



NEASC

Fifth Year Report

 **Westfield**
State College

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Westfield State College
Westfield, Massachusetts

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Preparation of the Report

The preparation of this report started in spring of 2006 with the selection two faculty members, Dr. James Carabetta and Dr. Lisa Plantefaber, as co-coordinators for the process. Working groups of administration and faculty were created to respond to standards in their areas of expertise. These groups were responsible for seeking out information and opinions from the community and drafting a response to the standard that reflected these multiple perspectives. Opportunities for comment were provided to the entire campus community through an open forum on standards four and five and through announcements on the campus faculty-staff listserv. An initial draft of the report was posted on the campus website and comments from the community solicited via the listserv. A draft of the document was submitted to the Board of Trustees for comment at their meeting on December 14, 2006. The final draft, incorporating comments from reviewers, will be presented to the President's Office for submission to the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

Members of the Westfield State College community who provided input to the report include the following:

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Overview of the College

Westfield State College (WSC) is the only public, comprehensive institution of higher education located in southwestern Massachusetts. As part of the Massachusetts state college system, the College serves the Commonwealth by providing education for its citizens and service to the community. The College offers 26 undergraduate degree programs as well as Masters degrees and post-graduate certificate programs in the fields of Education, English, Psychology, Public Administration and Criminal Justice. The College is known for its strong criminal justice and teacher education programs. The College offers several programs unique in Massachusetts including environmental science and regional planning. While drawing from the surrounding regions including the urban areas of Springfield and Holyoke, its reputation and the residential nature of the College also attract students from across the Commonwealth and from outside of Massachusetts. The College provides educational opportunities outside of degree programs. These include professional development for teachers, certification programs in several professions, Community Education courses for adults, and summer and week-end enrichment programs for children. Other programs emphasize outreach to students of color and first generation college students, and our Dual Enrollment program permits high school students to enroll in college courses. WSC Bridge Project and the Summer Scholars Program are academic and mentoring initiatives that nurture success of high school students to encourage college applications.

The institution that Westfield State is today is the result of its history and its response to needs of the Commonwealth. The College was founded in 1839 as the first co-educational normal school for teacher education in the nation. In the 1930s, the Normal School became a State Teachers College with a four-year course of study leading to the Bachelor of Science in education. Increasing population and demand for college education led to expansion, first to its current site in 1956 and then in the scope of its programs as the state colleges became comprehensive bachelors and masters degree-granting institutions. The College is again in a period of growth. Since 2002, a new combined academic-athletic building and a new residential hall have opened and full-time student enrollment has increased nearly 10 percent.

The student-centered and community-oriented mission of the College reflects both its history and its role in the Massachusetts public higher education system. Emphasizing teaching, student advising, and student involvement in both the life of the College and the community, Westfield State's primary mission is to assist its students to develop intellectually and to use their knowledge and skills to improve the social and economic conditions in their communities. The mission also emphasizes the College's role as a resource for the community and the role of its faculty in the community and in their disciplines.

As a result of its review 2002 accreditation visit, the NEASC visiting team reported several core strengths of the College. Westfield State College is "served by a group of professional, support staff, and faculty members loyal to the institution, dedicated to teaching, and proud of the accomplishments of their students." Additionally, "(f)inancial controls appear strong and result in the College being able to achieve fiscal objectives" despite severe budget constraints at the time.

Since the 2002 NEASC site visit, significant changes in the senior administration of the College have occurred. President Frederick Woodward resigned in 2003 and, after a five month transition period led by Interim CEO Barry Maloney, was succeeded by President Vicky Carwein. In June 2006, President Carwein submitted her resignation. Mr. Maloney is again serving as Interim President. A Presidential search, organized by the Board of Trustees, is underway. During the past two and half years, there have also been changes in the leadership of Academic Affairs. Members of the College administration and faculty assumed the positions of Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs, Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management, Associate Vice President of the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, and Dean of Education. Experienced administrators joined the

Academic Affairs staff as Registrar, Director of the Library and in the newly created posts of Dean of Institutional Research and Assessment and Assistant Vice President of Educational Outreach. It is anticipated that a Dean of Academic Programs and Accreditation will join the Academic Affairs staff next year. Other changes in the organization of the administration and Board of Trustees are described in Standard 3.

In response to both the 2002 NEASC visiting team's report and to the expressed needs of the community, the College has been engaged in a participatory strategic planning process. The strategic plan that has resulted articulates the goals toward which we work and the actions needed to accomplish these goals. This plan provides a stabilizing vision for the College.

As part of the Massachusetts State College system, WSC is governed by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and is party to the system-wide collective bargaining agreements. Over the past five years, the College, like all public institutions, has endured fluctuations in the state's financial support. Neither the fears expressed in the 2002 self study and visiting team report, nor the most optimistic predictions for recovery have been realized. As we began to write this report, we were informed that the College's budget would be cut by \$646,034. We are optimistic that the planning and prudent management of the past five years will buffer us from the immediate effects of these cuts.¹

At this mid-point in our NEASC accreditation cycle, we see an institution anchored by its commitment to the educational mission of the College and to realistic planning for its future. The structure and, especially, the faculty, administration and staff of the College provide it with the ability to fulfill its mission and to respond to the changes to come.

¹ We are pleased to report that the monies have been reinstated.

AREAS OF CONCERN

Based on evidence from the 2002 Self Study and the site visit report, the NEASC CIHE requested that the College emphasize its success in:

- maintaining an effective system of campus governance;
- planning strategically for the institution's future;
- developing and implementing methods for assessing student learning.

In this section of the report, our progress in these areas is highlighted. The issues are also addressed in context within the narratives of Standards 2, 3 and 4.

College Governance

At the time of the self study and site visit, many aspects of campus governance were impaired by the lack of progress in contract negotiations between the BHE and the MSCA. As part of its negotiating strategy, the faculty union had adopted a work-to-rule policy. Faculty participation in governance was significantly curtailed, with only the Teacher Education Council continuing to meet. Concerns about the lack of faculty participation in governance and the inefficient lines of communication were noted not just in the team's report on Standard Three, but also in their evaluation of the College's ability to include multiple perspectives in planning and resource allocation. The effects of the faculty governance suspension were broad, if at times subtle.

In the five years since the NEASC visiting team was on campus, governance practices have changed significantly, driven largely by the status of the collective bargaining agreements. Final ratification and funding of the collective bargaining agreement in 2002 freed the faculty to again participate fully in campus policy-making. The 2004-2007 MSCA/BHE collective bargaining agreement provided for a faculty and librarian referendum to determine whether to develop a new system of governance. The faculty voted overwhelmingly to retain the existing structures. Furthermore, recent agreements between the BHE and the MSCA have included provisions for the continuation of faculty participation in governance during contract negotiations.

In practice, the return to normal governance systems has been accompanied by some misunderstandings between the faculty, as represented by the MSCA, and the college administration. During the lapse in contractual governance, the MSCA leadership believes that practices evolved which included faculty through channels outside the collective bargaining agreement. They have sought to review any practices and realign them with the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement. While the committee structure and lines of reporting are clearly defined in the contract, the meaning of "shared governance," as stipulated in the contract, is open to different interpretations. As we write this report, the purview of the contractual governance structure is an issue of concern for the MSCA at Westfield State College. For example, the appropriate role of governance committees in operational decisions such as scheduling of classes and timing of registration are of specific interest.

Given the long hiatus of faculty from the governance process and new MSCA leadership, MSCA and the administration are forging a new working relationship. Although all parties are genuinely committed to the well-being of the College, their perspectives are sometimes different. There is, however, no evidence that this tension is inducing paralysis. Communication between the administration and the faculty is on-going and multi-faceted. Members of the administration regularly meet with the MSCA leadership. Academic department chairs meet regularly with the academic affairs administration, facilitating both communications and coordinated planning. Most importantly, faculty, staff and administration remain actively involved in the daily work of the College and planning for its future.

Long Range Planning

As a result of the site visit, the NEASC review team expressed concerns about the lack of long range planning at the College. The need for such planning in the face the extreme financial constraints that the College was then experiencing was mentioned in the context of several NEASC standards. The College was encouraged to develop a participatory process for focusing its limited resources on well-considered goals.

Over the past four years, the College has adopted and implemented a model for strategic planning. Through the governance process, an ad hoc Strategic Planning Committee consisting of faculty, administrators, students and community members was convened. Guided by the College Mission, the expectations of Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, survey data, and the assistance of planning consultants, the Committee created a strategic plan anchored in the vision and values of the College. The 2005 Strategic Plan contains 27 goals that support the College's values. Initially, three of the goals were chosen as the focus of specific implementation efforts. Action plans were created by the divisions of the College and funds directed to support those plans.

