the 2012 survey as seniors, responses fell on average and the gap was statistically significant.

Breadth of Knowledge

The 3-3-3 Distribution requirement (3 courses in the Natural Sciences and Quantitative Reasoning, 3 courses in the Arts and Humanities, and 3 courses in the Social Sciences) ensures that students are exposed to multiple ways of encountering and knowing the world. These breadth requirements are not intended to develop expertise in any given area. Rather, the point is to help students recognize that disciplines make sense of the world in ways that can be profoundly different—with each making a claim to the value of its respective way(s) of knowing—and in ways that can complement one another. Ideally, students come away from their distribution courses with a sharpened capacity for seeing an issue, problem, artistic work, or social context from multiple perspectives, greater confidence in their ability to challenge assumptions (their own and others’), and a deepened appreciation for how disciplines other than their own can contribute to a broader discourse, to a problem to be solved, or to aesthetic insight.

Through these courses all students are challenged to advance the research, writing, and oral communication skills that they established during the First-Year Writing Program. Further, students learn and practice scientific and quantitative reasoning and experience multiple ways in which different fields approach skills such as close reading, critical analysis, and reasoning. The Distribution courses promote deeper understanding of and appreciation for literature and the arts and the complexities of the social world. Finally, the Distribution requirement promotes an appreciation for the ways in which knowledge beyond the student’s chosen major creates opportunities for creative synergies of knowledge, the potential for asking novel questions, and making new discoveries.

The wide-ranging diversity of courses that count toward the 3-3-3 Distribution requirements ensure that students have freedom to explore new intellectual horizons and ample opportunity to match their course selections to their interests. The downside of this diversity of choice is that it is difficult to narrowly define specific learning outcomes that can be consistently assessed across the curriculum. Some progress, however, has been made as it relates to assessing learning outcomes for the Natural Science and Quantitative Reasoning requirement, which we take up below.

Scientific & Quantitative Reasoning

In order to fulfill the Natural Science and Quantitative (NS&Q) distribution requirement (one of the 3-3-3 overall Distribution requirements), all students must complete either two natural science laboratory courses and one quantitative course, or two quantitative courses and one natural science laboratory course. The Departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics offer lab courses appropriate to the NS&Q distribution requirement. Courses offered in the Department of Math and Computer Science are the principal means of fulfilling the Quantitative
Students majoring in natural science or mathematics will complete their NS&Q requirement in part with the introductory, majors-level sequence for that degree program (e.g., BIO-111/112, CHE-111/112, PHY-111/112, MAT-201/202/203). The Department of Physics also recently added an algebra-based (rather than calculus-based) introductory sequence to its curriculum (PHY-101/102), entitled College Physics, which brings the College's curriculum in line with other similar institutions with both variations on the introductory sequence. Several other majors also require their students to complete a majors-level natural science sequence (e.g., psychology majors primarily take BIO-111/112 or CHE-111/112 but can also take PHY-111/112; environmental science and studies majors also must take one of the aforementioned sequences). Student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) for these sequences is carried out by the respective departments and are addressed in the discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7.

Students not majoring in one of the aforementioned degree programs take one of several laboratory courses available for non-majors in Biology (100 or 104), Chemistry (110) or Physics (100, 110, 140, or 141) in order to fulfill their NS&Q requirement. The breakdown of the courses taken between 2009 and 2013 by non-sciences majors within the class of 2013 to fulfill their NS distribution requirement was: BIO courses (100, 104, 111, 112) = 197/394 = 50.0%, CHE courses (110, 111, 112) = 51/394 = 12.9%, PHY courses (100, 110, 111, 112, 140, 141) = 133/394 = 33.8%, other courses (CRS-240, SCI-100 via transfer) = 13/394 = 3.3%.

Students who pursue a quantitative course sequence outside the department of Mathematics & Computer Science, i.e., in the Departments of Business, Psychology, Economics, or Music, are more often than not majors in those departments. Students majoring in degree programs with more rigorous quantitative requirements, (e.g., math, physics, computer science, and chemistry) exceed the required one or two quantitative courses. Many of these major-specific quantitative sequences and quantitatively-rich disciplines are assessed as part of departmental student learning outcomes, and are addressed in the discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7.

Although natural science courses are not assessed specifically for the purposes of general education outcomes, the general education learning outcomes overlap substantially with those that the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics identify. Again, this is discussed in the narrative for Standard 14 in Chapter 7. Beginning in 2012-2013 academic year, students enrolled in both BIO-100 (N=84) and BIO-104 (N=62) were assessed for three specific general education learning outcomes: Analytical Reasoning, Scientific Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning. Data for these assessments are collected through a variety of in-class or laboratory exercises (i.e., student response clickers, selected examination questions, and overall performance on examinations and laboratory exercises). For assessment purposes student outcomes are classified as either Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, or Failing to Meet Expectations. During the most recent academic year the outcomes indicate that as a group the students satisfactorily met performance expectations in all three modes of reasoning (i.e., between 70% and 80% of students successfully met or exceeded the requirements for passing the assessment exercises).

During the 2013-2014 academic year the Biology department will offer two or three novel non-majors courses as a way to address increasing enrollment and a desire to keep course sizes small. These new courses will be offered by full-time, tenure track faculty, a change from the use of adjuncts to offer non-majors courses in the department in the past. Each of these courses will be assessed for general education outcomes during the 2013-2014 academic year. At the end of this year, the department will discuss the two years' worth of outcomes data from non-majors courses and will address ways in which the courses, general education learning outcomes and assessment mechanisms might be improved.

Quantitative Reasoning is a primary learning goal in a broad spectrum of courses that could count toward the distribution requirement. Rather than attempt a comprehensive assessment of every one of the distribution courses in which Quantitative Reasoning is a learning goal, the assessment for General Education is accomplished through the assessment of two popular courses. These courses include the introductory courses in computer programming (CSI-100) and introductory statistics (MAT-109), which are highly enrolled for completion of the Quantitative Reasoning requirement by students not majoring in a quantitatively-intense degree plan. The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science has been collecting pre-course evaluations data in CSI-100 for more than 10 years and began collecting pre-course and post-course evaluations for both courses last year. Four learning objectives that contribute to overall technological competency are assessed: Analytic Reasoning, Communication, Mastery of Skills/Knowledge, and Effective Use of Quantitative Software and Hardware. Pre-course data was based on guided, individual student input to his/her estimate of mastery/knowledge of all the elements taught in the course using an on-line questionnaire during the first day of class. The post-course assessments included student surveys of specific subject components and asked students to indicate whether they think more or less time/effort needed to be focused on individual subjects. Post-course evaluation also included an instructor evaluation of each class section using graded inputs for all course elements (e.g., quizzes, homework, projects). Where deficiencies are noted based on performance observations, changes are made to subsequent semester instruction and content by using a number of approaches (e.g., improved study guides, revision of quiz content, instruction content emphasis, additional online content). More direct assessment mechanisms need to be brought to bear on the quantitative skills distribution courses.

**Critical Thinking and Analytical Reasoning**

As discussed in the section oral and written communication above, the development of critical thinking and analytical reasoning is integrally connected to the teaching of writing at Washington College, in the First-Year Writing Program, in disciplinary-based writing-intensive courses and through writing-intensive Senior Capstone projects. Beyond the First-Year Writing Program, these skills are assessed in the context of departmental assessment of student learning outcomes. (Please see the Document Directory folder for Chapter 7, Standard 14 entitled “SLOA Reports 2013.”)

**Foreign Language Skills and Cross-Cultural Understanding**

General Education requirements at Washington College aim to prepare students to live lives of purpose and passion in the context of an increasingly diverse U.S. and globalized world. Our efforts to broaden and deepen global perspectives begin with GRW. The topics of the seminars are diverse, but all advance a global perspective—not just looking outward toward other cultures but reflecting upon how our own society and culture may be perceived by others. A wide diversity of courses available to students in the Humanities and Fine Art and the Social Sciences build cross-cultural understanding through the study of diverse cultures, perspectives and values. The opportunity to study abroad is another way in which students across all majors deepen their cross-cultural understanding even further. The percentage of students who studied abroad (including one-, two-, and three-semester length experiences and short-term abroad experiences) has hovered around one-third of the total undergraduate student population, varying between 26.0% and 38.5% of each graduating class since 2004.
The Foreign Language requirement advances the student's ability to live and work effectively in a diverse United States and globalized world by challenging them to immerse themselves in a language community other than English.

The Department of Modern Languages conducts an assessment of incoming student proficiency during the summer pre-registration period. Students must first complete a language survey to identify the number of years of prior language study they have completed. Those who have previously studied French, German, or Spanish must then complete the WebCAPE language placement exam (password: shoremen1), the score of which determines their placement level. Based on this assessment, academic advisors place students in the appropriate level language course. Instructors conduct a follow-up assessment during the first week of classes. Non-native English speakers who are already proficient in reading, writing, and speaking in a native language are typically waived from having to complete the College's Foreign Language requirement. The department chair meets with individual students on a case-by-case basis if needed to determine that the student is proficient in all three dimensions of their native language, to ensure that students with only partial proficiency (e.g., students who speak a non-English language at home but do not know how to write or read it) are not given this exemption.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the Modern Languages department initiated an assessment plan for all 101/102/201 level language courses that they felt would serve both the needs of the department and the College's General Education program, since these courses were the ones through which most students completed their language distribution requirement. The plan describes three goals for the fulfillment of the language requirement: (1) assembling and analyzing information, (2) linguistic proficiency and (3) intercultural competence. Eight sections (classes) across four languages were assessed during the Spring 2013 semester. Between 62.5% and 75.0% of these sections met the departmental standard (greater than 80% success) for each of the three goals. The Department of Modern Languages will continue to collect data during the 2013-2014 academic year in order to generate more data for analysis and action.

Even before generating this more formal assessment plan, grades have been helpful to the Modern Languages Department in assessing the preparedness of entering students for successful completion of the Foreign Language requirement. Specifically, a review of student performance indicated that those students who place into the intermediate courses in Spanish (HPS-201) and French (FRS-201), but who had completed their last foreign language course two or more years previously, were not doing as well as peers who had no such gap in their studies. As a result, the department implemented a "review" course in Spanish (HPS-200) and French (FRS-200) for those students with gaps in their language education. As implemented, these two courses entail the same content as the two-semester introductory sequence (101/102) in their respective language, only at an accelerated pace. HPS-200 was implemented in Fall 2012 with good outcomes and FRS-200 was offered for the first time in Fall 2013. Students taking the 200-level course must only take one course to satisfy the General Education requirement.

Modern Languages student learning outcomes data (see Standard 14) informed the Curriculum Committee's decision to retain the Foreign Language requirement during the ongoing curricular review. These outcomes made it clear that the language requirement was critical in allowing students to see the world from a vantage point different from one's own and therefore was critical to understanding varied perspectives and value systems as well as developing citizen leadership.

Moral and Ethical Insight

Developing moral and ethical insight is critical to emerging citizen leaders. We accomplish this through the co-curricular program of residential student life, athletics, the Student Governance Association, student involvement in college co-governance, through the Honor Code pledge ceremony at Mount Vernon, and the consistent application of the Honor Code in governing student life. The General Education requirements create many opportunities by which students will encounter courses that emphasize moral or ethical content, but ironically, there is no clear place within the General Education curriculum in which an academic gaze is deliberately focused in this direction. Addressing this lacuna has been a point of discussion in the 2012-2013 curriculum review (see minutes of Curriculum Committee 2012-2013).

Technological Competency

Technological skills required for a given major will vary widely and are assessed to a greater or lesser extent as appropriate by departmental SLOAs. (Please see the Document Directory folder for Chapter 6, Standard 11 entitled "SLOA Reports 2013."). Within the General Education program, technological skills are assessed during the GRW courses through direct assessment of Information Literacy skills and through surveys in CSI-100 (and MAT-109). More direct assessment mechanisms need to be brought to bear on the technological competency skills as assessed in CSI-100 and MAT-109.

Application of General Education Skills Across the Curriculum

Regardless of major, general education skills such as clear written and oral communication, close reading, critical analysis and reasoning are marbled throughout the Washington College academic program, from the first-year writing program through distribution courses, upper level courses in the major and ultimately in the crafting of a Senior Capstone Experience.

The proportion of students who engage in integrated learning experiences (internships, externships, summer research on campus, study abroad) is summarized in the discussion of Standard 13. Participation in such programs during the junior and senior years is one indicator that the curriculum of the previous two years has prepared them for academic and personal challenges that characterize competencies in the liberal arts and sciences.

Writing across the curriculum—the First-Year Writing program, writing-intensive courses in the sophomore and junior years, writing within the discipline in upper-level courses and the SCE—is one clear example of the progression and mastery of General Education skills. The clearest example of this progression and mastery is the SCE. Direct assessment of senior theses within departments indicates whether students have developed the skills of clear written and oral communication, close reading, critical analysis and reasoning by the time they complete their Washington College education. The intended learning goals of the SCE as stated in the Catalog include "... the ability to think critically and engage in a project of active learning in their major field of studies; ... to integrate acquired knowledge and skills in a senior project demonstrating mastery of a body of knowledge and intellectual accomplishments that goes significantly beyond classroom learning."

These learning outcomes clearly state that successful completion of the SCE requires the mastery of a number of academic skills, many of them first introduced to the students through the General Education program. The following SCE rubrics provide examples of the assessment of
General Education skills including writing, critical and analytical thinking among others, during the SCE: Art and Art History, Biology, and History.

The SCE and its assessment is addressed in some detail in Standard 14 in Chapter 7, including the outcomes from the Teagle survey that assessed the SCE at Washington College and similar capstone experiences at three other academic institutions. The report that resulted from this survey indicated that the SCE “… adds value to the educational experience above and beyond what could be provided by offering additional courses within or outside the major.” The report noted strengths and weaknesses of the SCE and made several recommendations for improving it over the next few years. The Curriculum Committee is already moving forward with several of these recommendations, including a proposed campus-wide senior capstone symposium in which students present their research and creative work in formal concurrent sessions. These changes will increase opportunity for mastery of oral communication skills across all majors.

A number of departments (Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, Education) administer standardized national assessments that are used as benchmarks for comparison with other institutions and to inform curricular revisions. In these cases the evidence is that seniors are performing at or well above that of their national cohorts. Detailed discussion of these assessment practices are provided in the discussion of Standard 14 in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

In our review of the general education requirements, we have found evidence to support our assertion that the program of general education at Washington College not only enhances students' intellectual growth but is also purposeful, rigorous, engaging and coherent. In addition, we have cultivated, since our last Self-Study, campus-wide habits of assessing this program and making data-driven adjustments where necessary. We therefore assert that we are in full compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 12.