The College is now in the second year of its planned implementation cycle. Steps described in the action plans have been undertaken. In some cases, evaluation data have been collected, allowing us to measure the results of the initiatives. Work on these three goals will continue while the Strategic Planning Committee leads the community in providing input on an additional goal(s) to emphasize. In parallel with the implementation of the strategic plan, an Institutional Assessment Plan has been developed to measure our success in meeting our goals.

Details of these activities are given in Standard 2 of this report.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Development of assessment measures for student learning outcomes is an ongoing process at the College with variation between programs both in approach and in the progress that has been made.

Our focus on student learning outcomes is driven by demands for accountability from the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, national program accrediting agencies, as well as NEASC. The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education Enhanced Performance Accountability System, enacted in 2003, requires that "all state colleges have documented a systematic process/cycle for annually reviewing curriculum and assessing student learning and use the information to improve curriculum and instructional quality." WSC incorporated this expectation into its 2004 Strategic Initiative Plan, with the following action steps: develop learning outcomes assessment plans, review general education program, maintain cycle of academic program reviews, and assess information/computer literacy. Even before the development of the Board of Higher Education's accountability system, several programs at WSC had successfully applied for national accreditation through professional organizations such as NCATE. In order to qualify for such accreditation, some departments had developed student learning outcomes based on professional standards. The teacher education programs developed an on-line data collection system to track student performance in courses and in student teaching.

The goals for development of learning outcomes and assessment on campus are as varied as its motivation. Generally, we seek to understand the effectiveness of our programs as measured by their impact on student learning. When possible, we seek to use assessment in collaboration with students as a metacognitive teaching tool. When students measure themselves against explicit learning outcomes, they are better able to monitor and direct their own learning. In the teacher education programs, the additional goal of assessment is to ensure that every student meets the outcomes and completes the program as a fully qualified teacher.

Our approach focuses on the major or academic program. Each program has been required to articulate student learning outcomes. In most programs, these outcomes have been designed by the departmental faculty. In a few, the outcomes are set by external agencies. External review of all program outcomes occurs as part of the program review process. The Dean of Institutional Research and Assessment has been working with many academic departments on campus to refine their learning objectives and to determine appropriate ways of measuring learning outcomes. The majority of departments have documented assessment plans at the date of this report. All academic departments will have their plan for learning outcomes submitted by January 2007. Furthermore, the College is currently searching for a Dean of Academic Programs and Accreditation. The successful candidate, housed in Academic Affairs and working closely with the Institutional Research office, will hold oversight for maintaining integrity in program development and guide departments in program evaluation processes, internal and external.

We have not yet developed a systematic way to publicize learning outcomes or to report the data obtained from assessment of student learning. Some programs have published their outcomes in their departmental website or in their student handbook. Some course syllabi indicate the departmental learning goals to be addressed in the course.

For most programs, the assessment cycle has not been completed. Outcomes and assessment measures have been defined but few data have been collected. There are, however, some benefits in completing the initial steps of the cycle. Program improvements result when faculty examine the alignment between their goals for their students and the learning experiences that the program offers. In several teacher education programs, where external standards define the learning outcomes, significant changes in course content and program structure have been made to ensure that students have opportunities to learn and demonstrate proficiency relative to the standards. Similar issues have been uncovered in the Biology program, for example.

Standard One MISSION and PURPOSES

Description and Update

The healthy tension between liberal arts and professional curricula has characterized Westfield State College throughout its 167-year history, first in its role as a teacher-training institution, and currently as a comprehensive public college. This tension is still reflected in its mission, which has not changed since the College's 2002 self-study. In marketing, hiring, policy-making, and program development, Westfield State has continued to rely upon the mission as a touchstone: emphasizing teaching, student advising, and intellectual preparation for social responsibility and citizenship. The mission is easily accessible, in official college documents and on its website.

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education continues to use annual mission implementation plans to evaluate the College's progress, particularly in relation to "access, affordability, quality, and efficiency." Notably, the first section of the Board of Higher Education's annual Performance Measurement Report (issued for each state and community college in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) consists of the opening lines of the College's mission statement. This prominence in relation to assessment demonstrates how the mission continues to provide a basis for measuring institutional effectiveness.

While the mission itself has not changed, what *has* changed is its function as a driving force in strategic planning at Westfield State College. The self-study of 2002 expressed a need for "more involvement at the...department level in articulating the educational and operational goals that feed into the broader goals [of] the mission implementation plan." Westfield State has made dramatic progress in this regard.

In the past several years, the mission was widely reviewed and contemplated as the foundation for the College's first foray into formal, long-range strategic planning. In October of 2004, former president Vicky L. Carwein charged Westfield State's Strategic Planning Committee with developing a plan that would guide the College for five years. The Committee made a concerted effort to use the mission as a springboard for its work. "The vision, mission and values of the College are the foundation for this plan, and our priorities and goals are directly aligned with them,"² the Committee asserted. That the established mission played such a fundamental role in the strategic planning process reaffirmed, and reaffirms, its ongoing prominence and relevance to the campus community. In this way, the mission now, even more than in 2002, actively serves to "give direction" for the College, and to provide the lens for Westfield State's "vision for the future."

The *Westfield State College Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010* is the most significant recent milestone in the evolution of the College mission. In an affirmation of its consistency with mission, the Plan was approved and adopted by the College's Board of Trustees in 2005. The Strategic Priorities outlined in the College's "Strategic Plan Summary" document all echo the traditions and expectations set forth in Westfield State's mission.

Thus, seldom in Westfield State's recent history have the connections between mission, budget, and assessment been so clear. Specific objectives reflective of the College's mission and purposes are now publicly documented, incorporated into the five priorities and 27 goals determined by the college community and its constituents as the core of the five-year Strategic Plan. To meet selected goals

² *Westfield State College Strategic Planning: Overview and Update, Spring 2005*

each year, strategies, action plans, and measurable outcomes are developed by campus units. Resource allocation decisions are based upon the relevance of proposed projects and programs to current goals.

A cross-section of the projects and programs recently implemented to meet the goals set forth in the Strategic Plan reveals their relevance to the essence of Westfield State's particular mission. Instruction for Westfield State faculty in developing web-based courses; an on-line community service "volunteer matching" program; a partnership to improve the teaching of American History in K-12 schools; the Westfield River Environmental Center; a new academic department, World Languages, Multicultural and Gender Studies—all of these initiatives, among others, reflect the integrity of Westfield State's ongoing mission and purposes of effective teaching, collaborative education, and community-based learning—increasingly, expanding the College's horizons to include the global community.

Analysis and Assessment

Internal understanding of Westfield State's mission and purposes will play an important role in the near future as the institution begins the careful process of revising the common core of study. Westfield State also needs to monitor the impact of student population growth on its mission and values, to ensure that its current standards of quality continue to be supported by an appropriate infrastructure. The College will continue efforts to incorporate experiential learning opportunities into all programs of study, in addition to that emphasis in its extensive residential life and extracurricular activities. Finally, shifting political winds at the state level may bring external pressures in the forms of resource allocation or system-wide restructuring, which may test the resilience of the Westfield State College mission in years to come.

Standard Two

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Planning

Description and Update

As a well-established public institution, Westfield State College is committed to responsible planning for its future through processes involving both external and internal stakeholders. As part of the Massachusetts state college system, Westfield State College is included in the system-wide planning by the Board of Higher Education (BHE). A completed system-wide master plan for capital renewal and construction, undertaken with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and Division of Capital Asset Management, is expected by the spring of 2007. In response to a legislative mandate, the BHE has developed a five-year master plan for the Commonwealth's public four-year and community colleges. The long-term goals articulated by the BHE include:

- * Improving Student Access and Retention
- * Raising Expectations for Student Performance
- * Aligning Programs with Mission
- * Demonstrating Accountability for Institutional Progress
- * Increasing Collaboration as a System

Based on the goals set by the BHE, the College created a Strategic Initiative Plan in 2003 (see www.wsc.ma.edu/) and began an internal strategic planning process that continues today. In March of 2003, a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) with broad representation from within the college community was established. In May of 2003, the SPC issued a report proposing a list of priorities for the College and recommending that work toward a more formal strategic plan be continued.³ This report acknowledged that the strengths of Westfield State College lie in its committed faculty and its close-knit community feel. Its challenges lie in the need to grow in its programs and its ability to encourage diversity without losing its sense of scale and community. The plan also acknowledged the fiscal realities facing the College, finding that its greatest weakness was the uncertainty of public funding. The 2003 Strategic Plan proposed steady, targeted growth but emphasized strategies for the human dimensions of community building through innovative teaching and programming, pro-active advising and other service to students. This planning process served as the base on which further strategic planning was to occur.

Beginning in fall 2004, the SPC took on the task of developing a comprehensive plan for 2005 – 2010. The SPC developed several online surveys to canvass students, faculty, administration, alumni and members of the greater Westfield community, in order to solicit their input regarding their values, priorities and goals for the College. A faculty member provided in-depth analyses of survey data, and the SPC hired a consultant to work with them. The result of these efforts was a draft strategic planning document that included five priorities and twenty-seven goals. Members of the SPC solicited campus wide input on these priorities and goals, and in April 2005 the Board of Trustees approved the present version of the *WSC Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010* (Appendix 1).

The College's values articulated through this process, Student Centered Education, Academic Excellence, Educated Citizenry, Institutional Stewardship, Accessibility/Affordability, Nurturing Environment, Effective Communication, reflect our vision of ourselves in the context of Massachusetts public higher education. From these values, the current strategic plan lays out specific priorities and goals guiding us to achieve our mission.

³ This report is available on-line at: <http://www.wsc.ma.edu/About%5FWSC/Strategic%20Plan/Archives/SP2003.pdf>

Although it was recognized that progress on all goals would occur in the normal course of college operations, three of the twenty-seven goals were chosen for increased emphasis and funding. The goals selected for targeted initiatives for spring 2005, fall 2005 and spring 2006 were:

- To provide alternative educational instruction
- To create a welcoming and inclusive environment
- To increase fund raising initiatives, including grants and contracts

The choice of these goals is based upon their overall strategic importance and potential for impact on the College, and their alignment with its mission. Alternative educational instruction encompasses two aspects of the mission: alternatives to traditional classroom-based instruction such as practical or research experiences and service learning prepare students to use their knowledge and skills to improve the social and economic conditions in their communities, while alternative modes of delivery, such as online learning, increase accessibility and encourage inter-departmental and inter-college collaboration. The choice of the second goal supports accessibility and the creation of a nurturing environment for all, while the final goal, that of diversifying the funding stream for College activities, supports efforts to remain affordable while strengthening our programs and updating our facilities.

The additional work on these goals included identifying: (1) strategies for accomplishment; (2) key actions necessary to implement those strategies; (3) progress indicators/measurable outcomes, i.e., measures which would monitor the accomplishment of those goals; (4) timelines; and (5) persons and groups responsible for those actions. Each division of the College reported its progress on the three goals during the summer 2006 Senior Staff Retreat. Action plans for spring 2005 and 2006 are available on the College website.⁴ Implementation of the action steps, with concurrent evaluation of outcomes, is a continuous process.

Analysis

Through the strategic planning process described above, the College has endeavored to create a plan for its future, which is idealistic in its goals, optimistic about its opportunities and realistic in its assumptions about funding availability. This plan melds the expectations of the BHE with values of the Westfield State community. It encompasses and, in doing so, integrates critical aspects of the institution's operations, guides the development and enhancement of academic programs, and informs plans for renovation of facilities, all of which, informs plans for college advancement and community relations. A robust implementation process, involving the administration, academic department chairs, faculty and staff, is ongoing. This year the President's Cabinet charged the SPC with soliciting input from the campus and with making recommendations on which goals would be targeted in fall 2007 – 2008. This is a college-wide undertaking, with members of the committee and administrators meeting with all divisions to allow them to highlight the goals most important in each area. Groups are asked to consider goals in terms of their college wide impact and their ability to create synergy across campus.

The College's budgeting process is increasingly linked to the initiatives of the strategic plan. During the academic year 2006-2007, over \$500,000 was allocated to these initiatives. In the upcoming year, the new goals to be emphasized will be selected in February 2007. At that time, academic departments and all administrative units will be asked to propose action plans to address these goals. These proposals will be brought to the Budget Committee. This committee, which has representatives from the SPC, will make the final decisions on allocation of funds.

⁴ <http://www.wsc.ma.edu/About%5FWSC/Strategic%20Plan/Strategic%20Plan%20.html>

Finally, the College recognizes the need to monitor progress on the goals currently emphasized as well as their continued relevance. Development of a comprehensive system for monitoring this progress is discussed in the Evaluation section.

Evaluation

Description and Update

Assessment is an increasingly important activity in higher education. It serves many purposes: Assessment can help teachers assess both teaching effectiveness and success of students in learning. Feedback to students can provide them with information about the success of their learning strategies, and on occasion be a motivational tool. At the programmatic level, it can help determine program/curricular effectiveness and be useful as a tool in resource allocation. It can also be helpful in evaluation of teachers and other professionals. Equally critical is that it assists in accountability and increases the public perception of education's accountability. For these, and many other reasons, assessment has moved to a role of prominence.

The benefits of assessment are, and have been, recognized at Westfield State. Throughout its recent history, the College has engaged in some assessment of its effectiveness as a teaching institution. The College collected and disseminated information on standard measures of productivity: first-year retention rates, six-year graduation rates, admissions yields and affordability. Our performance on these measures was at least comparable to, and sometimes significantly better than at the other state colleges. Other evaluation data have been collected, on both a regular and one-time basis, but the activity has not been conducted according to any systematic college-wide plan.

In 2002, the All College Committee authorized the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee on Institutional Evaluation drawn from faculty, staff, students, and administration. This committee was charged with supporting the development of student learning outcomes and the program review process, as well as designing a system for measuring institutional effectiveness. The committee had some success in meeting the first two charges; however the latter was beyond its resources. The College has realized that assessment and evaluation, while they must be part of the institutional culture, cannot be organized through part-time work. In February of 2006, the College hired a Dean of Institutional Research and Assessment whose responsibilities include the development of an institutional assessment plan. (Please see Appendix 2 for draft of Institutional Assessment Plan.)

Since planning and assessment are natural partners, the assessment plan parallels the twenty-seven strategic planning goals. This also ensures that the values and priorities of the College are represented in the Assessment Plan. Each broad goal is broken down into more operational steps. Measures for these more operational steps have been suggested, and in some cases specific methods for collecting data on these measures have been suggested. The process is ongoing—there are numerous 'action steps' (see above) for the goals the Strategic Planning Committee chose to emphasize and generally fewer for the remainder.

The Institutional Evaluation Committee has assumed an advisory role in the process of designing and implementing the Assessment Plan. The primary task of the committee has been to give the Assessment Plan the benefit of the collective experience and perceptions of the cross-section of the committee. The Committee's responsibilities include:

1. Advising on measures that are not included in the plan, but should be;
2. Identifying inappropriate and/or redundant measures;
3. Assessing the feasibility of the measures in the plan;
4. Helping with decisions regarding who should be given assessment data.

The plan is in the early stages of implementation. A few examples of activities underway are: Surveys are being designed to measure student use of library facilities. A questionnaire has been designed, and administered on a limited basis, to students who are withdrawing to determine in some

detail the reasons they are leaving. Two alumni surveys were designed and written by Institutional Research and Assessment to be administered this year. Many more are scheduled for 2007. There are also plans to provide data, collected via the assessment plan, to the Strategic Planning Committee in order to help refine the Strategic Plan. Also scheduled for 2007 is the development of a plan to assess the effectiveness of the Assessment Plan itself. Just as in the case of the Strategic Plan, it will change as practices change, and it will be refined or amended depending on feedback from college personnel regarding the utility of assessment data.

The Institutional Assessment Plan, as described, encompasses most, but not all of the assessment activity occurring at college. An additional component of the Institutional Assessment Plan includes the work being done on student learning outcomes for academic programs. These efforts have been substantial and ongoing; activities have been described in Section 3 of this Report. Evaluation of academic programs will be discussed under Standard 4.

Analysis

Much as does the Strategic Plan, the Assessment Plan embraces the expectations of the Board of Higher Education. Additionally, since it mirrors the goals in the Strategic Plan, by its nature it has the values of the College at its heart. Although the Assessment Plan is a couple of years newer than the Strategic Plan, its implementation is no less vigorous. The Dean of Institutional Research and the Evaluation Committee have worked to refine and expand the parameters of the plan, and will soon collaborate on priorities and strategies for the collection of new information. As part of the routine business of the College, data are already being collected that fit well within the parameters of the Assessment Plan. Those efforts can be built on; as can the data collection efforts alluded to above (see the last paragraph under *Planning: Description and Update*).

Ultimately, the Strategic Plan and the Assessment Plan will act symbiotically. Assessment information on goal accomplishment will be reported to the Strategic Planning Committee, which will re-examine goals in its light. Goals will, of course, change, and this information will be used to help direct assessment efforts. It is then that the planning-assessment loop will be completed.