Sources

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- AACU’s Civic Learning Matrix
- Alumni Awards
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- BIO - GenEd Outcomes 2012-2013 - Quantitative
- BIO - GenEd Outcomes 2012-2013 - Scientific
- BIO - SLOA - 2013 (Page 45)
- Campus Life
- College Catalog 2012-2013
- College Catalog 2012-2013 (Page 35)
- College Catalog 2013-2014
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 43)
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 48)
- College Catalog 2013-2014 (Page 51)
- College Mission Statement 2012
- Curriculum Committee minutes 10.16.12, 10.26.12, 11.06.12_FINAL
- ENG & GRW 101 Writing Survey Results 2011 (Raw Data)
- ENG & GRW 101 Writing Survey Results 2012 (Raw Data)
- First Year Writing Survey Questions
- First-Year Writing - Review After Three Years (Outline) - October 2012
- First-Year Writing - Review After Three Years (PowerPoint) - October 2012
- First-Year Writing: ENG-101
- First-Year Writing: GRW-101
- GRW Course Descriptions
- GRW Guidelines for Faculty
- HIS Dept. Assessment 2013 (Page 8)
- Honor Code
- Honor Code Presentation: Class of 2016
- MAT/CSI Assessment Matrix 2013
- Middle States Standards of Excellence in Higher Education
Standard 13
Related Educational Activities

The institution's programs or activities that are characterized by particular content, focus, location, mode of delivery, or sponsorship meet appropriate standards.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College does not offer any certificate programs or non-credit courses; nor do we have any branch campuses or offer our own distance learning program or contract with any other affiliate to do so. Therefore, the focus of our Standard 13 self-study is on modes of providing students with support for developing basic academic skills and for expanding their breadth of experiential learning experiences available to them.

Basic Skills

Remedial Courses

Washington College offers only one course that might be described as a remedial or "basic skills" course. This is MAT-110 Precalculus.

MAT-110 Precalculus

A precalculus course is offered as a service only to those who wish to take calculus later at the College. The Mathematics department chair will schedule the class and admit students only if contacted by academic advisors who can confirm that their advisees require precalculus in order to proceed to enrolling in calculus (often to complete a requirement for a course of study). The Catalog listing for this course reflects its position as a basic skills service course:

MAT 110. Precalculus Mathematics
The objective of this course is to prepare students to undertake Mathematics 201 [ed. note: the first course in the Calculus sequence]. Topics studied will include a review of algebra, properties of transcendental functions including trigonometry, and elementary analytic geometry. Prerequisite: Permission of the department. Students who have successfully completed a calculus course or who have received advanced placement credit for calculus may not enroll in this course.

Academic Support

Although Washington College has only two educational offerings that could be designated remedial or pre-collegiate (discussed above), the College does have systematic and effective procedures for identifying students who may struggle to meet the demands of college-level coursework. These procedures are meant to ensure that all students are able to achieve their educational goals and meet the high standard of academic performance expected of everyone enrolled in the College. Many of the current initiatives the College has undertaken to identify and support at risk students are linked to the 2007 Retention Assessment, which is discussed in Chapter 4, Standard 8.

The following programs and offices serve as the primary means of identifying students who may need additional academic support and referring those students to the appropriate resources:

- The Early Intervention Program (EIP)

  The Early Intervention Program serves as an essential means of identifying students who are academically at risk. As a part of its charge, the committee has the responsibility "to share information about students who are encountering both academic and non-academic challenges and determine appropriate strategies and support resources likely to assist the student in succeeding." The full charge of the committee can be accessed here. EIP is composed of members who play an essential role in the academic and social lives of students at Washington College, including the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, the Associate Provost for Academic Services, and the Associate Dean of Students and Director of Residential Life. A full description of the EIP committee's work is available here.

  In general, EIP identifies students who may be struggling to perform successfully in their coursework using the following criteria:
  - Incoming students with a predicted GPA of below 2.4
  - Students who have identified to someone that they are interested in leaving/transferring
  - Students placed on academic probation
  - Students placed on social probation
  - Seniors who are in danger of not graduating (usually these are identified in late fall and early spring)
  - Students who are not making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as determined by financial aid (because of federal guidelines established to determine a student's eligibility for federal financial aid)
Currently, EIP is in the process of implementing a Retention Alert module through its Elucian Colleague student information system which will use a combination of batch case creation and individual referrals from faculty and staff to help track performance more effectively in cases where students are in danger of not succeeding or are considering withdrawing or transferring from the College. This initiative is described in further detail in the Updates on Retention Action Plans 2012 document, under Action Plan F14.

- **The Target Experience for Academic Mentoring (TEAM) Program**

TEAM is an academic support and mentoring program for students who are academically at risk. The TEAM Mentor program is currently coordinated and administered by the Office of Academic Skills (OAS) in conjunction with the Provost’s Office. The participating students are selected based on their status on academic probation and are paired with volunteer professional staff members who serve as TEAM Mentors. Students who are on academic probation are required to complete an Academic Success Action Plan and meet with the Associate Provost For Academic Services. The Action Plan requires that students conduct a self-assessment by evaluating the reasons for their current grade point average and by identifying strategies for improving their academic performance. Students also report on how they have made use of appropriate academic resources. A final component of the Action Plan is a 30-minute meeting each week throughout the semester with the assigned TEAM Mentor. During these ongoing meetings, students have the opportunity to reflect, build strategies for success, and work on essential time management and study skills.

TEAM Mentors participate in mentor and academic support training each academic year and are required to communicate on student’s progress to the OAS at least twice a semester. These reports from individual TEAM mentors are conveyed to the Academic Standing Committee and are taken into account as decisions are made about students’ academic status. This provides an essential feedback loop that allows the committee to make informed decisions about student progress.

Data from the current year would suggest that the TEAM program is a significant factor in providing support for academically at risk students. In 2012-13, 43 professional staff served as TEAM mentors, and 90 students participated as mentees (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Status of Participating TEAM Students – End of 2012-2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Removed from probation or graduated</td>
<td>51% (n=46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing on Academic probation</td>
<td>30% (n=27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspended or academically dismissed</td>
<td>12% (n=11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn from the College</td>
<td>7% (n=6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certainly, these are numbers that the College would like to improve further, but nevertheless they seem to offer the hopeful implication that the majority of students placed on academic probation benefit from the kind of focused attention that is provided to them through resources like the TEAM program.

However, interpretation of such self-report measures of satisfaction is fraught with ambiguities so that they often fail to adequately assess the ultimate effectiveness of the program or help to explain for example, why approximately 30% of the seniors surveyed felt the assistance provided was less than satisfactory. Further efforts to follow-up on this data are underway.

- **Office of Academic Skills (OAS)**

Information regarding the staff and services of the OAS can be found on their website and also in Chapter 4 of this Self-Study. The 2011-2012 OAS Annual Report notes that during the preceding years the number of students who requested accommodations had tripled, but that in 2011-12 the numbers requesting accommodations and availing themselves of OAS resources had decreased somewhat. It is unclear what this may mean. Have we now reached the point that we are addressing the needs of all students who qualify for accommodations? Is the decline a result of factors that dissuade students from taking fullest advantage of the services of OAS?

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the average number of enrolled students who qualified for accommodations in each semester was 170; however the average number of students who received accommodation letters was 128 (75% of those who were qualified). Of these students, an average of 99 students (58% of those qualified) actively took their exams in the OAS. Many other qualified individuals may obtain accommodation from their instructor(s), but this number has not been tracked. The total number of exams proctored in the OAS = 1,369. The number of make-up exams for students who do not receive accommodations is unknown for academic year 2011-2012.

During academic year 2012-2013 the average number of enrolled students who qualified for accommodations was 185; however the average number of students who received accommodation letters was 126 (68% of those who qualified). Of these students, an average of 105 students (57%) actively took their exams in the OAS. Again, those who arrange accommodations with their instructors are not tracked. The total number of exams proctored in the OAS was 1,522. Approximately 7% (107 exams) of the tests proctored were make-up exams for students who did not receive accommodations. This service is provided as a courtesy to faculty who need assistance in proctoring make-up exams.

From these data it appears we can anticipate that approximately 7% of the student body may both qualify and seek some sort of accommodation due to learning difference(s) or physical/sensory limitation(s). However, there are likely to be 11.7% to 12.6% of the enrolled students who could avail themselves of the testing accommodations should all qualifying students do so. Why do 25-30% of all enrolled students with documented need for accommodations not pursue these? Are the needs of students not obtaining testing accommodations through OAS being served by individual faculty? If so, how may this be tracked/assessed? Furthermore, it is probable that there are additional students who would qualify for accommodations, but do not submit the documentation to the College to qualify.

The OAS does much more than provide students with testing accommodations. They provide services (e.g., Study Skills Workshops, Peer Tutoring and Course Mentors) that are available to all students. Additional details regarding the OAS and the services offered are found in Chapter 4.

- **Writing Center**

> “By promoting writing as an essential element of instruction and learning, the Writing Center supports students’ intellectual development and contributes to the broader culture of writing at Washington College.” (from the Writing Center Mission Statement)
The Writing Center is both a resource for faculty as well as students. For faculty, the writing center staff has contributed formal workshops to assist them in developing effective strategies embedding writing into a range of courses within the curriculum beyond the first-year GRW seminars and Writing Intensive courses. For students, the Writing Center offers individualized consultation session with staff as well as peer tutors. The staff of the center contributes directly to the curriculum with their Seminar in Peer Tutoring, offered annually through the Education Department (EDU-490).

Figure 13.1 from the Center's 2012-2013 Annual Report captures the proportion of student consultations by discipline or subject area over a three-year period and is illustrative of the Center's broad contribution to student majors. While 37% of the student consultations were for assignments in the common courses comprising the first-year general education requirement (GRW- and ENG-101) and another 18% were for work assigned in upper-level courses in English, the remaining 45% of the consultations were for work assigned in courses spanning the curriculum. Yet, students enrolled in courses offered by various disciplines/departments do not appear to be fully utilizing the Center as a resource (e.g., disciplines accounting for fewer than 8% of the consultations). This may be due in part to a general decline in the number of sophomores and juniors utilizing the Center. However, it might also reflect the nature of the writing assignments that are assigned in courses typically taken by sophomores and juniors. The fourth highest percentage of consultations is with seniors who are engaged in completing their SCE (8%).

Figure 13.1: Writing Center Student Conferences by Major – 2011-2012 Academic Year

One trend that is particularly evident in the Writing Center's 2011-12 annual report is an overall increase in student services over the past several years. There was a 14% increase in the number of tutoring sessions conducted in 2010-11 and another 12% increase in 2011-12. Numbers from 2012-13 indicate yet another large jump: a 21% increase over the previous year. Some of the reasons for this increase are evident. For instance, the increase in the number of international students studying at the College has had a large impact on the College's support services. Non-native English speakers accounted for 16% of the Writing Center's tutoring sessions in 2011-12; in 2012-13, they accounted for 36%. In other ways, however, the increase has outstripped the overall increase in enrollment at the College. Given this exponential growth, the Writing Center and the College face the challenge of determining how to maintain the quality of support they now provide while also attending to the increase in student demand.

The Writing Center conducts regular assessment of learning outcomes associated with tutoring sessions through student user surveys, a review of session reports submitted by tutors after each appointment, and most recently, a statistical study of the academic performance of frequent users during their first year at the College. These sources provide both qualitative and quantitative indicators of the results of student experiences in the Writing Center. See the information under the first self-study question below for more information about these assessments.

Details regarding the professional staff and strategic review of the Writing Center are provided in Chapter 4 of this self-study, the Center's 2011-12 annual report, and their 2009 self-study document.
• **Additional Support for English Language Learners**

In order to address the distinct English language challenges of some of our incoming international students, the College offers a special section of ENG-101. The credit-hours, goals and learning objectives, reading and writing assignments, and overall format are the same as the other sections of ENG-101; however, students enrolled in this section benefit from being in a classroom environment with other non-native English speakers. The instructor provides additional tools to encourage their ongoing development of English reading and writing proficiency. A very heavy emphasis is placed on reviewing drafts individually with the instructor, and on revising written assignments. This course makes use of a dedicated Writing Center peer consultant who develops a close working relationship with the course instructor and students throughout the semester.

Students who are enrolled in this section of ENG-101 are also enrolled in ELL-101 English for Academic Purposes, which is a two-credit course that develops the listening, speaking, reading, writing, and critical thinking skills that students need in all of their college courses, regardless of the discipline. Students enrolled in this course complete classroom activities and also attend weekly lab sessions. Beginning in Fall 2013, a few students who were not enrolled in ENG-101 were permitted to take ELL-101.

The Associate Provost for Academic Services works together with the Office of Admissions, the Global Education Office, and ENG/ELL faculty to identify students who would benefit from these courses. This identification includes reviewing the student’s TOEFL scores and writing samples.

• **Quantitative Skills Center**

Details regarding the mission, professional staff and strategic review of the Quantitative Skills Center (QSC) are provided in Chapter 4. The QSC operated in a manner very similar to the Writing Center, providing drop-in tutoring sessions by student tutors and specialized workshops. The 2009 external review of the QAS recognized that significant turnover in the QSC Director over the past nine years had likely contributed inconsistencies in the quantity and quality of the support that students were receiving during this period. During the past two years a full-time director has been in place and the Center has a new home within the recently renovated Miller Library.

The annual reports submitted in past years have tracked the number of students who utilize the QSC by semester and the number of visits. Centralized Web-based appointment scheduling for Academic Resources (Writing Center, OAS, GEO & QSC) has been implemented in the recent years which has helped track their utilization and anticipate periods of peak demand so that tutors can be better utilized. The quantitative course that visitors to the QSC are taking is also tracked and reveals that from year to year the quantitative assignments that students most often seek assistance with is generated from a common group of courses, all of which are typically taken by first-year students: MAT-109 Statistics and MAT-201 Differential Calculus, MAT-202 Integral Calculus and MAT-135 Finite Mathematics. Very few students enrolled in quantitative courses that are offered by departments other than Mathematics and Computer Science utilize the QSC as a resource. In particular, a substantial number of economic courses require use of quantitative analytics.

Each year the QSC conducts a survey of those students who visit the center to gauge their perceptions of the assistance they obtain from the tutors. The results indicate that students who visit the QSC do value the assistance they obtain and feel that the consultation with a tutor helps insures their mastery of quantitative skills required in their respective courses. According to the most recent analysis conducted by the QSC director comparing the relative success in their courses of frequent versus infrequent users, the performance of frequent users of the center was significantly greater (see Standard 14, Appendix 14.7). This data helps to characterize the effectiveness of tutorials and those courses/students that could benefit most from the QSC resources. The next steps will be to develop strategies that will bring such students to the QSC.