Standard Three

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

Description and Update

Important changes to campus governance have taken place over the past five years. Organizational changes have improved the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees and contractual changes have opened the governance process to faculty again. The changed role of faculty in the governance process has been addressed in the Areas of Concern section of this report.

The Board of Trustees meets every two months to consider policies, personnel actions, and fiscal and other matters brought to it by the president. In the 2005-2006 academic year the Board undertook a review of its organizational structure and amended its by-laws in order to operate more efficiently. The number of committees was reduced from six to four—Executive, Academic and Student Affairs, Finance and Capital Assets, and Governance and Nomination. Since much of work of the board is undertaken by its committees, the reduction in the number of committees has enabled the board, which is comprised of eleven trustees, to be more focused in its deliberations. Notable board accomplishments since 2003 have been the oversight of a comprehensive planning process which resulted in its adoption of the campus strategic plan in 2004, and its management of the transition following the retirement of President Woodward in December, 2003. The College again faces a transition with the departure this year of President Carwein to become Chancellor of Washington State University, Tri-Cities. In the 2002 self study, the selection of the president was identified as the most crucial function of the board. It remains so today. In meeting this challenge the board has initiated a nation-wide search for the next president. A search committee, with representation from campus and community constituencies, is in the process of screening candidates. The committee expects to present the board with final candidates in early 2007.

The Board of Trustees has appointed an Interim President as the chief executive officer of the College. He has continued the initiatives of the previous president, particularly the implementation of the next phases of the strategic plan. The President oversees all academic and administrative operations of the College. In 2004 the senior management group was reorganized. The Division of Advancement and College Relations was created. This division brings together the College's development, marketing, media relations, and corporate and governmental relations functions under the direction of a single vice president. Finance, facilities and auxiliary services were consolidated in the Division of Administration and Finance. Six senior administrators comprise the President's Cabinet: the Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs; the Vice President, Student Affairs; the Vice President, Administration and Finance, the Vice president, Advancement and College Relations; the Director, Human Resources and the Executive Assistant to the President. The President meets weekly with these senior administrators as a group to discuss policy issues and to coordinate operational activities. The President also convenes periodic meetings with a larger group known as the President's Council that, in addition to the previously listed senior administrators, also includes administrative department heads and four academic department chairs. Efforts have been made to integrate faculty perspectives into operational administrative decision-making. The President's Council, the Enrollment Management Committee and the Budget Committee, all of which have added faculty to their membership, are examples of this initiative.

Faculty participation in governance is determined largely by the terms of the collective bargaining agreement currently in force. Agreements ratified in 2002 and 2005 define the role of the faculty in the decision-making processes of the campus. The details of this process are presented in Standard 4. In addition to the All College Committee (ACC) and its standing committees, a contractually

stipulated Graduate Education Council is a requirement of any state college offering a graduate education program., and therefore of Westfield State College. It consists of five members of the faculty elected by the association membership, three administrators appointed by the president, and a graduate student of the College enrolled in two or more courses. The faculty's collective bargaining agreement also provides for student participation in the governance process through its representation on the standing committees (ACC, Curriculum, Academic Policy Committee, and Student Affairs). Students are also represented with a seat on the Board of Trustees.

Analysis and Assessment

The structure of campus governance is well prescribed and reasonably well understood. It is consistent both with the Massachusetts General Laws and with the collective bargaining agreement. Faculty and librarians support this structure as evidenced by the recent referendum on governance. With the referendum came an increased focus on the governance committees, which has led to a renewed interest in the role of formal governance. This has led to the creation of additional committees to address specific issues, including workplace quality and general education. The strategic planning committee has set the foundation for future direction. The strategic plan was adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2005. Some of the action plans developed from the strategic plan have been completed, with others in progress. Most importantly, the momentum created from committee's work has integrated planning into virtually every element of decision-making. Included in this process are committees such as the better workplace committee, the committee to study the core curriculum, and the proposed committee for long range planning for the use of space and facilities.

Because of the many decision making centers on campus, it has proven effective to utilize cross divisional committees and work groups to effect change. Efforts have been made to link some of these structures and bring together the various decision making centers on a periodic basis. For example, faculty members of the Strategic Planning Committee are invited to attend the senior staff retreat along with the union chapter presidents, and the ombudsperson (a faculty member). Two members of the Strategic Planning Committee are members of the Budget Committee; four academic chairs have joined the President's Council and faculty have been invited to join the Academic Affairs staff meetings. A model for this linkage can also be seen in the faculty association's executive board meetings with faculty representatives on the various governance and decision making centers (President's Council, ACC, academic department chairs). Bringing representatives from all College constituencies that work on these various decision making bodies together on a periodic basis will facilitate working toward common goals. The ACC is an additional place where this type of collaboration can take place.

Standard Four

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Based on its 2002 site visit, NEASC requested that WSC address several areas of concern. One of these areas, assessment of student learning, is included in this standard. It has been addressed in Section III of this report and will be described only briefly here. Other areas of concern, governance, long term planning and shifting financial circumstances, impact the academic programs, both directly and indirectly. These are addressed in context below.

Description and Update

Guided by a mission centered on teaching and student learning, Westfield State College continues its commitment to providing quality educational programs. Undergraduate academic programs provide an institution-wide, general education, called the Common Core, balanced with major requirements leading to baccalaureate degrees. Post-baccalaureate programs of study and graduate academic programs offer courses with a deeper theoretical focus and distinctive educational requirements that support professional development. Both undergraduate and graduate programs provide opportunities for experiential and community-based learning through internships, cooperative education, practica, and other types of capstone and service-learning experiences.

As a part of the Massachusetts state college system, the mission of Westfield State extends beyond its physical campus. Our mission calls on us to “serve as a leader and resource for the community, identifying opportunities and solutions to community problems...” Through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE), the College offers off-campus classes at a variety of sites. In order to better serve students in the middle and eastern portions of the state, both the undergraduate criminal justice major and the master’s degree in criminal justice are offered on the Framingham State College campus. Courses in vocational education leading to vocational technical teacher licensure are offered through McCann Technical High School in North Adams, Massachusetts. In 2007, this program will be extended to Dean Technical High School in Holyoke, Massachusetts. In addition, Core courses and introductory-level major courses will be offered at Dean Tech to serve students in the Pioneer Valley who may otherwise have difficulty accessing courses on the main campus. Professional development courses in education, both credit-bearing and non-credit, are offered on campus and at a variety of school settings throughout western Massachusetts. The Center for Teacher Education & Research (CENTER), established in 2003, collaborates with DGCE to offer professional development activities such as seminars, institutes, workshops and other instructional support groups. In all cases, Westfield State College is responsible for key elements of academic programs and does not delegate this responsibility through contractual arrangements. Program and course approval occur through the same governance processes for both on-campus and off-campus programs. Oversight and evaluation processes parallel those which occur on campus.

Since 2002, there has been significant change in the integration of technology into the College’s academic programs. Distance learning courses have increased from two to over forty different offerings in the 2006-2007 academic year. One minor, sociology, can be completed entirely online. These courses are delivered via the WebCT platform. The courses are supported by the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT), a unit reporting to Academic Affairs. CIT provides both support for instructional design and technical support for users. Assignment of faculty to these courses and course evaluation is done by department chairs, as it is with traditional courses.

Academic administration and faculty assure an effective system of academic oversight. Through the governance structure, proposals for new or revised programs are initiated by academic departments, and then proceed to and through governance for consideration and recommendation. Following review by a departmental curriculum committee, the department chair submits the proposal to the All-College Committee (ACC). The ACC refers the proposal to the College’s Curriculum Committee,

the Academic Policies Committee, or the Teacher Education Council for consideration and recommendation. Substantive or stylistic changes, if any, occur during subcommittee deliberations, and the potential impact of a proposal on the overall program and on other academic departments is explored. The Curriculum Committee submits reports and recommendation to the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs. The original or revised proposal is returned to the All College Committee for its recommendation. Approval for graduate courses and policies is initiated by the appropriate academic department and sent to the Graduate Council and Senior Vice President. Proposals involving teacher or school personnel programs are considered by the Graduate Education Council and Teacher Education Council prior to consideration by the Graduate Council. All proposals are then transmitted to the President, who makes the final campus decision. Significant changes, such as the addition of majors, require approval of the Board of Trustees and the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.

The Office of Academic Affairs has established a five-year review cycle for both graduate and undergraduate programs. This review includes a self study and an external evaluation, preferably by an accrediting organization. Several departments have applied for national accreditation in their disciplinary areas, including Education, Music, Movement Science (health fitness, athletic training, and emergency medical training programs), Social Work, and Computer Science. Criminal Justice programs engage in a mandated state-wide review. The newly proposed graduate programs in Applied Behavior Analysis and Accountancy will both be evaluated by appropriate external evaluators.

During the 2005 – 2006 academic year, seven programs were reviewed. Sociology, General Science, Biology, and Environmental Science, for which no national accrediting organizations exist, completed the college-defined review process, while Criminal Justice, Social Work, and Athletic Training were reviewed by national accrediting or state approval agencies. Criminal Justice and Athletic Training were approved or accredited. Social Work received conditional accreditation dependent upon providing sufficient space and adding a faculty line. Both conditions have subsequently been met and the program has full accreditation status.

Undergraduate Degrees

All undergraduate programs at Westfield State College lead to baccalaureate degrees. Degree requirements, as established by the College governance process described in Standard 3, are published in the College Bulletin and are updated yearly. While the specific program requirements differ, the basic degree plan is the same for all majors. All require completion of the common core or general education requirements as well as introductory, intermediate and advanced course work in one or more related disciplines. Typically upper level requirements make up three-quarters or more of the required credits in a major. All degree programs permit one or more additional electives.

Since the 2002 site visit, WSC has added and revised several undergraduate programs. For example, the campus proposed and defended a new Bachelor of Arts major in Theatre Arts in 2006 which was subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees and the Board of Higher Education.

General Education

The general education component of an undergraduate degree at Westfield State College requires all students to complete the Common Core, distributed among academic areas as follows: Humanities (18 credits); Social Science (12 credits); Mathematics and Applied Analytical Reasoning (6-8 credits); Science (7-8 credits); and Diversity (6 credits). The maximum required number of credit hours to complete this requirement is 49-52 or 41-43% of the 120 credits of an undergraduate degree. However, since a number of courses qualify as meeting one or more core requirements, or core and major requirements, in practice the requirement may be completed with fewer credits.

The Common Core represents a complete revision of the 1991 general education core based on feedback from NEASC. The new curriculum is standards-driven, based on learning goals for each area. Inclusion of courses in the Core is predicated on meeting these standards. In 2003-2004, academic departments were asked by the All-College Committee to review their Core offerings to assure the courses held to the original standards. In general, programs were found to be meeting the standards of the original proposal. One aspect of the Common Core requirements has proven difficult to implement as originally written. The advanced electives specified by the Core requirements have not been developed. The current requirements already require more than a third of the 120 credit degree requirement. If combined with major requirements, the full core requirement would leave little room for electives in students' schedules. Also, academic departments felt that, due to staffing limitations, development of advanced Core electives would decrease the range of advanced major courses that could be offered.

In 2006, when seeking to expand interdisciplinary programs and support teaching alternatives as part of its work on the Strategic Plan, the department chairs determined that the Core was one of the obstacles facing major curriculum changes. The department chairs petitioned the All-College Committee to undertake a comprehensive review of the Common Core. The ACC formed an ad-hoc Review of Common Core Committee (ROCCC) comprised of students, faculty and administrators. This committee will evaluate the existing general education curriculum and make recommendations to the College governance committees for potential changes.

Graduate Programs

Westfield State College's primary mission is to assist its students to develop intellectually and to use their knowledge and skills to improve the social and economic conditions in their communities. Westfield State College has strengthened and expanded graduate offerings which support this community-focused mission. The Division of Graduate and Continuing Education offers 27 distinct graduate programs of study. Since the 2001 NEASC review, a Master of Education in Music and a Master of Public Administration have been added, as well as two certificate programs: Graduate Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis and Graduate Certificate in Homeland Security Studies. A Master of Arts in Psychology (applied behavior analysis track) and Master of Accountancy are currently in the governance and state-approval process. Post-baccalaureate teacher licensure programs continue to be available for college graduates who are seeking licensure as teachers in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Programs are designed for students who have completed a Bachelor's degree and desire initial licensure as a teacher. Students completing programs leading to teacher licensure must meet program outcomes outlined by the College's academic major, state, and national standards.

Students admitted to graduate programs are demonstrably qualified. The minimum GPA varies across programs, but has been raised overall. Students must hold a minimum GPA of 2.7 – 3.0 depending on the program of study. All applicants must pass applicable standard examinations (e.g., GRE, Miller Analogies Test), provide a superlative essay of life experience as it relates to planned course of study, have evidence of successful academic completion of prerequisite courses, and possibly complete a successful interview process. Every Master's degree requires completion of a thesis or comprehensive exam.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

Since the 2002 site visit, there have been no changes in the policies regarding academic credit. As stated in the Westfield State College *Bulletin*, there is a 30-credit residency requirement for the undergraduate degree. The College accepts undergraduate transfer credit from other accredited institutions, and has developed articulation agreements with all public community colleges in Massachusetts including those institutions from which students transfer frequently (e.g., Holyoke Community College, Springfield Technical Community College). Articulation agreements are

available to students and prospective students on the web. Joint admissions programs with several schools accelerate the admission process at Westfield State. Academic departments review these agreements annually in order to facilitate new programs. Graduate students may transfer a maximum of 6 credits into their program of study prior to matriculation at the College, as long as the transferred courses meet the content requirements of the program of study.

All online credit-bearing courses offered at Westfield State College are provided by College faculty and are subject to the same learning outcome expectations as a traditional classroom-based course. Department chairs make the assignments with the appropriate administrator and Registrar.

Assessment of student learning

Over the past several years, departments and programs have been engaged in an effort to specify learning goals and to develop measures to accurately assess students' success in meeting these goals. These activities have been described in section 3 of this report.

While the primary assessment process is tied to the majors, there are two College-wide programs that assess communication and literacy skills. All students who enter a degree program at Westfield State College are required to have basic proficiency in English. This requirement is met through high school grades and SAT scores. TOEFL scores are required of international students. Writing, reading and mathematics proficiency are tested upon entry and, when necessary, a student is enrolled in a "plus" section where extra class time is built into an appropriate three-credit course. For all students, English Composition I & II are required as part of the Common Core. The College provides support for continued development through the Reading and Writing Center and available tutors. The English proficiency of graduate students is gauged at the point of entry, through admission essays, and at the point of exit, through comprehensive examinations and/or theses. Information literacy assessment has been on-going as the library collects data from entering first year students. Consistent findings include a wide-spread inability to identify appropriate information sources, as well as a lack of understanding of the quality of information available on the internet. As a result of this assessment, instruction is offered to our students in the required English Composition sequence and within the disciplinary context of other courses.

Westfield State College measures student satisfaction upon graduation in both the day division and DGCE. An exit survey is given to all graduates. In 2006, DGCE held a focus group with graduates to determine program strengths and areas for improvement. Students praised their level of academic preparation, field experience, and faculty involvement in student learning. The graduating class encouraged administration to continue development of alternative education delivery formats, as well as to provide some readily accessible food service (e.g., vending) at certain locations on campus.

Analysis and Assessment

At the time of the site visit, the team expressed concern that budget constraints would have several negative effects on the quality of the College's academic programs. Specifically, they were concerned that there would be an increased use of adjunct faculty and a decrease in course offerings. These concerns have not been realized. In the past five years, Westfield State College has, at a minimum, maintained and, arguably, increased the quality of its academic programs. The use of adjunct faculty is limited to 15% of contact hours by the MSCA collective bargaining agreement. This limit is exceeded only under unusual circumstances (see Standard 5). As noted in the final response on September 12, 2002, from (then) President Woodward, the increased use of adjuncts is attributable to our growth in fulltime students, planned decrease in class size, and the award of release time to faculty for teaching overloads and alternative duties. Occasionally, courses may be cancelled or postponed due to insufficient enrollment. After consultation with the appropriate department chair as many as five to ten courses may be cancelled (0.4 to 0.8%) in any given semester. Allowances are made for students needing a course for graduation or prior to student teaching. The effects of

decreased course selection can, in the short term, be ameliorated by planning and pro-active student advising. A more positive measure of program quality comes from our recent experience with external approval and accreditation. Programs seeking such recognition have been quite successful.

In the near future, the College expects some expansion and realignment of its academic programs. Several teacher licensure programs are being discontinued due to low enrollment: Instructional Technology, Severe Needs Special Education, and the Middle School Generalist licenses. We anticipate the approval of two Master's programs, Applied Behavioral Analysis and Accountancy, that are related to current programs.

We expect that the over-arching focus of the next five years will be on the related processes of program review and assessment of student learning. Academic program review had been intermittent in the past but, since 2004, has been reorganized and reinvigorated. All academic programs will be reviewed at least once between 2005 and 2009. The program review requirements contain an expectation of assessment of student learning. As described in Section 3, development of these measures is underway. We trust that this commitment to evaluation of our activities will reinforce the "culture of on-going assessment" that the 2002 Visiting Team found lacking.