**Experiential Learning and Other Academic Opportunities**

Washington College currently has no branch campuses; however, the College offers students offsite instructional and experiential learning opportunities via formal and informal affiliations with a number of institutions and programs as well as with alumni. In addition, we offer our students internship opportunities that take place on and off campus as well as for and not for credit along with a host of other research experiences via formal and informal affiliations with a number of institutions and programs as well as with alumni.  In addition, we offer our students internship opportunities that take place on and off campus as well as for and not for credit along with a host of other research opportunities. The College's Curriculum Committee, integrated into departmental assessment plans, and evaluated by students using our current student evaluation system. In addition, GEO offers support to faculty in regards to travel arrangements as well as security and health concerns.

• **Study Abroad**

The Global Education Office (GEO) of Washington College supplements the on-campus curriculum with study abroad opportunities for its students, and it seeks to ensure that all partner programs uphold the same standard of academic rigor that the College maintains for itself. Approximately 29% of students participate in some form of study abroad experience during their time at the College (2009 IE working Group Self Study, p. 3), whereas a goal that has been disseminated is 60%. The College offers 28 programs for semester- and year-long study abroad. In addition, the College's faculty members offer 13 short-term programs over the winter break or during the summer. For example, the Department of Philosophy and Religion offers two short-stay research seminars; one at Oxford University during the summer and the other at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Other examples of such short-stay programs include the Kiplin Hall Trip (ENG-385 Literature and Landscape; described below), BIO/ENV-221 The Bermuda Environment, and ENV-222 Summer Environmental Studies in Ecuador. Since 2003 BUS-330 International Business Experience has incorporated short-stay experiences in a total of 26 countries throughout Europe, Asia, South America, as well as Australia, Canada and Mexico. A complete list of the College's study abroad programs is available in the 2013-2014 Catalog and on its website.

Short-term programs taught by College faculty are assessed in the same way as other on-campus courses. They are vetted by the College's Curriculum Committee, integrated into departmental assessment plans, and evaluated by students using our current student evaluation system. In addition, GEO offers support to faculty in regards to travel arrangements as well as security and health concerns.

The assessment and review of the College's semester- and year-long programs is under development. Each program has a faculty advisor. Until 2005, the College had an Off-Campus Study Committee whose charge was to review study abroad programs. However, due to a lack of investment of its membership, the committee was deemed ineffective and was dissolved. From that point forward, faculty worked with the liaison and the Office of International Programs (now GEO) directly when proposing new study abroad programs and
reviewing ongoing programs. While this system has provided an adequate means of assessment, it was suggested there was need for more systematic faculty oversight of how the programs fit into the overall vision for the College and its curriculum. In response to a petition by faculty sent to the Provost expressing concerns about the need for more faculty review of programs, an International Education Task Force was formed in 2008 to review the state of International Education. The Task Force's 2009 Report on International Education at Washington College recommended that the faculty reinstate a committee on International Education to "evaluate and monitor international semester programs and summer programs, develop new programs and faculty exchanges, promote site visits, and promote the integration of international programs and students into the curriculum and life of Washington College." (p. 5; 2009 Task Force Report). Changes in the College's governance structures and leadership postponed action on the task force, but in 2012, the faculty voted for the creation of the International Education Committee (IEC) with the following charge:

The Committee on International Education will provide an effective voice to discuss and shape significant issues related to International Education at Washington College. The Committee will work together with the Director of the Office of International Programs and the Associate Provost for Academic Services on the following: assessing, monitoring and establishing protocols and guidelines for the support, implementation and direction of international semester and short-term programs, developing new programs and faculty exchanges, promoting site visits, examining and addressing the needs of international students to thrive academically and socially at Washington College, and promoting the integration of international programs and students into the intellectual and social life of Washington College. The committee meets annually with the Provost and Vice Presidents of Student Affairs and Admissions.

The committee is composed of three elected faculty members, the Associate Provost for Academic Services, the Director of GEO, and two students appointed by the Student Government Association. One student member should be an international degree-seeking student.

The current evaluation of study abroad programs, developed by the GEO director, takes place through GEO. This assessment is primarily conducted through a student survey after the study abroad experience. The survey assesses students' experiences abroad around five areas: advising through the Global Education Office at Washington College; students' academic experience at their host university; living conditions and accommodations while abroad; engagement in social and cultural opportunities, and students' overall assessment of the experience. In addition, the committee has put together a rubric to be used to vet new programs and to review current programs going forward. The rubric along with other information about the vetting process is available in the GEO report on Vetting and Approving Study Abroad Programs. The International Education Committee will oversee this review process, and data collected from the rubric, in conjunction with the GEO student survey and feedback from faculty advisors, will be used to review current programs every five years. The committee also plans to review the responsibilities of thefaculty advisor to ensure a more thorough understanding of each partner institution. One of the current challenges in the process is the lack of funding to support site visits. As a result, many sites have not been reviewed in quite some time. The hope is that, going forward, funding will become available so that a complete review will be possible.

More information on the Mission, Goals, and Objectives of the Global Education Office is available in their assessment document. Additional details regarding the GEO and Study Abroad are provided in Chapter 4, Standard 8.

- Experiential Learning

Integrative learning, also referred to as applied or experiential learning, is offered to Washington College students through a broad array of opportunities designed to link learning outside the classroom with academic inquiry and scholarship. The College's integrative learning programming is designed and reviewed using findings from a variety of assessment tools that yield qualitative analytics, descriptive and anecdotal case studies, and evidence-based results to support continuous improvement and feedback to stakeholders including students, parents, alumni, faculty, administrators, externship and internship hosts/sites, and other external partners. In planning and implementing integrative learning here at the College, we strive to integrate the standards and best practices supported by the Association of American Colleges and Universities "Statement on Integrative Learning", the Council on Undergraduate Research, the National Association of Colleges and Employers, and the National Society of Experiential Education, among others.

"Mapping Your Future: Paths to a Career" is Washington College's holistic approach to integrative learning and includes important milestones for a student to customize his/her experiential opportunities to guide choices of majors and minors, course electives, civic engagement projects, and career objectives. This program prepares students for a career that fits their interests and talents and draws on the strengths of their liberal arts education.

Students are encouraged to move through a freshmen skills assessment phase (Focus 2) and are then provided opportunities for first and second year externships/job shadowing. These experiences are followed by summer and in-semester internships/research placements. Some of these are credit bearing or are required components of major study (i.e. political science, business management, psychology). Others are completed solely for the student's experience and personal edification.

For many years, Washington College has been an affiliate of the Washington Center and American University's Washington Semester Program, both of which provide internships and courses in the greater Washington DC-Baltimore, MD, and Northern Virginia urban corridor. The College has also created partnerships with internship providers such as CISAbroad, IFS-Butler, and Hansard that offer international internships. We have forged partnerships with several providers that offer volunteer social service learning opportunities here in the U.S. and globally. The College continually offers a number of options for students wishing to study abroad. Upper level, targeted career awareness programming, such as the Washington College to Wall Street Program, junior/senior- alumni mentoring, as well as the four-year pre-health and pre-law mentoring initiatives round out the list of integrative learning options.

"Mapping Your Future" is coordinated through the Office of the Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives and the Washington College Career Development Center. Administrators and staff assist students in 1) identifying experiential learning opportunities 2) reading them for application processes and interviews 3) and providing professional networking, workplace etiquette, and skills trainings. The Center maintains internships.com, provides other internship search information on the College website, and manages career expos on campus. The Office of the Assistant Dean conducts regular programming on campus for students interested in externships and internships. Various offices and the Center collaborate to bring speakers to campus to discuss career opportunities, use of on-line employment sites, and social media professional networks.
Washington College faculty, the Provost’s Office, the Assistant Dean and Career Center staff are involved in assessing and analyzing student outcomes related to integrative learning. Students are asked to complete a number of evaluations related to their experiences outside the classroom and respond to surveys about career preparedness and awareness. A major aim of the various integrative learning assessment tools is as noted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities for “Today, college graduates must be able to integrate and apply disciplinary and cross-disciplinary learning in new contexts as they seek better and more responsible solutions to problems encountered in work and in society” (AACU).

Washington College offers funding support for students interested in pursuing externships, internships, and research projects. For example, generous awards from the Comegys-Bight fund provide history and cultural internships, awards from the Bennett Funds and the Rebecca Corbin Loree Internship Fund support business focused internships. Johnson Funds provide internship assistance to international studies students, and Cater funding is available to high-achieving students seeking internships and research opportunities here and abroad. Goldstein, Houghton, and Hodson funding supports externs and interns in a variety of majors. Science majors are supported by CES/Chino Farms awards and by Middendorf, Layton, and John S. Toll Fellows funding. Students focused on journalism are supported by Jacoby or Harwood awards. Fellowships are also available for students interested in Jewish-American studies through the Roy Ans award, African-American studies through the Frederick Douglass program, and religion and political values through support from the Institute for Religion, Politics and Culture. As a Maryland independent college, Washington College participates in the National Security Scholarship Program which offers internships in national security focused organizations, high-level security clearances, and scholarship support to our students.

A list of all the Washington College funding sources for internships and research can be found on the Center for Career Development’s Internship website. Annual Cap & Gown Surveys completed by graduating students indicate that 60% of current students have had at least one internship experience.

Figure 13.2 shows several types of evaluative tools and assessments are utilized at various milestones/stages of the integrative learning process including student self-reports, internship and research site supervisor input forms, faculty assessments, pre- and post-activity surveys, compilations of portfolios, and longitudinal assessments such as the Cap & Gown Exit Survey administered to graduating seniors and the 5-year post graduate survey provided to alums. The diagram indicates the College office or personnel responsible for providing surveys, compilations of portfolios, and longitudinal assessments such as the Cap & Gown Exit Survey administered to graduating seniors. These processes include student self-reports, internship and research site supervisor input forms, faculty assessments, pre- and post-activity surveys, compilations of portfolios, and longitudinal assessments such as the Cap & Gown Exit Survey administered to graduating seniors.

The following are the current methods by which a student may pursue a formal experiential learning opportunity during their academic career at Washington College:

- **Freshman and Sophomore Externships/Job Shadowing Program**
  
  New in 2012, first and second-year students have the opportunity to engage in an externship program, coordinated by the Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives. During the fall, winter, and spring breaks, students who meet the 3.0 GPA requirement may complete an application for an externship. The student is paired with a participating host/mentor, based on academic interest. These hosts are often alumni, friends, or parents of current students. For one to three days, the student visits the host’s work site, spends the day reviewing the mission and goals of the organization and learning about job-related tasks. Following the site visit, both the mentor and the student complete an assessment of the experience. A similar program is also available to all athletes, and in 2012-2013, a new WC-Latino Community externship program was created with local community non-profit, government and for-profit partners. While all these externships are non-credit bearing, they are tracked through the Office of Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives and the Registrar’s Office using a reporting tool separate from the academic transcript process.

  Program components and assessment forms for externs and for hosts participating in the Freshmen and Sophomores Externship/Job Shadowing Program can be accessed here.

- **Internships**

  Internships that are coordinated by the College fall into three broad categories: credit-bearing, noncredit-bearing, and Signature Internships. These may occur during the summer as well as during the academic year. During the summer of 2013, 176 students took part in either an internship for academic credit, or an internship or externship without academic credit (Figure 13.3). Students completed internships during all four academic years (Figure 13.4) and represented 27 majors, with the highest proportion of majors from Biology (10%), Business Management (10%), Environmental Studies (9%), and Psychology (9%). Institutional support for these experiences comes from a wide range of sources and totaled $230,117.50 for the summer of 2013 (Figure 13.5).

  Figure 13.2: Distribution of internship (for academic credit or not) and externship experiences during the summer of 2013.
Figure 13.3: Distribution of all internship experiences by year class during the summer of 2013.

Figure 13.4: Internship funding sources and total dollar amount for each source the summer of 2013.
Credit-Bearing Internship Experiences

All for-credit internships must be supervised by faculty mentors. Students are granted 2-4 credits based on the length of work time (a 140 minimum for 2 credits) and the substantive nature of the work. Students are required to create learning objectives that are discussed/negotiated with faculty mentors and their learning contracts include specific academic assignments that are reviewed and assessed by the faculty mentor. Internship site supervisors are required to complete mid-term and final assessment forms on the quality of the student’s work and learning on the job. Students also are asked to complete evaluation forms for their internships.

Other programs have reporting systems unique to the experience. For example, a Washington College student participating in the Washington Center program is required to complete a portfolio that reports on his/her internship, the course itself and leadership forum activities. This portfolio is then reviewed and graded by a Washington College faculty advisor. Several academic departments (i.e. business management and psychology) have created in-semester or over-the-summer internship courses. The course syllabi set out specific intern-focused academic assignments and require site supervisor assessments.

Some in-semester courses require that students conduct an internship or social service learning component. The site supervisor is asked to assess the student’s work and this input is provided to the faculty instructor for grading evaluation and ultimately granting credits to the student.

A common portal to assist students looking for internship opportunities and acquiring all the necessary forms has been established [here](https://washcoll.compliance-assist.com/accreditation/requirement.aspx?id=4f109536-7e1f-e211-9021-86539cf2d30e).

Other Assessment Tools Used for Student Internships

In May each academic year, the Center for Career Development conducts a student survey to learn about students’ summer plans and follows up with a post-summer survey. Analytics are also maintained by the Office of the Assistant Dean on the numbers and types of internships conducted by students for-credit and for non-credit as well as by majors, by class status (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior) and other characteristics.

Non-Credit Internships

Many students either opt to pursue or are encouraged by faculty to obtain non-credit bearing internships. Starting in 2012, these are now tracked through the Office of the Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives and the Registrar’s Office for purposes of creating a report separate from the academic transcript. Students are also asked to complete a brief evaluation of their work experience that is submitted to the Center for Career Development.

Washington College “Signature” Internships

The term “signature” refers to internship opportunities or related funding that is open to Washington College students or alumni exclusively or where the host organization may provide special consideration of the applicant’s qualifications for the position. The list includes internships with: the Academy Art Museum; Children's National Medical Center in Pediatric Cardiology; Children's National Medical Center Student Innovators' Program; Comegys Bight Summer Fellowships; DOHA Bank; Hansard Program in International Studies; Health Integrity, Inc; Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Governor's Internship Program; National Security Scholarship Program, National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration internships/research; Office of Naval Intelligence; Washington Center; Washington College Institute for Religion, Politics, and Culture; Washington Intern Student Housing Internship Program; and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.
On- and Off-Campus Research Opportunities

Students are encouraged to participate in on- and off-campus research programs/projects supervised by professionals and practitioners. For example, the College partners with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to offer summer research/internships at over 50 national research and field stations/sites. A number of college "Signature" research/internships have been created through the support and guidance of alumni and friends of the college. For example, several of these allow students to conduct off-campus health and medical research.

Each summer a number of students conduct research on-campus as collaborators with Washington College faculty in the sciences (click link for video compilation of Summer 2013 research). In the past two years this has been coordinated through the John S. Toll Science and Mathematics Fellows Program. Through this program the College extends support for collaborative student and faculty research throughout the academic year. A ten-year summary of this summer program is available here.

Beginning in the summer of 2013, the Provost and Dean of the College has funded several pilot projects intended to foster similar collaborative student/faculty research with faculty in the Divisions of Humanities and Social Science. The first three of these fund projects in drama, anthropology, and modern languages.

The Literary House offers research positions, as does the Center for Environment and Society funded through special grants.

Student research may result in credit-bearing, graded courses, academic presentations at professional conferences, and/or in published materials.

Pre-Health, Pre-Law and Graduate School Preparation

Students interested in preparing for professional graduate education and careers are encouraged to: 1) join the relevant College email-based listserv to learn about events and on-campus activities relevant to the professional fields (i.e. pre-med; pre-pharmacy; pre-nursing; pre-law); and to 2) participate in on-and off-campus related pre-professional opportunities including lectures, conferences, presentations, field trips, as well as GRE, MCAT, LSAT test preparation offerings including on-campus practice tests and online preparation courses. Faculty and administrators work directly with pre-professional students mentoring them through the application process and hopefully on to successful admission. Pre-medical applicants participate in a rigorous pre-application process including interviews by Pre-medical Committee members and the solicitation letters of recommendation from faculty and staff which are forwarded to the Pre-medical Committee. The results of these processes is the generation of a substantial letter of recommendation compiled by the Pre-medical Committee for the student's application file. Metrics on numbers of applicants and admission rates to various post-graduate programs are maintained by various College offices. An example of this is the list of medical, veterinary and dental schools to which Washington College students have been accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A./M.S./M.S.W., etc.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.B.A.</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: The remaining % of graduates indicate admission to Ph.D. or other doctoral programs, as well as M.S, M.A., or certificate programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These numbers (Tables 13.2 and 13.3) may be underestimates because not all members of each graduating class complete the Cap & Gown Survey (roughly 80-90% complete it each year), and students who may ultimately gain admission months after graduation may not self-report this to the College. It is also worth noting that the national norm, atypical of WC pre-med students, is to NOT apply to medical school directly upon graduation, but to take one or more years after college before doing so.

The Pre-Law Advisor's draft 2013 annual report indicates that 8 students were admitted to seven different law school programs and one member of the class of 2010 was assisted with preparations for his application to the University of Baltimore.

The Pre-Med Advisor maintains a library of study aids and program catalogs for students interested in pursuing careers in health professions and veterinary medicine. Student portals to obtain information and access to resources related to Pre-Law and Pre-Med/Health professions have been established on the College website.

National Competitively Fellowships

The Office of the Associate Provost is responsible for working with students interested in post-graduate fellowships. Starting freshmen year, potential students are identified and are mentored as they progress in their studies and prepare applications for these fellowships. To access information on these nationally competitive fellowships see the nationally competitive fellowships page.

The Douglass Cater Society of Junior Fellows

The Cater Society of Junior Fellows offers competitive grants to its student members for non-credit off-campus experiential learning opportunities. The funds support self-directed student projects that demonstrate creativity, initiative, and intellectual curiosity anywhere.
in the world.

Established by former President of the College Douglass Cater and his wife Libby, the intent was to bring together the best and brightest students in “a companionship of learning.” Before assuming his position as President, Cater worked at the Aspen Institute. His experiences there and familiarity with the Society of Fellows at Harvard University inspired his vision for the Society of Fellows, which he described as a “companionship of learners.” The CSJF was to be comprised of students who embodied the characteristics of scholarship, character and leadership.

The CSJF currently is comprised of approximately 70 student members, and accepts a new class of only 20 students annually. The criteria for selection is quite rigorous. Student grants are also very competitive and require detailed and project proposals. The best proposals are those that expand the scope of the student’s education but “also for the Society and the broader community of which it is part.” Examples of such projects include:

- Internship with the Center for International Policy in Washington, DC
- Researching Youth Well-Being with an Aboriginal Controlled Agency in Australia
- Internship with International Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Switzerland
- Volunteer Projects in South Africa and Cambodia

In 2011 the CSJF celebrated their 20th Anniversary with current and past alumni (click to view video on YouTube).

### Kiplin Hall Trip

Kiplin Hall is a 17th century manor house in the north of England that was the home of George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, who developed the concept of a colony in the Americas dedicated to religious freedom for Catholics. In February, 2013, Maryland Public Television offered a documentary about the historic connection between Kiplin Hall, Lord Baltimore and Maryland entitled “Kiplin Hall – Birthplace of Maryland.”

For over a decade, Washington College students have had the unique opportunity to travel to Yorkshire, England for three weeks during the summer, live in Kiplin Hall, and explore the surrounding environs that inspired such poets as Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Seamus Heaney, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth, while reading and discussing their works. The Kiplin Hall Trip, (ENG 385: Literature and Landscape) is a credit-bearing experiential learning course combining literary, landscape, and architectural discourse as components of a unique immersive field experience.

### The Center for the Environment and Society—Chesapeake Semester

Offered through The Center for the Environment and Society (CES) each fall since 2009, the Chesapeake Semester offers a select group of students a highly interdisciplinary and experiential learning opportunity in the Chesapeake Bay region and beyond. The goals of the program are to help students in developing qualities of civic leadership while also engaging them in issues related to local environmental culture. After applying to participate in the experience, students who are accepted take part in intensive classroom study as well as travel and hands-on site visits to the locations being investigated. Past semesters have incorporated four “Journeys” commencing with a ten-day 842 mile trip circumnavigating the Bay (Journey 1: A Sense of Place & History). Students depart from Chestertown and travel down the Delmarva and up the Western Shore of Maryland stopping at historic landmarks like Jamestown, Colonial Williamsburg, Shirley Plantation, Historic St. Mary’s City, our state capital Annapolis, Havre de Grace, and Port Deposit. During the next two journeys the students explore the western borders of the estuary watershed in the Shenandoah National Park and travel eastward visiting other national parks and wildlife refuges (Journey 2: Ridge to Ocean), followed by visits with local farmers, watermen on the Eastern Shore and policymakers in the state capital (Journey 3: Issues & Management Fisheries, Agriculture, Development & Policy). Despite the name, student experiences are not limited to the Bay and its surroundings alone, as they embark upon their final journey to Peru where they are challenged to draw critical comparisons between the two regions, focusing on how aspects of the environment may contribute to shaping culture and environmental policy (Journey 4: Peru: A Contrast in Environment & Culture). During the fall 2012 semester, there were five faculty coordinators of the four courses, drawn from the Departments of Biology, English, Anthropology, Environmental Studies and the CES. An additional 15 faculty contributed in some manner (e.g. presentations, workshops, facilitators). These additional contributors were drawn from the Departments of Art & Art History, Business Management, Economics, Chemistry, Philosophy, Political Science, and the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience.

The semester program is integrated across four, four-credit courses: CRS-240: The Natural Science of an Estuary; CRS-242: The Social Science of an Estuary; CRS-244: A Humanities Perspective on the Chesapeake; and CRS-246: Interdisciplinary Study of an Estuary: Integration and Action. These courses may be applied toward completion of the concentration in Chesapeake Regional Studies, the College major in environmental studies and general education distribution requirements. As credit-bearing, discipline-based classes, the courses involved in the Chesapeake Semester are vetted through the College’s Curriculum Committee and participating students receive consistent assessment and feedback through classroom activities and assignments. For instance, in the final semester project, students are evaluated based on a writing project integrating the components of their experience, a panel discussion, and the presentation of a documentary-style video project prepared by student teams. Essential outcomes of the program are provided to faculty via an end of year letter (2011 letter; 2012 letter) from the program coordinator.

For further description of the goals and means of assessment for the program, please see the Chesapeake Semester Working Document.

### Experiential Programs Sponsored by the C.V. Starr Center and the Rose O’Neill Literary House

Both the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience and the Rose O’Neill Literary House contribute programs and talks by visiting scholars throughout the academic year as well as sponsored research opportunities for students.

Examples include the non-credit Print Shop Workshops that are offered each semester as well as the Writers’ Union and Writer’s Theater, two student-run organizations intended to foster a vibrant and productive writers’ community. The Literary House is also home to the College’s Board of Publications, charged with coordinating four student-run campus publications: the campus newspaper (The Elm), the yearbook (Pegasus), a monthly magazine (The Collegian) and an undergraduate academic journal (The Washington College Review).
Likewise, the C.V. Starr Center periodically offers weekend excursions to various regional locations associated with important milestones in our nation’s history. Such weekend “Road Trips” have included visits to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and Independence Hall in Philadelphia. The Center also sponsors student historical research projects such as an extensive examination of documents spanning 350 years, that were discovered in a local home (The Poplar Grove Project). During the 2012 presidential election, students and faculty from the Starr Center created an online resource on the website of the New York Times where they commented on the accuracy of historical references offered by candidates and political pundits (Historically Corrected).

- **The Archaeology Field School**
  The Department of Anthropology offers a 6-week (8-credit) experiential summer course in which students explore the practice of archaeological field research (ANT-296). Students learn, first hand, archaeological field methods, land surveying, and archaeological laboratory techniques through the excavation and analysis of a real archaeological site. Recent field school sites include Harriet Tubman’s Birthplace and the Mount Harmon Plantation.

- **Student/Alumni Mentoring Program for Juniors & Seniors**
  The Student/Alumni Mentoring Program provides students with an opportunity to connect over a four month period with alumni who can provide information about specific occupations in chosen career fields, insight into the expectations of the professional work environment, resources for identifying experiential learning opportunities, and suggestions for building a professional network. The program is a collaborative project between the College’s Alumni Relations Office and the Center for Career Development instituted in 2011. Applications for the program are submitted in mid-November. In early December, prior to winter break, alumni matches are assigned at a required orientation that includes a pre-assessment of mentoring readiness. The student initiates the mentoring contacts during January winter break and continues with telephone, email, and face-to-face meetings (when possible) through April of spring semester. Students are monitored by Career Center staff through regular email check-in to clarify expectations and progress with the mentors. Students are asked to complete a post-assessment and satisfaction survey at the end of the program.

- **Targeted Career Awareness Programs: Washington College to Wall Street**
  Talented and qualified juniors and seniors are invited to participate in targeted awareness programs. Washington College to Wall Street, developed in 2011-2012, serves as the model for this concept. Student attendance is required at on-campus panel presentations by practitioners in the financial services field. These are then followed up in the Fall with 1-2 day field experiences on Wall Street and at the New York Stock Exchange. Then students are placed in financially focused internships over the following two summers. Assessments are conducted at various phases of this program and metrics are maintained on the number, location and type of internship placements as well as how these internships lead to full time positions after graduation. We anticipate developing several new programs in other academic disciplines using the Washington College to Wall Street paradigm.

- **Multimedia and Learning**
  As part of Academic Computing, Educational Technology and Digital Media Services are distinct groups that share common resources including the Beck Multimedia and Technology Learning Center, the Multimedia Production Center, the digital media loaner pool and the sound Studio. Educational Technology works with faculty to develop project-based experiential learning opportunities within the regular curriculum. Many of these opportunities are based around digital media workshops offered by Educational Technology and supplemented by programming offered by Digital Media Services. These workshops are guided by the Educational Technology staff in the Beck Multimedia and Technology Learning Center. Beck also serves as an Apple Authorized Training Center where certification classes are offered for students who want to learn Final Cut Pro. Students also have access to the Multimedia Production Center, an “open” lab space which allows them to work on class-centered and independent media projects, consult with the staff, borrow digital equipment and in some cases take part in independently programmed workshops, excursions, and extracurricular programming. Educational Technology and Digital Media Services are located in Miller Library.

- **Model Programs in Diplomacy**
  The Goldstein Program in Public Affairs (GPPA) has helped to establish a number of extracurricular and co-curricular experiential programs as well as a competitive student grant program to foster opportunities for practical learning in public and international policy that extend beyond the classroom. The program supports faculty-led field trips (e.g., to the World Bank, the U.S. Department of State, the United States Institute of Peace, the National Portrait Gallery, C-SPAN, the Capitol building, and foreign embassies) and annual participation in Model United Nations, Public Leadership Education Network Seminar on Women and Public Policy, and SCUSA – the West Point Military Academy, Annual Student Conference on U.S. Affairs.

- **Civic/Service Learning Organizations**
  Campus service groups/clubs provide additional opportunities for experiential/integrative learning. In contrast to experiential programs that are discipline-based, some service groups (e.g., Habitat for Humanity, Best Buddies) include students with varied academic interests.

- **Alex. Brown Investment Fund**
  Students from any major have the opportunity to learn first-hand how to manage a portfolio of investments in an equity fund through the Alex. Brown Student Investment Program offered in the Department of Business Management. The Alex. Brown Student Investment Fund offers a unique experiential-learning opportunity for students to develop and practice their investment skills by managing a half million dollars in equity investments.

Students have front-line responsibility for researching and recommending equity trades. The program includes extensive interaction with investment professionals and ongoing research and learning opportunities. The program goal is to help talented, motivated students learn about and prepare for careers in the investment field.

In 2012-2013, students met weekly via Skype with the program’s senior advisor, Richard Bookbinder, a fund manager based in New York City. Three Alex. Brown students, along with Dept. Chair Prof. Michael Harvey, did a radio interview on the local radio station WCTR 1530 AM in February on investing and the current financial and economic landscape. Several Brown students visited the Bloomberg office in Washington, DC during the spring semester, learning how to use the famed Bloomberg terminal, ubiquitous in the investing community.
Guest speakers included three lecturers from the University of Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business—including Professor Cliff Rossi, who spoke on finance and investing, and a Skype session on socially responsible investing with Joshua Humphreys of the Tellus Institute.

### Mathematics and Computer Science Extracurricular Activities

According to the U.S. Department of Labor there will continue to be increasing demand for skilled computer and information scientists. Yet nationally, there are relatively few majors being graduated each year with the practical skills that the market requires. The Department of Mathematics and Computer Sciences has tried to address this and attract as well as retain students to the major by engaging students in two significant experiential extracurricular activities: The Annual Association of Computing Machinery’s International Collegiate Programming Contest (ACM-ICPC) and the Consortium for Mathematics and its Applications (COMAP) Mathematical Contest in Modeling.

The Department enters teams every year for the Putnam Competition and the team contest sponsored by the Consortium for Mathematics and its Applications (COMAP) Mathematical Contest in Modeling. Students, who are usually seniors, receive problem credit towards the senior capstone experience in mathematics.