Standard Five FACULTY

Description and Update

Westfield State College currently employs 183 full-time faculty and eight librarians giving a student: faculty ratio of 22:1. Sixty percent of the faculty have been hired within the last ten years. The faculty continues to be predominantly white although the College has made some progress in increasing the diversity of its faculty. Slightly less than 90 percent of full-time faculty are white (compared to 90.6 percent in 2001); 10.1 percent are members of racial or ethnic minority groups.

Over the past two years the College has increased its efforts to recruit a diverse pool of candidates for full-time faculty positions. A group of faculty and staff have worked on improving the recruitment and hiring process so that the College will be able to attract and retain a more diverse group of new faculty. The Diversity Working Group, meets periodically with department chairs and the chairs of search committees. This effort has led to the development of a variety of strategies such as networking with colleagues at other institutions, using directories of women and minority candidates, creating search plans that address best practices, and generally promoting a welcoming environment.

In addition to these efforts, the Office of Academic Affairs offered to host a luncheon or breakfast each month for Westfield State faculty, staff and administrators of color. The purpose of the meeting is to provide these members of the community with an opportunity to meet for their own purposes of support and mentoring. One activity that the group initiated was to serve as “ambassadors” to faculty candidates during their on campus interviews. Their goal was provide candidates with a positive experience on campus and underscore the institution’s commitment to diversity.

While the faculty remains relatively homogeneous racially and ethnically, it is less so when it comes to gender. Approximately 48 percent of full-time faculty are female, compared to 39.4 percent in 2001. Thirty-five percent of full professors, 51 percent of associate professors, and 56 percent of assistant professors are female.

The proportion of full-time faculty with terminal degrees is 83.2 percent. An increase in faculty salaries has somewhat improved the College’s ability to recruit well-qualified faculty. On March 1, 2005, all full-time faculty members received the first of three salary increases under the current contract. After the last increase became effective on September 30, 2006, faculty salaries had risen approximately 14 percent, bringing them closer to the national average.

Faculty in the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE) are drawn from the College’s full-time faculty and working professionals from the region. Fifty percent of the DGCE faculty are members of the full-time faculty and two-thirds of the DGCE faculty have terminal degrees in their fields. DGCE faculty generally teach one course per term and all courses are taught under the provisions of the DGCE contract.

The ratification of a new collective bargaining agreement covering the period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2007 and the subsequent funding of faculty salary increases removed the impediments to faculty participation in the college governance process and in strategic planning. The new contract stipulates that governance, with faculty involvement, must continue even in the absence of a collective bargaining agreement. Faculty now serve on all governance committees. Four representatives of the faculty serve on the President’s Council and faculty have been closely involved in the strategic planning process at both the departmental and institutional levels. Two members of the Strategic Planning Committee serve on the Budget Committee, and currently one is a faculty member. Academic department chairs, who are all members of the faculty, have participated in two retreats—held early in the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years—that focused on the

institutional strategic plan. Departments have been involved in developing action steps for the strategic plan.

As part of the College's emphasis on developing a comprehensive assessment plan to measure institutional effectiveness, the faculty has become actively involved in creating measurable objectives for their courses and for academic programs. This process is still in its early stages, but is being assisted by the new Dean of Institutional Research and by the members of the Institutional Assessment Committee, co-chaired by a faculty member from the Biology Department. The faculty in each academic program have been tasked with developing several measurable objectives for their program by the end of the fall semester.

Professional development resources for faculty have improved over the past several years. Professional development funds increased to approximately \$780.00 per faculty member in each of the last two academic years. In addition to these funds, a travel fund has been established to support faculty who present papers or are otherwise actively involved in international, national, and some regional professional meetings. In the current academic year the fund totals \$60,000.

In addition to funds available to individual faculty members for professional development or travel, the College has developed several new initiatives that support faculty research, scholarship, and teaching. The I³ Fund (Innovate, Initiate, Inspire), established in the 2004-2005 academic year, provides funding for innovative and creative collaborations among faculty, staff, and students that will strengthen and transform the College. Faculty members have been active in developing a number of I³ projects in the past two years, including the creation of a service learning course that will take 25 students to New Orleans over the 2006-2007 winter break to participate in projects led by Habitat for Humanity. In the 2005-2006 academic year, faculty recipients of I³ funding developed a Center for Community Planning, the Westfield River Environmental Center, and WSC Write (Write, Reflect, Innovate: Transforming Education), and initiated two academic bridge programs for urban youth. Each of these projects provided opportunities for the development of innovative approaches to teaching and, in the case of WSC Write, offered professional development workshops for faculty in all disciplines.

Another new initiative is the STARS (Semester Time Award for Research and Scholarship) program. STARS recipients—junior faculty members who have not yet been tenured—are given release time from teaching responsibilities and other duties for one semester in order to complete scholarly projects. The first STARS awards were granted for the spring semester of 2006 to four faculty members; three faculty members will receive STARS awards for the spring semester of 2007. Faculty who received this grant of release time in spring 2006 have completed publishable articles and a book proposal that is now under contract.

The College's support for alternative instructional models has increased noticeably over the past several years. Creating and supporting alternative approaches to instruction is one of the strategic planning goals for the College. The service learning course described above represents one approach. Faculty are also involved in a re-examination of the College's general education curriculum with the objective of revising the Common Core, if appropriate, and being able to offer more interdisciplinary courses. Faculty serve on, and chair, the All College Committee, an arm of the governance structure, which is currently in the process of examining several other alternatives, including the establishment of learning communities, courses that combine travel with study, a new structure for teaching writing across the curriculum, and courses that focus on student research projects. Academic departments have been asked this year to propose their preferred pedagogical initiatives, as well.

The use of instructional technology has grown exponentially since the establishment of the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) in 2003. The technical and pedagogical assistance provided by CIT has enabled the faculty to develop and offer many different kinds of technologically-enhanced

courses. Since 2003, nearly 500 courses using WebCT (the web-based platform used by the College) have been offered, either as online distance courses, “brick and click” courses (a combination of distance and face-to-face classes), or enhanced courses. Enhanced courses are regular face-to-face classes in which faculty members use WebCT to post the course syllabus and assignments, hold discussions, and, in some cases, administer examinations. In the three years since the establishment of CIT, nearly 150 faculty have used WebCT in some way in their classes. To encourage faculty’s development of online distance courses, the College initiated a “web camp” as one of the action steps in the College’s strategic plan. In the summer of 2006, interested faculty who had never taught an online course received a stipend of \$1000 to attend a two-week training program: one week, face-to-face; the second week, online. Ten faculty members completed the training and each will offer an online course during the 2006-2007 academic year. The College will fund a web camp again in the summer of 2007. To support the faculty’s efforts to offer additional technologically-enhanced courses, the College has turned 64 classrooms into “smart” or high-technology classrooms. This number represents nearly sixty percent of all classrooms.

Procedures for the evaluation of faculty members’ teaching, scholarship, advising, and service to the College and the community are established by the collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Higher Education and the MSCA. This agreement requires that all non-tenured, full-time faculty be evaluated yearly. Under this process, faculty’s classes are visited each year by members of the peer evaluation committee and/or the department chair. Student evaluations for each of the faculty members’ classes are collected each semester; faculty also submit materials to document their scholarly and service activities and their advising. The vice president for academic affairs reviews these materials including the evaluations completed by the peer evaluation committee and the department chair and makes a recommendation for reappointment to the president.

Evaluations for tenure and promotion follow the same steps described above but are supplemented by reviews by two faculty committees. The seven members of the Committee on Promotions are elected by the faculty of the College from among the tenured members of the faculty and librarians. The Committee on Promotions forwards its recommendations to the vice president for academic affairs who subsequently submits recommendations to the president.

The Committee on Tenure is composed of four tenured faculty or librarians, who are elected by the faculty and librarians, and one tenured member from the candidate’s department. An applicant’s department chair also serves as a consultant to the committee. The Committee on Tenure considers the recommendations of the department chair (and an optional peer evaluation recommendation), reviews the candidate’s materials, and meets with the candidate. The committee forwards its recommendations to the vice president for academic affairs who subsequently submits a recommendation to the president.

Tenured faculty and librarians are also subject to post-tenure review, a procedure instituted under the current collective bargaining agreement. Each individual undergoing review compiles materials documenting his or her teaching effectiveness, research and scholarship, advising, and service to the college and community. These materials are submitted directly to the vice president for academic affairs along with a document evaluating the candidate’s teaching based on the department chair’s observation of one of the candidate’s classes. Student evaluations of the candidate’s teaching are also included in the dossier reviewed by the vice president.