Through the Department, Washington College has, since 2002, been one of approximately ten host sites in the Mid-Atlantic region for the International Computer Programming Competition sponsored by IBM and the Association of Computing Machinery. Teams from Washington College have participated in this contest since 1998, and historically at least one team routinely has placed in the top third of the contestants including one that placed thirteenth out of more than one hundred and eighty teams. The contest involves three-person teams using a single computer to solve as many problems as possible within five hours. The benefits to the students are the sense of camaraderie built up through a shared, stressful experience. The benefits to the College have been strong despite the cost in terms of engineering support, and the volunteer work of faculty members as coaches and judges. The contest is a way to test computing systems under heavy load conditions. Items such as Linux server virtualization, wireless and wired network security protocols, network fault tolerance and bandwidth issues, software installations etc., were tested here before being deployed to the rest of the campus. The contest is mostly of recreational benefit to the students.

### Self-Study Questions

In addition to the fundamental elements of Standard 13, the Self-Study Steering Committee addressed the following questions related to the quality of related educational activities at Washington College.

**Question 1:**
Given investments made in student support services (e.g. academic advising, peer mentoring, counseling services, writing center, math center, multicultural affairs office), is there evidence that these investments are effectively meeting the needs of their intended student populations?

The Writing Center stands as one example of the way that the College has effectively met student needs by investing in its academic support services.

Data from the Writing Center’s 2011-2012 annual report indicate not only that students are utilizing the Center as a resource more frequently than in the past, but also that there are some tangible learning outcomes associated with Writing Center use. Several conclusions seem particularly evident:

1. **Students who use the Writing Center return often.** In 2011-12, for instance, statistics show that over half (56%) of Writing Center users returned after a first appointment, for an average of 3.3 sessions per unique user. Considering data from other years, we can see this as an upward trend: In 2010-11, there were 2.7 visits per user on average; in 2012-13 there were 4.3. While frequency of use is not by itself evidence of successful outcomes, it nevertheless suggests that students are receiving the kind of support that makes them want to return.

2. **Students perceive a long-term benefit in using the Writing Center.** Survey data available in Appendix I of the 2011-12 annual report show that frequent users leave the Writing Center feeling that they’ve gained something from the experience. For instance, across the entire year, 70% of frequent user survey respondents said that sessions in the Writing Center contributed to their success on writing assignments “A Great Deal” or “A Lot.” Similarly, 69% of respondents said that sessions had increased their own self-awareness of their writing habits, strengths, and weaknesses.

3. **Writing Center frequent users perform more successfully than non-users in their first-year writing classes.** A statistical analysis of the performance of first-year students in relation to Writing Center use during 2010-11 revealed that frequent users (three or more sessions per semester) maintained a higher average GPA in their first-year writing classes than non-users both in the fall (frequent users: 3.14 vs. non-users: 3.04) and the spring (frequent users: 3.09 vs. non-users: 2.91). Regression analysis also revealed that frequent Writing Center use was at times a statistically significant predictor of overall GPA and grades in first-year writing, controlling for high school GPA, SAT scores, and gender. The full analysis is available in Appendix III of the 2011-2012 annual report.

**Question 2a:**
How effective and integrated with the College’s overall goals/mission are current credit-bearing off-campus academic study abroad programs?

While the College encourages all students to incorporate an abroad experience in their junior year, there are several majors which have integrated an abroad experience as required components of the curriculum. These include majors in German, Spanish and French as well as the interdisciplinary major in International Studies which requires all students to “... pursue two off-campus experiences – including at least one semester abroad (two encouraged)” (Student Handbook, p.293). Through their Global Learning Program, Business Management also requires students to incorporate some international component in one of three ways, one of which is “... participating in any study-abroad experience that earns Washington College Credit.” (Student Handbook, p. 123). Business Management has established partnerships with business programs at nine institutions in nine different countries to facilitate student placements in courses offered to students studying abroad.
Students from a broad spectrum of majors have the option of establishing a concentration within one of five international regions—African Studies, Asian Studies, European Studies, Latin American Studies and Near Eastern Studies. Arrangements for the courses that would fulfill requirements for the concentration are coordinated through the International Studies Program and GEO. Majors in Political Science also must fulfill an experiential learning requirement that may be satisfied in one of four ways, two of which incorporate an abroad experience. Like the Business Program, these are coordinated through the International Studies Program and GEO. For example, there are structured credit-bearing curricula that fulfill requirements for majors at Rhodes University in South Africa and the Hansard Scholars Program in London. The Political Science Program has developed both credit-bearing internship opportunities in Tanzania and a Summer Course: Politics, Culture, Economy, and Sustainable Development in Tanzania.

Other departments have developed global experiential learning electives. For example, education majors may elect to pursue two credit-bearing experiences in Global Education, a Summer Teaching Experience in Tanzania (EDU-215) and the course Two Irelands (EDU-498). Environmental studies majors may elect to enroll in the credit-bearing Washington College Summer Program in Ecuador. The Department of Biology offers the Bermuda Environment (BIO-221), a 2-week summer course that is also cross-listed in Environmental Studies (ENV-221). These courses are all accepted as course credit towards these respective majors. Of the 28 majors and programs offered by the College, 7 (25%) have developed formal and coherent mechanisms for students to obtain credit for courses or internships completed while abroad.

**Question 2b:**
How effective and integrated with the College’s overall goals/mission are current credit-bearing off-campus academic experiences/programs including internships/externships?

During the previous ten years the College has added to the extensive group of internship and externship opportunities available to students. The Assistant Dean for Academic Initiatives and her predecessor in the Office of the Provost have in recent years helped to formalize means for publicizing these internship and externship opportunities as well as developing a common application process and vetting applications for credit-bearing programs. Data collection and assessment of internships and externships is now centralized and rubrics for such experiences are under development.

Likewise, while in the past the focus of the GEO may have been on expanding the number and variety of abroad experiences that were available for students, the current director has developed and implemented new measures for vetting and assessing their quality. The use of the rubrics and assessment mechanisms for internships and externships is limited at present, but as data is collected from each semester a report summarizing these should be submitted to the Curriculum Committee (or assessment committee if one is formed) and offered for discussion during a faculty meeting or a pre-meeting informational session.

**Question 3:**
What opportunities/challenges exist for the expansion of our off-campus academic experiences or implementation of new off-campus academic initiatives?

**Study Abroad:**

The recommendations of 2009 Working Group Report (pp. 5-7) summarize several challenges that stand in the way of achieving the intended goal of providing 60% of our graduates with some form of abroad experience. The overarching impediment that they name is insufficient endowment to support GEO initiatives/programs. The self-study also revealed that most of our peer/aspirant comparison offer more short-stay opportunities (e.g., during summer or winter break) than semester or year-long. Expanding the number of these opportunities may be attractive to potential donors and thereby fiscally sustainable. Models for such programs currently exist at the College (i.e., The Oxford and the Jerusalem Seminars, offered by the Department of Religion and Philosophy; the Kiplin Hall Trip (Literature & Landscapes, ENG-385); The German Environment (ENV/BIO-221) & International Business Experience (BUS-330). Beyond providing enough fiscal and administrative support needed to attain the goal of 60% participation, it is important to invest in a process of strategic review and assessment of the courses that students take to ensure that they are of the requisite rigor and consistent with learning goals established for comparable courses at home.

**Integrated/Experiential Learning Opportunities:**

It can be concluded from this review that there exists a viable and varied program of integrated/experiential learning opportunities for students. These are not primarily found in any single department or division or mode of delivery. However, we aim to develop a comprehensive strategy for collecting meaningful data beyond participant surveys to assess their strengths and weaknesses. The Integrated Learning Assessment Tools and Student Outcomes scheme presented above represents an initial model for how this may be accomplished.

**Conclusion**

The possible educational opportunities contained in the Fundamental Elements of Standard Thirteen, along with the three Self-Study questions, afforded us the opportunity to examine how programs as diverse as academic support for under-prepared students and experiential credit and non-credit experiences work together as part of the whole institution and comport to the goals and values expressed in the Mission Statement. As a result of a close analysis of these activities, we assert that we are in compliance with the Fundamental Elements of Standard 13.

**Sources**

- 2012 Update on 2008 Retention Action Plan
- 2012 Update on 2008 Retention Action Plan (Page 8)
- 20th Anniversary
- AACU MACH Integrative Learning Without Borders 2013
- Academic Success Action Plan
- Archeology Field School
- AU Washington Semester
Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of student learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals.

Purpose and Overview

Washington College takes seriously our commitment to systematic assessment of student learning outcomes. The Middle States Characteristics of Excellence cites several key points and fundamental elements that an institution must demonstrate to be in compliance with Standard 14. Important considerations are that the assessment process be useful, cost-effective, reasonably accurate and truthful, carefully planned and organized, systematic, and sustained. Furthermore, fundamental considerations are that the process is used to evaluate and improve student learning, and that the process helps the College achieve its mission, goals, and plans. As the chapter demonstrates a variety of direct and indirect measures of student learning outcomes are used at WC. This chapter documents the College's compliance with these very important criteria.

Mission, Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

The recently-revised Mission Statement of the College is clearly centered on preparing our students for rich lives and leadership roles in society through an academically rigorous course of study. Our goals are similarly transparent in describing the student learning outcomes of the institution: the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, to assemble and analyze information from multiple disciplines, to perceive the connectedness and complexities of the world we live in and to learn and work independently and in partnership with others.

The institutional student learning outcomes of Washington College are also addressed in the Catalog, a document used by students throughout their four years and referenced continuously by the faculty. On the departmental level, learning outcomes are clearly described in the goals and objectives of each degree plan and are the basis upon which student learning outcomes are assessed in each academic program. The Document Directory of our Middle States website contains examples of departmental student learning outcomes assessment reports (see the Document Directory folder for Chapter 7, Standard 14 entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”).

Individual course syllabi address in a variety of ways the goals and objectives of a course, introducing the student learning outcomes of each course to the students (see the Document Directory folder for Chapter 7 entitled "Academic Department Syllabi"). For individual courses, student learning outcomes are rooted in the goals and objectives of the department and those of the department in the goals and objectives of the College, creating congruency from the individual course to the mission of the College as a whole. Though content and skill-based learning outcomes might vary greatly among degree programs, some of the overarching goals expressed in the Mission Statement ("habits of analytic thought and clear communication," for example) are expressed across the curriculum from our first-year writing courses (ENG-101 and GRW-101) and general education program, through the degree programs, and culminating in the Senior Capstone Experience.

Examples of assessment of College-wide student learning outcomes within various departments can be found in Appendix 14.1. A full description of the First-Year Writing Program can be found in Standard 12 under the heading "First-Year Writing Program" and an analysis of its efficacy is located under the "Assessment of Oral and Written Communication within the First-Year Writing Program" heading.

Writing across the curriculum, as a reflection of clear communication, is another example of the consonance of student learning outcomes across all levels at Washington College. Writing plays a significant role in the first-year sequence and is also addressed by the Writing Obligation required of all students (two Writing-Intensive courses, one each during the sophomore and junior years). Obviously, writing also plays a large role in Senior Capstone Experiences. Over the 2012-2013 academic year, the Curriculum Committee, based on assessment data and analyses (including surveys of students during their First-Year Writing sequence, first discussed in Standard 12), has considered the elements of writing in the curriculum and found that ENG-101 was indeed successful in providing a consistent foundation of acceptable writing at the college level and supports the qualities of effective writing common to all disciplines. However, the role of the two Writing-Intensive courses in this process is being considered for change. One possible change is to move one of these Writing-Intensive courses to a disciplinary writing requirement within the student's chosen major. The Committee agreed to revisit the 2007 Writing Task Force report and the more recent report developed by the Director of the Writing Program with an eye toward moving the recommendations embedded within them to a clear decision as part of the curriculum review.

Use of the SCE for assessing writing and/or oral communication varies among departments, but nearly all departments have rubrics for assessing clear communication of concepts in the SCE in written and often also in oral format. SCE rubrics can be found in nearly every academic program assessment plan; some examples can be seen in the assessment plans of the following departments: Biology, History, and Philosophy. Other mechanisms of assessing clear communication are used by many departments. Examples can be found in Appendix 14.2.

External Accreditation by Associations other than Middle States Commission on Higher Education
As first discussed in Standard 13’s self-study Question 1, only two of WC’s programs (Chemistry and Education) have professional accreditation beyond that granted by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. The Chemistry program is accredited by the Committee on Professional Training (CPT) of the American Chemical Society (ACS). The ACS Committee on Professional Training issues guidelines for the accredited curriculum which form the nucleus of the chemistry curriculum. The Department of Chemistry reports to the CPT annually and submits a more extensive report every five years; its last major submission was in May 2011. Since Washington College maintains a student enrollment of under 2000 students, the Education department is approved to offer training for Maryland State teacher certification in elementary education and 12 secondary education content areas. The department was last reviewed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MDSE) in February 2013 and received full state approval to continue certification programming until 2020.

Several other departments, while not accredited by another external association, do use various pertinent professional guidelines or criteria to shape their curriculum; these include the Psychology and Business Management departments. The Department of Psychology looks for regular guidance from the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major or D. F. Halpern’s (Ed.) 2010 book, Undergraduate Education in Psychology: A Blueprint for the Future of the Discipline, which is published by the APA.

The Department of Business Management, while too small to be accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), does monitor AACSB accreditation standards and rely on them to guide their curriculum. Within the AACSB framework, the business management program works these standards into their curriculum in a manner consistent with the College’s three core values of liberal learning—critical thinking, effective communication, and moral courage. Specifically the AACSB standards are explicitly woven into the seven major learning outcomes embedded in the department’s assessment plan:

- Managerial knowledge
- Critical thinking
- Quantitative analysis
- Communication skills
- Global perspective
- Collaboration skills
- Ethical awareness.

There are several departments that use nationally-normed, standardized tests as a way to track the impact of curricular improvements as well as examine how our students compare in content knowledge to other undergraduate majors nationwide. This represents an external validation that these academic programs meet the standards of higher education in these disciplines. Several such tests are used in the Natural Science Division. The Biology and Psychology departments have each been using the ETS Majors Field Test as an exit exam for their seniors for a number of years. The Chemistry department has begun using, over the past 1-2 years, several standardized exams administered by the ACS Division of Chemical Education Examinations Institute. These exams include subject-specific exams in general chemistry, organic chemistry, inorganic chemistry and periodically in analytical and physical chemistry. The department also administered the DUCK (Diagnostic of Undergraduate Chemistry Knowledge) exam for the first time in Fall 2012. Other examples of the use of standardized exams can be found in Appendix 14.3.

The Education department also relies on nationally-normed exams. As a teacher certification program requirement, all students who earn under 1100 on the SAT (reading and math combined) or 24 or more on the ACT must take and pass the Praxis I in reading, mathematics, and writing. In order to exit the program and be eligible for Maryland State certification, students must pass the appropriate content area Praxis II exam and appropriate Praxis Principles of Teaching and Learning exam. Passing scores are mandated and published by the Maryland State Department of Education.