The post-tenure review process is linked to merit pay. Faculty whose performance over the past four years is “exemplary” receive a six-percent raise and those whose performance is rated “meritorious” receive a three-percent raise. Faculty who receive a rating of “not acceptable” may, if they choose, engage in a professional development plan as prescribed by the vice president with the goal of improving their ratings. No punitive action may be taken against a faculty member who chooses not to undertake a professional development plan.

Adjunct faculty members' classes are visited periodically by department chairs, as required by the collective bargaining agreement. Student evaluations are also collected for each adjunct faculty member's classes each semester. Periodic evaluations by the department chair are based on the chair's observations of the faculty member's classes, course documents, the faculty member's updated resume, and any other relevant material the faculty member chooses to offer for consideration.

The collective bargaining agreement directs each of the Massachusetts state colleges to administer a survey to students asking for their evaluation of the advising they receive in their major departments. The survey was administered for the first time in the 2006 spring semester. The results of the survey are encouraging: institutional totals show that students generally gave high marks to the advising they received. Each department has been given results for its own majors and is able to compare those results with our institutional average.

In addition to these contractually-mandated evaluation procedures, faculty members' performance can be assessed in a variety of other ways. For example, at the end of each academic year each department chair submits an annual report that includes a summary of the department faculty's activities, including their participation in meetings of professional organizations; research, scholarship, and publications; and service to the College and the community. In addition, faculty members who receive STARS awards or I³ grants (see above for a description of these programs) must present a report on their activities at the conclusion of the award period. This is also true for faculty who have taken sabbatical leave. Both the STARS awards and I³ grants are made after a review of proposals by committees specially constituted for this purpose; faculty members serve on both committees. I³ projects, whether they involve faculty participation or not, must be evaluated by external reviewers.

Analysis and Assessment

During the five years since the NEASC Self-Study and visit, many of the issues noted by the visiting committee have been addressed. With the ratification of collective bargaining agreements, relations between faculty and administration have normalized. The faculty have maintained the commitment to their students and to the College for which they were commended in the visiting committee's report. The strength of the faculty's qualifications have not changed either. Due to rapidly increasing student enrollments, there has been a small decrease in the ratio of full-time faculty to students. This change has been offset by small increases in class size, use of adjunct faculty and voluntarily increased faculty course loads.

The College's focus on teaching and the intellectual development of students calls for an emphasis on the evaluation of teaching effectiveness. Internal evaluations of faculty performance are conducted according to the contractually mandated procedures described above. The yearly evaluation of untenured faculty members provides an opportunity for discussion of professional growth with senior faculty and administration. External evaluations of teaching effectiveness are indirect. During national accreditation of programs, faculty performance and qualifications are examined. These reviews have generally been quite favorable. Program reviews, conducted on a five-year rotating schedule, also assess teaching effectiveness. External reviewers, who have been recommended by professional societies, are asked to examine faculty performance and qualifications as well as the curriculum developed by the faculty.

A commitment to teaching is also evident in faculty initiatives. Papers written by faculty, both in and outside of the Education Department, often address college and pre-college pedagogy. This year, under the sponsorship of the Faculty Center, members of the faculty have formed a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning discussion group. Its purpose is to examine good practice in the field and to promote research collaborations.

Standard Six STUDENTS

Description and Update

Admissions, Retention and Enrollment

Over the past five years, first-time student enrollment at Westfield State College has increased by 21% and transfer student enrollment by 6%. This increase is the combined result of a 29% increase in the number of applications and 33% increase in the yield of admitted students who enroll. The increased enrollment is not due to any reduction in the admissions standards. The College continues to maintain high school GPA standards above the minimum required by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. In 2001, our entering first year students had an average high school GPA of 2.91 and combined SAT score of 1,019. For 2006, the GPA increased to 3.00 and SAT to 1,020.

Retention and graduation rates remain above the average for Massachusetts state colleges and for our IPEDS-defined peer institutions. Retention for 2005 – 2006 fall to fall enrollment is 75% with a three year average of 76.4%. Our institutional graduation rate of 55.1% is above the state college average of 45.6%.

Our recent rapid growth in first year students has put a strain on the College's ability to address the needs of the students in classes, housing and other support services. As a result, we have adopted a targeted admissions plan to build the Class of 2011. The net goal of this plan is to reduce the enrolled first year students by 20% while balancing the improvement of academic standards with the goal of remaining accessible. The net reduction of our day student population will be matched by a net increase in our part time and graduate student population. See CIHE Data Form 6 for our enrollment projections.

Over the past two years, the Admissions Office has seen applications increase by 29%. Participants in campus tours have increased by 214%, attendance at Saturday open house programs has increased by 60%, and visits by parents and prospective students to campus for "Wednesdays at Westfield" have numbered 1300-1500 each fall. Admissions activities have increasingly migrated online. Extensive information for applicants, including admissions requirements, transfer credit equivalencies and financial aid, is available online. Admissions procedures have been streamlined through the implementation of a web-based application process. Westfield State first employed online applications for the fall 2002 semester when 42 complete applications were processed. Students appear to be embracing web applications; The College has experienced a 50% increase in web application this past year. The Admissions Office maintains a paper-based application process for applicants lacking internet access.

Student Support Services

High retention and graduation rates are sustained, in part, by appropriate student support services. Academic support services, including the Academic Advising Center (AAC), the Office of Disability Services, the Urban Education Program, and the College Skills Enhancement Program, report directly to the Dean of Academic Retention. The Academic Advising Center offers assistance and advice to students within specific academic majors and provides all students with a range of services including tutorial assistance, developing strategies for academic success, and reviewing academic progress. New to the AAC, beginning in the fall of 2005, is the Peer Advising Program. The Peer Advising program is designed to supplement advising offered through individual academic departments. Peer advisors are undergraduates who meet specific academic requirements. They are trained to assist other students to understand major and minor requirements, Common Core requirements, and the registration process.

The Academic Advising Center is clearly responding to a real demand for its services. During an average academic year, its staff is directly responsible for assisting more than 900 students from the population of students with undeclared majors, those on academic probation, and those majoring in Liberal Studies/Education. Additionally, more than 1,000 first-year students from nine different majors utilize pre-advising services.

The Office of Disability Services continues to provide a wide range of services to students with physical disabilities and documented learning disabilities. Approximately 90 percent of the students served by the program over the past 15 years have graduated. In the fall semester of 2006 the office served more than 500 students. Services and support include personalized tutorial assistance, modified examinations, readers, signers, scribes, assistance in obtaining recorded books, and adaptive technology. The Office of Disability Services assists the Office of Admissions in screening and providing academic support for students diagnosed as learning disabled. In the fall of 2006, approximately 570 students with disabilities applied and 141 entered the College. The Tutoring Center, which operates out of the Office of Disability Services, works with approximately 500 students annually, providing assistance in virtually every academic subject area at the College. The Center also houses a peer-tutoring program. These services are available to all students at the College.

In 1993, the College was awarded a \$169,000 renewable grant from the United States Department of Education to administer a Student Support Services Program (SSSP) to aid in the retention of academically needy students who were first-generation college students, low-income students, or physically disabled. The program seeks to identify students who meet federal eligibility requirements and demonstrate academic need. Students receive financial aid packages that satisfy all financial need. The program provides academic assistance, a comprehensive network of counseling support services, and administers an innovative, program of support services. Funding for the SSSP has risen consistently since its inception.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Reading and Writing Center completed its sixth year of operations. The Center's staff of four professional tutors worked with more than 350 individual students and visited 40 classrooms, reaching nearly one-fifth the College's student body. The Reading and Writing Center serves students through individual half-hour tutorials at the Center and through in-class visits and workshops—two very effective ways to provide students with alternative instruction. Students preparing to take Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL), now account for 28.4 percent of all students served by the Center. By offering three week-long group sessions and individual tutorials, the Center has made serving MTEL students a priority.

The Student Administrative Service Center (SASC) continues to provide convenient, student-centered services to current and prospective students and their families. The offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, and Student Accounts are now in the same location and, although they remain in different administrative divisions, they are more easily able to work cooperatively. In 2003 the College migrated to an integrated computer system, SCT Banner, which impacted all offices across campus. The change to a new student information system has been difficult at times, but as personnel are trained and become more familiar with the system staff and faculty expect to have better access to student records and other data.

In 2005, 83% of undergraduate students received some form of financial aid. Over the past five years, there has been little to no growth in federal aid dollars, while the cost of tuition and fees at Westfield State has increased from \$2914 to \$5657. The Director of Financial Aid is currently managing a financial aid portfolio in excess of 21 million dollars, of which 15 million dollars are student loans. Westfield State College has a merit program designed to attract high quality students to the College. The institution committed 1.7 million dollars in financial aid for academic year 2005-2006, of which \$400,000 was merit-based aid. The remaining aid was need-based with 99.2% of aid-eligible students

having their need (Direct Costs – Expected Family Contribution) covered by financial aid in FY2005. Current policies, procedures and criteria for financial aid are available on the college website and in its Bulletin.