The high quality of our faculty (see Standard 10), who teach our classes and assess our students is also an assurance that our academic programs meet or exceed the standards of higher education across the disciplines.

**Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA)**

The mechanism of student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) at Washington College is a four-stage process (Figure 14.1) including:

- The establishment of goals and student learning outcomes (objectives) following from the mission statement of the academic program and in a larger sense, reflecting the mission and goals of the College as a whole.

- The generation of program specific assessment mechanisms to measure student learning outcomes, including both direct and indirect measures, the determination of program criteria (determination of what level of student outcome meets, exceeds or fails program expectations), and the use of course matrix (curriculum map) to map which program goals are introduced, reinforced and mastered in all the courses offered in the program.

- Analysis of SLOA data using program-specific criteria for determination of which goals students met or failed to meet.

- “Closing the loop” actions in which SLOA data inform changes in curriculum, staffing and assessment mechanisms in order to improve student learning outcomes during the next iteration of the cycle.

*Figure 14.1: The four-stage mechanism of student learning outcomes assessment (SLOA) utilized by academic programs at Washington College.*
All academic programs of the College are engaged in SLOA (Table 14.1). Almost all have fully-formed assessment plans and with few exceptions are engaged in the collection of data from direct (and sometimes indirect) measures of student learning (Table 14.1, see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”). As is the case at many institutions of higher learning, assessment of student learning among academic programs is uneven at Washington College. In an attempt to standardize assessment the College has taken three important steps:

1. Provided greater guidance to academic program chairs and directors about the requirements of assessment planning and reporting
2. Retained a consultant on student learning outcomes assessment to review a sample of academic program assessment plans (see the “External Review of Assessment Plans” section below)
3. Generated recommendations (see Chapter 8) on how best to move forward on maintaining and improving our culture of sustainable, accurate and useful student learning outcomes assessment

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA reports) is mandated by the Provost and, in congruence with Middle States stipulations and the recommendations of a consultant in the field of student learning outcomes, is required to include the following elements:

- Mission statement & goals
- Student learning outcomes/measurable objectives—each addressing one or more goals
- A course matrix (curriculum map) indicating in which courses the goals of the department are addressed (though not necessarily assessed)
- Concrete direct (and indirect) assessment mechanisms generating quantitative data
- Criteria for determining the success of each assessment mechanism
- Annual assessment reports submitted to the office of the Provost and formatted as follows:
  - Summary of the department’s current and recent actions (“closing-the-loop” moments) as informed by assessment data from the previous academic years
  - Presentation of assessment data from the current academic year with outcomes clearly tied to goals/objectives
  - Analysis of the impact of current/recent academic year actions on current learning outcomes, understanding that responses from curricular or other change may take more than one year to manifest/present useful data
  - Suggestions of actions for the upcoming academic year informed by learning outcomes from this academic year with the understanding that complete discussion of the current academic year learning outcomes may not occur until the beginning of the fall semester

The structure of the SLOA reports tracks and presents the four stages of the SLOA process as shown in Figure 14.1 for each academic program. SLOA reports are available for all academic programs for the 2012-2013 academic year (see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”). The College is fully engaged in academic assessment and many departments have years of data and have been tracking trends and making curricular and programmatic improvements based on assessment outcomes for years.

However, the culture of documented, organized, data-driven academic assessment on campus is relatively new and not all academic programs have completed all the stages of the SLOA process (Table 14.1).

Table 14.1: Percentage engagement of academic programs (majors and interdisciplinary programs) in various stages of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment as of the end of the 2012-2013 academic year.
In the assessment planning process, stress has been placed on keeping assessment as natural and sustainable as possible. Academic program chairs/directors and through them, the faculty, are encouraged to utilize, where pertinent, existing assignments to gather assessment data with an eye towards being able to generate data that clearly addresses specific academic goals or objectives (student learning outcomes). This course of action is preferred to creating or purchasing purpose-built assessment tools, which can be expensive and/or time consuming for the faculty. This process has been incorporated into most academic programs, generating useful, goal-specific assessment data while minimizing additional workload on faculty. For example, instructors at the College utilize quizzes, specific exam questions, response-clicker data, in-class discussions, review of the primary literature, presentations, essays/papers, annotated bibliographies, portfolios, etc., to assess student learning outcomes. These are discussed in departmental and programmatic SLOA reports (see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled "SLOA Reports 2013").

The Senior Capstone Experience (SCE) is an excellent, campus-wide opportunity for assessment of all degree plans and is used as such in all majors. As first discussed in Standard 11 under the heading "Ensuring the Rigor of the Undergraduate Academic Program," a recent survey (see the next paragraph) noted that most departments (63%) reported they employed a rubric to determine capstone grades. The SCE often addresses most or all of the academic goals of a department and, coming as the culmination of the academic career of a student, is a perfect opportunity to collect direct assessment data from many if not all of the academic goals of a department. Several SCE rubric examples are provided above in the discussion on writing across the curriculum, and are provided again here in larger context (Biology, History, and Philosophy).

In the summer of 2008, Washington College joined Allegheny College, Augustana College and The College of Wooster in planning a major assessment of the impact of the required capstone experiences at each of these four schools. Through funding provided by the Teagle Foundation, data collection began in the 2009-2010 academic year and continued through the 2011-2012 academic year. A survey of faculty, students and campus-wide approaches to student learning outcomes assessment.

### Campus-Wide Approaches to Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

In the assessment planning process, stress has been placed on keeping assessment as natural and sustainable as possible. Academic program chairs/directors and through them, the faculty, are encouraged to utilize, where pertinent, existing assignments to gather assessment data with an eye towards being able to generate data that clearly addresses specific academic goals or objectives (student learning outcomes). This course of action is preferred to creating or purchasing purpose-built assessment tools, which can be expensive and/or time consuming for the faculty. This process has been incorporated into most academic programs, generating useful, goal-specific assessment data while minimizing additional workload on faculty. For example, instructors at the College utilize quizzes, specific exam questions, response-clicker data, in-class discussions, review of the primary literature, presentations, essays/papers, annotated bibliographies, portfolios, etc., to assess student learning outcomes. These are discussed in departmental and programmatic SLOA reports (see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled "SLOA Reports 2013").

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In the summer of 2008, Washington College joined Allegheny College, Augustana College and The College of Wooster in planning a major assessment of the impact of the required capstone experiences at each of these four schools. Through funding provided by the Teagle Foundation, data collection began in the 2009-2010 academic year and continued through the 2011-2012 academic year. A survey of faculty, students and alumni was used to examine the SCE process from multiple perspectives across all four campuses and presented to the campus as Teagle Washington College campus report. Results were examined both in-house and across the four institutions. Results from all three surveyed groups indicated a number of ways in which the SCE at Washington College is strong, supporting our institutional learning objectives and improving abilities in areas such as: thinking critically, analytically and creatively, writing in a clear and articulate manner, persisting in the face of difficulties, supporting arguments with evidence and others. However, survey results also indicated that Washington College ranked lowest on several measures when compared to the three other schools who completed the survey, including: student enthusiasm for their SCE topic, effectiveness and frequency of mentoring, and overall rating of the capstone experience.

For the following review of the Teagle survey data, a Campus Action Plan was proposed, consisting of four steps that addressed the apparent short-comings of the SCE based on the survey results. These steps included:

1. Develop Student and Faculty Mentor Handbooks
2. Take steps to reduce or eliminate reliance on Comprehensive Exams
3. Develop a campus-wide celebration of the SCE
4. Institute yearly, formal, college-wide assessment of the SCE

The Curriculum Committee considered these recommendations as part of its comprehensive curriculum review of General Education requirements during the 2012-2013 academic year. [NOTE: The Curriculum Committee’s response to these recommendations regarding the SCE is articulated in its proposal for revisions to the General Education curriculum.]

The SCE, however, cannot stand alone as an assessment mechanism and all academic programs are either engaged in, or have begun to collect pilot data on longitudinal assessment of the curriculum from introductory through upper level (200+, 300+, and 400-level) courses. This is a recent addition to assessment in some academic programs, coming as a result of a recent external review of sample assessment plans by a consultant (see the next section below). In some cases this longitudinal assessment is targeted toward courses that are required for the major: for example, assessment of ART-251, -392, and the SCE for students attempting a major in Studio Art, assessment of POL-201, -202, then POL-401 and the experiential learning requirement in the Political Science department or assessment of PHL-108, -213, -214, -225, and -425, all required courses in the Philosophy major.
In other majors, courses are hierarchical, allowing the progress of individual students or whole classes to be tracked across a series of content subjects across a series of courses. Such is the case in the Chemistry major; concrete data is provided based on the abilities of their students across their four years in the program through the tracking of specific content topics across multiple classes. In other academic programs, however, the curriculum is less hierarchical and assessment efforts alternate among several courses in a category from which students must take one or more courses. In the Music major, for instance, students must take one of three music history courses (MUS-203, -204, and -205) and one of three world music courses (MUS-313, -314, and -327), each of which can be used to assess specific student learning outcomes.

Similarly the English department plans to begin assessment of their literary genre goal in this manner beginning in the 2013-2014 academic year using an open-ended rubric that can be applied to courses in fiction, non-fiction, drama or poetry, thus leaving the students open to self-select their courses. Assessment of interdisciplinary minors is a microcosm of these approaches, with some minors assessing outcomes via a series of required courses. The Earth and Planetary Science minor is assessed through three required courses: PHY-140, -141 and -340 while the Information Systems minor is assessed through two required culminating courses: CSI-360 and BUS-304. Other interdisciplinary minors do not require any specific courses and so must take a different approach to assessment of student learning outcomes. The Black Studies minor is in the process of restructuring their student learning outcomes assessment to reflect the open course selection supported by the minor (two humanities, two social science and one additional course in any discipline). The proposed assessment plan is to assess one humanities and one social science course from those offered for the minor and survey graduating minors yearly. Gender Studies also has a very open course selection option for their minors and is in the process of switching to a portfolio approach to follow the academic progress of individual minors.

In addition to utilizing existing in-class assignments for assessment, many purpose-built assessment mechanisms are in use by academic programs. Some of these are direct assessments: ETS and other standardized tests, rubrics of student learning outcomes during experiential learning during internships (Political Science) or study abroad programs (Modern Languages), before and after quizzes of content knowledge or skills (for example the pre and post-tests for music history and music theory used by the Music Department). Other purpose-built, but indirect assessments include an array of student and alumni surveys designed to answer specific questions and include exit surveys from introductory course sequences, senior exit surveys and alumni surveys. Examples of some of the varied assessment mechanisms utilized by academic programs and the data and closing-the-loop moments they generate with them can be found in Appendix 14.4.

Examples of Student Learning Outcome Assessments Across the Curriculum

As stated above, almost all academic programs have student learning assessment plans that include a mission statement, goals and objectives (learning outcomes), a course matrix, direct (and sometimes indirect) assessment of student learning, data from these assessments and actions based upon these data (see Table 14.1). Also as stated above, the culture of student learning assessment is uneven across the curriculum, but is gradually becoming stronger and more standardized. In the sections of this report to follow, specific assessment mechanisms and actions are described for academic programs across the curriculum. Here, however, we wish to present a snapshot of the approaches and relative strengths and weaknesses of student learning outcomes assessment plans at the College. Some of the recent changes in the assessment plans discussed below resulted, directly or indirectly, from external review of a sample of plans reviewed by a consultant working in consort with departmental faculty. General outcomes from this review are discussed later in this narrative.

B.S. in Biology

Biology uses both direct and indirect measures to assess student learning, and multiple approaches are used to assess each of the six departmental learning outcomes, including the ETS field test, practical lab assessments, independent research projects, the SCE and several student surveys. Their assessment plan summary is a good visual tool for displaying assessment activities across learning goals. Biology's assessment report is also very thorough, summarizing data from all mechanisms used to assess each goal and concluding with actions taken each academic year. Biology has years of data and closing-the-loop actions. These reports demonstrate that the program is using assessment to improve courses, assignments, skills and content, etc. The assessment plan and report show that assessment of student learning has been in place over several academic years.

B.A. in Philosophy and Religion

The Philosophy and Religion program is a good example of quality assessment planning. The rubric for the SCE is fully developed. In addition, there is evidence of assessment of student learning across required courses in the major. This longitudinal assessment provides opportunities for actions and feedback at multiple points in the degree plan. The program utilizes excellent and detailed rubrics across a number of essential courses. They also provide a course matrix outlining how, across the curriculum, learning goals are addressed. Their assessment report provides evidence of ongoing monitoring and discussion of student learning.

B.A. in Political Science

Political Science has clear learning goals. They describe assessment of students learning in the senior capstone and in 200- and 400-level courses, addressing their majors across the duration of the degree plan. They also provide a very strong assessment of experiential learning including both direct and indirect measures, which could serve as an example for other programs requiring or encouraging experiential learning experiences as part of the degree plan. This assessment plan coincides with some major curriculum changes in the department. Assessment of the SCE has been ongoing for several years, though other aspects of the plan are more recent. However, there is clear evidence of discussion and closing-the-loop actions to improve both assessment and pedagogy in the program with the goal of increasing student learning outcomes.

B.A. in Economics

The assessment plan for this program is clear, however, assessment in early stages of program (assessment outside of SCE) is not evident. The program goals, as listed in the plan, are a mix of learning goals and program goals. For example, “preparing student for work” is typically considered a program outcome while teaching students to “search and use economic literature” is a learning goal. These two types of goals need to be clearly differentiated. Assessment of the SCE experience is good, relying on both direct and indirect measures of assessment. The program, however, needs to move toward assessing student progress in achieving learning goals earlier in their academic careers. The assessment report is data rich and the analysis of errors analysis is a good visual display of how comprehensive exams are assessed and scored; however, early assessment reports lacked a clear demonstration of how assessment is used to improve teaching and learning.

Recent improvements in student learning outcomes assessment in the program include clear separation of learning and program goals and the introduction of assessment of courses at the introductory, intermediate and advanced phases of the major. Specifically, the department has identified three courses required for the major and will assess student learning outcomes in each beginning in the 2012-2013 academic year. The
department has also generated actions from their previous SCE data, changing from pass/fail to graded theses in order to encourage greater effort and methodology by their seniors. Data from the 2011-2012 academic year indicate an increase in SCE quality and methodology, but methodology scores still fell below the departmental criteria and faculty determined to focus on these methodologies in their courses during the current academic year in order to improve student learning outcomes in this area.

B.A. in English

Until 2012-2013, the English department academic assessment plan relied entirely on the SCE for student learning outcome assessment, with no apparent assessment at points earlier in the curriculum and a paucity of closing-the-loop actions. Student learning outcomes assessment via the SCE is accomplished using a detailed rubric and provides clear evidence that the majority of English majors met or exceeded the expectations for all of the objectives set out by the department. In order to address longitudinal assessment of the program the English department has created and continues to improve a generalized rubric that can be used to assess their learning goals in a number of 200- and/or 300-level courses. (It should be noted that ENG-101, taken by all students, is assessed as part of the General Education program, and thus discussed more fully in Standard 12.) The English department is also moving toward more clear communication of actions taken based on assessment outcomes.

B.A. in Modern Languages

The Modern Languages assessment plan initially did not clearly differentiate between programmatic and learning goals and there was a lack of clear ties between assessment mechanisms and specific goals/student learning outcomes. Updates to this plan have addressed these concerns; categorizing goals as programmatic or academic and providing clear ties between assessment mechanisms and specific academic goals. Rubrics utilized by the program include criteria for success in speaking, listening, reading and writing based on ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standard. Improvements in the assessment plan included clarification of a number of rubrics used in multiple classes to include reference to specific academic goals, assessment of introductory courses as well as study abroad experiences and the SCE. The Modern Languages department created a novel and very powerful assessment of study abroad experiences, combining direct (e-portfolio of assignments while abroad) and indirect (student surveys) assessment mechanisms. This assessment tool was created as closing-the-loop action resulting from the realization that the program lacked a concrete mechanism for assessing their third academic goal, intercultural competence. See Appendix 14.5 for closing-the-loop actions.

Interdisciplinary B.A. in Environmental Studies

Until the 2012-2013 assessment, this program relied primarily on senior-level assessment: senior course content exams, the SCE and a senior level seminar course. This approach reflects both direct and indirect evidence of student learning, but does not allow for assessment or precise action at curricular levels other than the senior year. The plan has recently added a course matrix, identifying courses earlier in the curriculum in which student learning outcome assessment can take place. Assessment in this program is complicated by the relatively open course selection encouraged by the interdisciplinary nature of this program and the fact that faculty from outside of the program teach many of these courses. The lack of early program assessment and the complicating issue of few specifically required courses has been addressed by targeting one required first year course (ENV-101), two required introductory science courses (CHE/ENV-110 or -210 and PHY/ENV-140 or -141) and one of two required social science courses (ECN/ENV-117 or -317) for assessment in the 2012-2013 academic year.

Assessment during the 2012-2013 academic year included direct and indirect measures. Direct assessment measures included content assessments (exam questions, in-class assignments, oral presentations and a paper) in environmental chemistry, earth science and environmental economics classes, analysis of news articles, analysis and critical evaluation in written form of a major environmental issue paper, assessment of the SCE and others. Indirect measures included a senior exit survey. Some recommendations resulting from the 2012-2013 academic year assessment data included both general (requesting assessment data from the foundation class in environmental ethics, discuss ways in which to increase the abilities of majors to interpret and synthesize the literature) and specific (enhance understanding of chemical cycling, increase the number of environmental issue articles analyzed in senior seminar, improve assessment tools to better access data on specific objectives within goals) actions for the current 2013-2014 academic year. This academic program has made great improvements in the depth and breadth of their SLOA in the past academic year and these outcomes are already resulting in curricular and programmatic changes for the better.

Also during the 2012-2013 academic year, the interdisciplinary Environmental Studies program became a full department: the Department of Environmental Science and Studies, which will continue to offer an interdisciplinary B.A. in Environmental Studies and will supplement this major with a new B.S. in Environmental Science. The reformattedting of this program, including curricular and staffing changes, will be reflected in future assessment efforts by the department.

B.A. in Art and Art History

Until recently, the Art and Art History assessment plan expressed strong mission statements and goals, but the linkage between assessable objectives/learning outcomes and broader goals was unclear. Similarly, though assessment mechanisms were presented, it was unclear which learning outcomes each assessment addressed. Closing-the-loop actions were missing due to a paucity of data and the only actions in recent years were programmatic (e.g. space concerns) rather than academic. The original assessment plan did contain a strong rubric for the assessment of learning outcomes in the Art History SCE, but no assessment beyond the SCE was being carried out. The Studio Art assessment plan was similarly lacking linkages between assessment mechanisms and learning outcomes.

The department’s 2012-2013 academic year report provides strong and specific student learning assessment plans for both the Studio Art and Art History tracks. The updated assessment plan in Studio Art has been tied to dramatic program revisions following recent changes in the program faculty. These changes to the studio art curriculum allow the faculty to more effectively address the goals and learning objectives of the program.

Both degree tracks (Studio Art and Art History) now demonstrate clear links between assessment mechanisms and learning outcomes and between learning outcomes and the academic goals of the department. The new assessment plan was created and initiated during the 2012-2013 academic year, with pilot data collected during the Spring 2013 semester. Direct SLOA data was collected in four classes (ART-200, -251, and the Junior and Senior seminars) and from SCE comprehensive exams and thesis for both Art History and Studio Art. Most of these assessments included the use of department developed rubrics. While the new, robust SLOA plan for Art and Art History Department is in its infancy, it is already generating and supporting curricular and programmatic changes that will improve student learning outcomes in both degree tracks (see Appendix 14.5 for closing-the-loop actions).

Application of Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes are discussed annually by program faculty in order to look for successes or shortcomings in academic programs. Not all assessment data is discussed each year as some assessment mechanisms are relatively new, or newly altered, and many outcomes are examined...
as multiple year averages. Within academic programs individual learning outcomes are examined via direct and indirect assessment measures to determine if these outcomes are meeting the standards set by the program. As the program and institutional learning outcomes are closely tied (e.g. “habits of analytic thought and clear communication”) success in programmatic student learning outcomes is a clear indication that we are also achieving our institutional learning outcomes. Positive student learning outcomes are common across the curriculum, providing many examples of achieving our academic goals. However, not all student learning outcomes meet the criteria set by the academic programs, proving opportunities for improvement. Actions informed by student learning outcomes include but are not limited to: changes in curriculum, staffing, course content or assignments, assessment mechanisms or even goals and objectives.

The purpose of any of these closing-the-loop moments is to provide us with an opportunity to improve student learning during the next academic year in the cases in which we are not reaching our academic criteria. Examples of successes in meeting or exceeding assessment criteria and some closing-the-loop opportunities that resulted in improved curriculum, assessment mechanisms and/or student learning outcomes can be found in Appendix 14.5.

### Reporting and Review of Assessment Plans; Training in Assessment

Academic program assessment plans and reports have been reviewed annually by the Provost as part of an annual review of departmental reports (including programmatic matters). The review of these documents has been followed by a one-on-one meeting between the Provost and each academic program head. These documents and meetings have been used by the Provost to make budgetary decisions and to lobby for greater funding for academic programs during the generation of the annual College budget, the process of which is described more fully in Standard 2. Decisions by the Provost reflect not only provision for direct budgetary and staff-based support of academic programs (such as incremental growth of faculty, guidelines for which are explained in Standard 10), but also consider support from non-departmental institutional support programs (staffing and funding of the Writing Center, Office of Academic Skills, and the Quantitative Skills Office, which are fully explored in Chapter 4).

The growth of quantitative assessment on campus, particularly over the past five years and several recent changes in staffing in the Office of the Provost have limited the responsiveness of the administration to academic assessment outcomes above the departmental level. The current Provost is data-driven in her decision-making and clearly understands the importance of using assessment outcomes to drive decisions of budgetary and institutional resource allocations to academic programs. Conversations between the Provost, Assistant Provost for Institutional Research and Assessment and the Self-Study Steering Committee have determined that the current process of Provost-only review of academic assessment must be supplemented or replaced with a more rigorous process. These recent conversations take into account growth of the College, recent increases in the rigor of academic assessment on campus and the need for a more rigorous and regular review of assessment reports. The conversations recognize the need for a clearly defined process for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of student learning assessment on campus.

Another recent outcome of growth in the College has been a change in the way in which assessment and programmatic information is reported to the Provost. Reporting of student learning outcomes was, until recently, included as a part of an annual departmental report that included student learning outcome assessment (SLOA) and departmental program assessment and planning (DPAP). Following consultation with an external expert in student learning outcomes assessment (see the next section below and discussion of these new annual reporting requirements in Standard 2), relevant administrative offices and representative faculty, in Spring 2013 the Provost presented a new process of academic reporting that will be used from the 2012-2013 academic year forward. Beginning in that year, these two reports are now submitted separately, with SLOA reports (assessment plan and outcomes) compiled by each academic program and submitted to the Provost annually (see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”). Conversely, the programmatic DPAP reports will be generated and submitted only once every three years. The triennial DPAP report will be an opportunity for academic departments to reflect on the programmatic strengths and challenges of the previous three years and to set a plan for moving forward. In past years, department chairs needed to compile a wealth of data for these programmatic reports by themselves, but the Provost’s Office, in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office and the Office of Institutional Research, will now be generating, compiling and sharing these data based on existing enrollment information and curricular changes already collected by these offices as part of their regular business processes. This represents a significant release in workload for department chairs, the goal of which, at least in part, is to provide them with more time to meet with their colleagues and discuss student learning outcomes assessment. The streamlining of the annual report process reflect the growing dedication of the faculty and the administration toward student learning outcomes assessment and the use of these outcomes to inform decisions at the program and College levels. While many programmatic changes can be made within the department or through routine proposals to the Curriculum Committee, others require significant planning and commitment of institutional resources. As such, we recommend below that triennial reports be reviewed by the College’s Planning Committee which will issue recommendations to the President.

Another recent change in culture of assessment of student learning on campus and a direct result of (i) the self-study process; (ii) external review of assessment plans; and (iii) changes in the way in which assessment outcomes are collected and reported to the Provost has been the initiation of a more collaborative culture of assessment on campus. This has included the posting and sharing with academic program chairs/directors of assessment plans that were considered exemplary by the external reviewer. This has allowed other departments to upgrade existing student learning assessment plans to a more rigorous, data-driven format. More clear guidelines of assessment plan and outcome data expectations from the Provost’s office has also had a clearly positive effect on the overall assessment of student learning outcomes across the curriculum. The co-chairs of the Self-Study Steering Committee have made themselves available to answer questions of academic program chairs/directors and have made presentations and held open-house help sessions regarding best-practice assessment mechanisms (e.g. providing sample rubrics), handling of assessment data and reporting of outcomes. As one example of the benefits of this more collaborative assessment culture, the Business Management department provided the following:

Thanks to the impetus provided by the Self-Study process (and helped greatly by the examples of assessment plans from Biology and Philosophy—the College’s deeply collaborative approach to the self-study has proven very helpful), the Business Management department over the past year redrafted its assessment plan to better articulate major learning outcomes and learning trajectories. The clear mapping of progress on each major learning outcome (the now-familiar Introduce-Reinforce-Progress-Master model) has had a consequent salutary effect of enabling a broader, department-level review of specific learning goals as articulated in the syllabus of each course required for the major. What this means for students is that we are now even more focused and coherent in what we do, what we ask students to do, and what students learn.

Table 14.2: Student learning outcomes assessment course matrix for Business Management department (I=Introduce, R=Reinforce, P=Progress, M=Master).

As part of the reshaped department assessment plan, the Business Administration department has also modified the main learning outcomes for our Senior Capstone Experience, to better align them with the major as a whole. The old SCE learning outcomes were:

- Core principles
- Insightfulness
- Research
- Data analysis
- Writing quality
- Mechanics

The new learning outcomes are:

- Managerial knowledge
- Research
- Critical thinking
- Quantitative analysis
- Communication skills
- Ethical awareness

### External Review of Academic Program Assessment Plans

In December 2012, the College sent a sample of ten academic program assessment plans and reports (outcomes and closing-the-loop moments) to a consultant for external evaluation of the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of our academic assessment. The consultant was engaged by Washington College to review assessment documents and address the following:

- What are the strengths of submitted plans and reports?
- What are the weaknesses of submitted plans and reports?
- Are these plans and reports consistent with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education’s standards for assessment of student learning?
- How might Washington College improve assessment planning and reporting?

The consultant commended the College for the strength of student learning outcome assessment, particularly the development of learning goals and assessment mechanisms, most notably within the SCE. It was also noted that the quality of the plans varied by academic program, but that all provided evidence that programs are engaging in assessment of learning. General recommendations included a number of important points that resulted in immediate improvements in academic assessment while others echoed concerns of the self-study steering committee and confirmed the recommendations made at the end of this standard. For example:

- The addition of a course matrix to academic program assessment plans would make it easier for chairs to track the assessment of student learning outcomes longitudinally across the four years of the program.
  - Accomplished: a course matrix is now a required element of all academic assessment plans.
- Reorganization of the assessment plan and outcomes reports into one unit.
  - Accomplished: see the discussion of the annual SLOA reports above
- Over-reliance on the SCE in some academic programs resulted in assessment of student learning that was heavy toward the senior year. It was recommended that “longitudinal” assessment should occur across the curriculum (first through senior years).
  - Underway: in academic programs in which this was not already taking place, this has been mandated and all programs collected at least pilot data on longitudinal assessment during 2012-2013 (see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”).
- Discussion of actions taken based on assessment of student learning (closing-the-loop) is inconsistent across the academic programs (additional discussion on this below).
  - Underway: this reinforced requests from the Provost’s office in past academic years for more specific closing-the-loop moments in annual reports and has been clearly codified in the new SLOA report formatting (see the Document Directory folder within Chapter 7, Standard 14, entitled “SLOA Reports 2013”)

This review of a sample of academic program assessment plans gave us a much-needed external perspective that allowed us to see both strong and weak points in our student learning outcomes assessment. It provided us the opportunity to share strong approaches between programs, to be more aware of assessing across the curriculum within an academic program, to more clearly tie our assessment mechanisms to specific learning goals, to be more clear about communicating the assessment we were carrying out and to produce and communicate clear actions informed by our outcomes to improve student learning.

### Student Learning Outcomes Inform Institutional Assessment and Decision-making
Measures of student learning outcomes, particularly those that emerge from departments are designed to inform decision making at the department level—e.g., how to tweak assignments, course topics, and pedagogy to directly improve learning outcomes in courses. That said, SLOA play an important role in informing institutional assessment and decision-making on campus. Through the process of annual reporting (previously via departmental annual reports that included both student learning and programmatic data, more recently via standardized SLOA and DPAP reports, as discussed extensively above) to the Provost, student learning outcomes and academic program data are used to assist in decision making at the institutional level.

SLOA data are currently informing a College-wide curriculum review and redesign that is taking place over the 2012-2013 academic year, summer of 2013, and the 2013-2014 academic year. For example, SLOA data across the departments revealed that the Senior Capstone Experience is a signature strength of the College and should be retained and emphasized in a new all-College curriculum. At the same time, it is also clear from SLOA data that the final presentation of senior capstone outcomes is inconsistent across departments. Further, though departmental efforts often highlight the successes of their majors’ SCE projects, these efforts are relatively "internal" to the department or division. This, along with the Teagle study results and recommendations, has led to the recommendations of the curriculum design working group to create a campus-wide symposium in which students present their work, including a major, formal presentation of SCE research.

Examples of other ways in which SLOA data have informed the current curriculum redesign can be seen in Appendix 14.6.

Direct and indirect assessment data acquired both from the academic departments and from various student support services are used in other ways to make decisions beyond the level of the academic department and in the on-going process of institutional assessment. Examples of the use of student learning outcomes in institutional assessment can be found in Appendix 14.7. A more detailed discussion of student support services can be found in both Standards discussed within Chapter 4.

Proposed Self-Study Questions

In the process of addressing the major elements of Standard 14, we feel that this Self-Study answered all of the research questions we had put forward in the Self-Study Proposal.

Conclusion

We believe that our answer to the essential question: "Are our students learning what we want them to learn?" is "yes." Through a comprehensive review of learning outcomes in all academic programs, we have made significant adjustments to how the data is collected, analyzed, and then used in the decision-making process of the institution. We therefore assert that we are in full compliance with the Fundamental Elements outlined in Standard 14.

Appendix 14.1

Examples of assessment of College-wide student learning outcomes (in these examples 'analytic thought') across the curriculum within the academic programs.

- In the Biology department, analytic thought is assessed via clicker questions, labs and exam questions in non-majors biology courses (BIO-100/104), in most if not all upper-level biology courses (for example, data is collected on this skill via clicker questions in BIO-206 Ecology, a course required by all majors) and is assessed again in the Senior Capstone Experience of all Biology majors completing an experimental thesis project in the form of a rubric examining experimental design and data analysis.
- The Political Science department assesses for analytical thinking during the Senior Capstone Experience (SCE) using the following rubric point: Is the analytical framework clear and appropriate? Does the thesis avoid mere description and instead offer analysis for the political topic under study? Does the student provide adequate evidence from secondary research sources for each line of reasoning? Does the student employ tools of original analysis (such as data analysis or analysis of primary sources) when appropriate (such as those students pursuing Honors)?
- The Philosophy and Religion department expects analytic thought in all major papers/essays and in the SCE and has rubrics to assess this. PHL-108: Logic has its own set of rubrics used to assess analytic thought.
- The first goal of the Chemistry department is: 'Develop problem solving skills, the ultimate goal of a chemical education' and the department tracks analytical thought through problem solving in multiple classes across the curriculum.
- In the Education department, students pursuing teacher education certification must submit a summative portfolio that is evaluated according to the Maryland State Essential Dimensions of Teaching (EDoT). Each of the EDoTs is divided into four domains including knowledge, analysis, action and reflection. Under the analysis domain portfolio artifacts must demonstrate the students' ability to analyze and discern critical elements related to each of the ten dimensions of teaching. Students are assessed according to rubric criteria.

Appendix 14.2

Examples of assessment of College-wide student learning outcomes (in these examples 'clear communication') across the curriculum within the academic programs.

- The Biology department annually assessed oral and poster presentation skills of all of their majors during the SCE process through presentations associated with the Biology Senior Seminar course (BIO-491 and -492).
- One of the Chemistry departments major goals is: "Develop effective oral and written scientific communication skills." Rubrics exist to measure this in oral and poster presentations as part of the SCE.
- The Philosophy and Religion department has multiple class-based rubrics for assessing clear communication in writing assignments, including the SCE.
- In the Psychology department, oral defense of SCE proposal during the junior year and poster defense of SCE in the senior year are both assessed by multiple faculty using a set rubric.

Appendix 14.3

Examples of the use of standardized exams for student learning outcomes assessment.
The Biology Majors Field Test has been used by the Biology Department since 2001. Total (overall) percentile rankings of our students among all institutions taking the exam are examined on three-year rolling averages. Success criteria for the department are set as: > 60th percentile = exceeds rubric, between 50-60th percentile = meets rubric, and < 50% fails rubric. The department has met the rubric for all three-year averages since 2001 and exceeded the rubric in half the cases.

The Psychology department has used the Psychology Majors Field Test for 20+ years with an objective of sustaining an overall score at or above the 69th percentile. With few exceptions, the program has produced annual overall scores between the 70 and 90th percentile.

The Chemistry department has two years of data from the ACS standardized exam and one for the DuEE exam and the results so far indicate that their students are scoring on average (approx. 50th percentile) with other chemistry students across the nation in all the exams that they have administered.

Appendix 14.4
Examples of some of the varied assessment mechanisms utilized by academic programs and the data and closing-the-loop moments they generate.

- Study abroad e-portfolio for Modern Languages, based on the faculty grading rubric for a series of assignments completed and compiled in an electronic portfolio while the student is studying abroad. The portfolio activities help students become more aware of importance of focusing on making linguistic progress while they are abroad.
- The Biology department annually carries out both a General Biology BIO-111/112 exit survey and a senior exit survey. The results from these surveys (BIO 111/112, Senior Exit) have both been invaluable in improving BIO-111/112 and tweaking the curriculum to improve the overall experience of biology majors.
- In the Education department, all mentor teachers use a narrative based rubric to formally assess teacher education students. The rubric is aligned to the Maryland State Essential Dimensions of Teaching (EDot) and is designed to track progress over time. The Education department also assessed performance during teaching internships utilizing a portfolio rubric.
- In the Psychology department, all junior SCE oral poster proposals and all senior SCE poster defenses are scored independently by two faculty raters (one of which is their SCE advisor) using the same in-house rubric. The rubric is simple but includes clear verbal communication of their ideas, clear visual presentation of their main points, and clear demonstration that scientific method is understood.
- The Political Science department has developed a survey for assessing student learning outcomes during experiential learning opportunities (internships) and has a senior exit survey as well.

Appendix 14.5
Examples of successes in meeting or exceeding assessment criteria and some closing-the-loop opportunities that resulted in improved curriculum, assessment mechanisms and/or student learning outcomes.

- In Spring 2012 for the first time a rubric was used to assess the objectives listed under goals 1 through 4 for the Chemistry Senior Capstone Experience. The averages for objectives listed under goals 1 through 4 varied from 87% to 91%. These high scores are the result of the close-knit relationship and the one-on-one advising and mentoring that each of our chemistry majors receives to perform successfully a Senior Capstone Experience project in chemistry.
- The Economics department has made some recent changes in their SCE based on the past four years of data. First, they changed their SCE from pass/fail to a graded process and they have seen increased performance on the SCE since this change. In addition, they noticed that their SCE methodology score was low, so they pushed the methodology deadline back from fall of the senior year to spring of the junior year. This provides the faculty with the time to discuss methodology with the students before they write their proposal in the fall. It is too early to tell if this has increased methodology scores, but the department is hopeful.
- Education teacher candidates continually perform well on the Maryland State Department of Education Essential Dimensions of Teaching (MSDE EDoT) dimension number ten: “engage in careful analysis, problem-solving, and reflection in all aspects of teaching.” That particular EDoT aligns well to key Washington College institutional learning outcomes and EDU course activities are designed to teach and reinforce processes of, and frameworks for, reflective inquiry.
- Based on low scores on the ‘Organismal-Plant’ category of the ETS Majors Field Test, the Biology department reinstated a botany course in the department during the 2007-2008 academic year. Previously, due to lack of enrollment and staffing issues, our two botany courses, BIO-212 Botanical Diversity and BIO-308 Plant Physiology had not been offered for several years. The new course, BIO-211 Plant Biology, offers elements of two previously offered courses and has successfully increased the student scores on this category of the ETS test (33rd percentile for the three-year average academic years 2001-2003 to a high of the 50th percentile between academic years 2008-2010). Scores in this category still often fall below the department’s desired criteria for success, but this reflects the open nature of the major, which allows students to self-select an area of concentration, growth in the major with a limit to 16 seats in botany each year and the fact that botany is not currently a “hot” field within biology.
- Assessment data from the Studio Art program indicate that students should improve their ability to connect their work with larger issues in contemporary art and society, resulting in curricular and programmatic actions; a strong recommendation that Studio Art majors take ART-320: Introduction to Twentieth-Century Art and the need to hire a full-time Gallery Director, Artist, and Curator for Kohl Gallery. Art History assessment data support the need for a curricular change in the introductory Art History course (ART-200) from a single course to a two-course sequence. The department believes that this change will be beneficial to the students in a number of ways, including; improvements in learning outcome 1 (art historical knowledge) with more time to spend on the material and improvements in learning outcomes 3 and 5 (writing and research) because more time to cover the content will allow more opportunities for the students to carry out art historical research and writing.
- Utilizing recent ETS Majors Field Test data, the Psychology department realized that their Developmental indicator was consistently in the average range (sometimes dipping below the mean of the 50th percentile), so they advocated for a developmental psychologist line and that eventually resulted in the hire of Dr. Tia Murphy. Dr. Murphy has been with the department only two years, but the Developmental indicator has been above the mean (65th and 80th percentile) over that time period.
- In the Modern Languages Department, assessment of proficiency during the Spanish SCE in academic year 2011-2012 led, in part, to the creation of the study abroad e-portfolio, which has turned out to be a strong tool for student learning and assessment.
- The Chemistry department has been tracking the mastery of a series of topics across a number of courses over the past three years. On average 77% of the topics tracked from general chemistry are mastered in upper-level courses (mainly 200- and 300-level). In organic chemistry 74% (up from 73% in the 11-12 of the concepts are retained whereas in inorganic chemistry 81% (up from 79% in 11-12) of them are recalled effectively. This system allows the professors to have a better understanding of what topics to reinforce longitudinally through the curriculum and how to improve the way these topics are introduced and practiced. The chemistry faculty now work as a team to stress individual topics from the first time students learn them to the last time they cover them in class.
- In the Education department during the 2010-2011 school year, the portfolio assessment data and mentor evaluation data showed that
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Appendix 14.6
Examples of ways in which SLOA data have informed the current curriculum redesign.

- Modern Languages' student learning outcomes data informed the decision to retain the foreign language study requirement. These outcomes made it clear that the language requirement was critical in allowing students to see the world from a vantage point different from one's own and therefore was critical to developing citizen leadership as part of a proposed citizen leadership requirement.
- Learning outcomes from the first year writing program (ENG-101/GRW) and analyses of ENG 101 and the Writing Intensive program by the Chair of English and the Director of Writing provide information that were critical in developing the rationale for the first year program during the current cycle of curricular redesign.
- In addition, we have used indirect measures of student learning outcomes in our analysis and development of the proposed new curriculum, especially NSSE data (see Document Directory > Institutional Research > NSSE12), an excellent resource to address questions regarding values, community engagement, diversity, and other issues related to the development of citizen leadership - key themes in the mission statement of the College and being considered during the current curricular review.

Appendix 14.7
Examples of the use of student learning outcomes from academic programs and student support services in institutional assessment.

- The director of the Quantitative Skills Center (newly hired prior to the Fall 2012 semester) has surveyed students using the Center at the end of each semester and determined that students on average predicted an increase in the grades of their quantitative courses of approximately one letter grade based on their experiences in the center. Analysis of the grades of students who visited the Center two or more times shows these students scoring on average 6% better in the course than students who did not visit the Center.
- The Office of Academic Skills uses direct and indirect measures of student learning outcomes to direct decisions in the Course Mentor and TEAM programs. For example, in the Course Mentoring program, course grades are gathered and analyzed and compared between students who attended course mentoring sessions and those who did not. Students who attended Course Mentor sessions showed grades of 0.1 - 0.17 GPA points higher than students from these classes who did not attend Course Mentor sessions.
- OAS plans to expand the use of SLOA data to other programs including peer tutoring and academic skills support services in the upcoming academic year. OAS also uses student surveys in disability services, course mentoring, peer tutoring, and academic skills support to inform decisions in these areas.
- Training of Writing Center peer tutors is based in part on student feedback from an end-of-semester survey of all students who had appointments at the Writing Center that semester. For instance, students at times report that they would like the tutors to be more knowledgeable about specific subject areas, so the Writing Center has adapted the peer tutoring seminar to address that concern.
- The Teaching Fellows program was initiated during the 2012-2013 academic year in part as a response to our desire to keep the first-year seminar course enrollments down. The College is dedicated to small class size and well beyond the College there are clear connections between small class size and best practices in writing courses, and small course sizes and retention. The Teaching Fellows are required to teach a larger number of first-year writing courses (ENG-101 and GRW-101), increasing the number of sections, keeping enrollment size low and assisting in long-term stability to these programs by providing a number of faculty who teach regularly in the program.

Sources

- 12Nov_chairs_mtg_presentation
- 2013_Lab_manual_bio112 (Page 6)
- Academic Assessment Presentation to Department Chairs - November 2012
- ACS Guidelines for Bachelors Degree Programs
- APA Guidelines for Undergraduate Psychology Major

Recommendations

Narrative

Based upon our collective review of this Self-Study, as a community, we:

1. Recommend that as the Planning Committee develops the Implementation Plan for the College’s recently approved Strategic Plan, special consideration be given to ensure that sufficient resources are in place to support any future incremental growth in student enrollments. This requires campus-wide cooperation and attention to staffing (faculty, staff and other support services), space (including current and planned facilities) and resources (including allocation of capital and budgeted funds).

2. Recommend that Senior Staff, in conjunction with the Staff, Faculty and Administrative Councils, develop strategies and opportunities to strengthen cross-departmental cooperation and communication with the campus at-large.

3. Recommend that Senior Staff, the Planning Committee, and the Benefits and Finance Committee work cooperatively to broaden both the consultation of other faculty, staff, and standing committees of the College, as well as the communication of decisions regarding the alignment of staffing and resources in annual budget allocations and how these relate to the financial model for the strategic plan.

4. Recommend that the College consider and adopt mechanisms for making frequent and periodic institutional assessment more manageable and sustainable. Possible mechanisms follow. Each would require approval of the appropriate standing committee, the Faculty Council, and/or the Faculty as a whole.

   • Expand the charge of the Planning Committee to receive and review Institutional Effectiveness Plan reports, and make recommendations to the appropriate office, committee, or department.

   • Expand the charge of the Planning Committee to receive and review the triennial Departmental Planning and Program Assessment (DPAP) reports and make recommendations to the appropriate office, committee, or department.

   • Create a new Committee on Academic Assessment that would oversee assessment of general education, receive and review departmental Student Learning Outcomes Assessment (SLOA) reports, and make recommendations to the appropriate office, committee, or department.

5. Recommend that the College implement a protocol for assessing annual progress on the goals and objectives of the College’s strategic plan. This assessment will inform decisions to adjust the plan’s goals and objectives, to add or delete specific tactics, and to adjust annual budgets to meet the College’s strategic priorities.