The Student Affairs Division includes the departments of Campus Center/Student Activities, Residential Life, Athletics, Career Services, Counseling Center, Health Services, Public Safety, Student Conduct, and special student programs including Commuter Services, Orientation, First Year Experience, and Veteran Services. These departments serve the needs of full-time and part-time students, residential students and commuters, undergraduates and graduate students. In order to meet the needs of these different student populations, many changes and new initiatives have occurred in these areas over the past five years.

A major emphasis of Student Affairs continues to be promoting and supporting student leadership through the Student Government Association and various student clubs and organizations. Student leaders, working closely with faculty and staff advisors, produce and publicize a robust schedule of social, cultural and recreational activities which include club sports, musical and theatrical performances, and a student-run newspaper and radio station. In addition to activities and programs developed by students, Student Affairs produces co-curricular events throughout the school year. In line with the college mission, an online community service clearinghouse has been developed to promote community service among students. The clearinghouse has created links with nonprofit organizations in the greater Westfield community where students can be involved in a variety of service activities. Engaging students in community service reflects a national trend to combine academic learning with practical experience.

Athletic services have been enhanced as a result of the completion of the Woodward Center academic/athletics field house in September of 2004. Major renovations to the outdoor athletics facilities were completed in the summer of 2006. The Athletics Department has achieved the goal of gender equity. For the past eight years, the department has been within the accepted five percent of complete gender equity in terms of number of participants (somewhat uncommon among institutions offering football). Eighteen varsity sports are offered through the Athletics Department; women's lacrosse was added to the roster in 2006. Nine varsity sports are offered for women and seven for men. In addition, there is a varsity coed competitive cheering team. The athletic programs follow National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III guidelines, which place priority on the quality of student-athletes' educational experience. The Athletics Department also runs more than 30 intramural recreation programs throughout the school year. Westfield State continues to excel as one of the top colleges in the Massachusetts State College Athletics Conference, both athletically and academically.

Career Services has experienced tremendous growth in programs and services. In 2001, Career Services assumed on-campus management of the Washington Center internship program. Enrollment in the internship has increased dramatically as a result of effective marketing. The program grew from four enrollees in 2001 to nearly 30 in 2005-2006. The Westfield State College Foundation's scholarship for students enrolled in the internship has doubled to \$10,000. These funds are matched by the Washington Center. The Director of Career Services, who coordinates the Washington Center program for Westfield State, was named liaison of the year by the Washington Center in 2004 in recognition of the dramatic growth in student participation in the internship.

Despite a reduction in staff in Career Services, marketing and outreach have continued. Enhancing the use of technology to meet the needs of constituents (students, alumni, and employers) continues as a major focus of attention. A completely redesigned website was implemented in June 2006. The recent addition of a comprehensive online Career Services Management software system now provides a full range of tools for tracking every service offered for students, alumni, and employers. The system facilitates the online posting and registration of jobs, internships, and community service

announcements. The additions of a comprehensive online Career Resource Library and Online Resume Development Program have also been well received. Career Services has commissioned a series of professional marketing materials for the 2006-2007 academic year. These high quality brochures will enhance outreach to students, alumni, and employers.

The Counseling Center, like other college mental health centers, continues to see an increase in demand for services both in terms of the number of students requesting services and in the severity of their presenting concerns. In 2006, the Counseling Center saw an 18% increase in the number of counseling appointments from the previous year and a 14% increase in the number of psychiatric appointments. As a result of this demand, the Counseling Center has had to institute a waiting list during periods of high volume over the last four years. To meet this demand for its services, the Counseling Center hired an additional counselor in the fall of 2006. Counselors on staff also participate in an on-call rotation to assist in after-hours mental health emergencies. The creation of a Counseling Center website provides updated information on mental health and can also be used for on-line screening for depression, anxiety, PTSD, eating disorders, and alcohol abuse. Screening sites refer students to Counseling Center resources and offer specific information on how to schedule an appointment and what they can expect from participating in counseling. The Center is fully accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) and will be submitting materials for reaccreditation in the spring of 2007.

The Department of Health Services has evolved over the past five years. The Department focuses on health education, prevention, wellness promotion, and surveillance. Health Services staff have collaborated with the Counseling Center and community hospitals in the development of health programming and services. Service has been expanded to include women's health care under the auspices of a community hospital. Some free laboratory tests are available to aid in diagnosis and the Department has developed a vaccine immunization program for students and staff.

The Public Safety Department provides law enforcement and security services at the College and works cooperatively with the City of Westfield Police Department and the Massachusetts State Police. The Department of Public Safety has been certified by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission, and has recently been recertified by that agency. The department will work toward full accreditation in the next five years. The department's location in the "White House" on Western Avenue makes it more visible. The building is now fully accessible to people with disabilities. Public Safety offers a Rape Aggression Defense Program for our students and continues to utilize a bike patrol unit and Adopt-A-Hall program to encourage informal contact between police and the community. The department continues to be the main referral agent for student conduct issues.

The Student Conduct Office continues to work with students, faculty, and staff to ensure that non-academic behavioral standards are upheld. These standards are reviewed and updated every year in collaboration with various campus constituencies. A new Classroom Conduct Policy has been developed and approved in concert with Academic Affairs. A campus-wide committee's review of student conduct data and the effectiveness of on-campus sanctions led to the first major revisions of the College's Alcohol and Other Drug Policy in almost ten years.

The Office of Special Programs and Community Service ensures that appropriate services and facilities are readily accessible to students who commute. This office oversees commuter programming, commuter newsletters and postings, and Commuter Council advisement, and advocates for commuter student issues. The office of the Dean of Student Affairs maintains off-campus housing listings and works cooperatively with officials of the city of Westfield to assist in addressing issues pertaining to off-campus student life.

The First Year Experience Seminar has added a substance abuse prevention program, CHOICES which is an interactive journaling program based upon a harm reduction model of prevention. The

journal has become a required text for the course and every new instructor is required to receive training in facilitating the journaling process.

The New Student and Parent Orientation Programs continue to draw over 90% of our incoming first-year students and have registered increasing parent participation over the last five years. A significant overhaul of the Transfer Student Orientation Program was initiated in 2006 to increase student attendance and to make the program content more consistent with our other orientation program offerings.

Veterans Services have expanded in light of the nation's response to terrorism and the many students affected by the war in Iraq. In addition to responding to an increase in the number of students applying for veterans financial benefits, the College supports students who are members of military programs with services such as informational newsletters, veterans' group meetings, and other events directed toward this special student population.

Analysis and Assessment

In line with the College's strategic plan, student service areas are continuing to assess, evaluate, develop and strengthen programs and initiatives. The Division of Student Affairs is also implementing student learning outcomes in its co-curricular activities. Through regular and systematic assessment and evaluation, the College will need to determine whether the co-curricular goals and needs of the students are being met. Information obtained through assessment and evaluation can be used to revise annual objectives and to improve the delivery of programs and services.

Since its inception in the fall semester 1993, the Student Support Services Program has achieved all of its program objectives while managing to exert considerable campus influence in the areas of multicultural development and the expansion of learning communities for students needing extra academic support. One hundred and sixty program-eligible students have been enrolled in the program and all have been offered financial aid packages that satisfy 100 percent of each student's financial need. Through the support of program courses, workshops, tutoring, mentoring and academic counseling, more than 80 percent of the program's students have achieved a GPA of 2.00 or better. Of particular significance is the goal of sustaining culturally diverse students in majors which do not typically attract these students. Even though the total number of these students is rather small, seven students have been successful in majors often avoided by minority students.

Anticipating continued funding for the next four-year period, the Student Support Services Program (SSSP) has moved deliberately to expand program/faculty cooperation to meet program goals, increase the level of community involvement, and expand services in collaborative learning to include more ambitious learning communities that link thematic courses in an innovative program for first-year students. A new extended learning community involving 60 SSSP eligible students is planned for the fall of 2007. A course linking English Composition I, Critical Issues in Education, and a third common core course will be offered to students in the Urban Education Summer Bridge Program. The SSSP learning community will be housed on a single floor on campus where a program of lectures, colloquia, films, and workshops will enhance formal learning and stress multicultural themes. This effort, offered in conjunction with the full slate of workshops, classes, tutorials and cultural enrichment excursions and activities that are the backbone of the SSSP program, serves to underscore a project agenda aimed at maximizing student involvement and, ultimately, student success.

In light of the continued increase in the student population, additional staff and funding for Academic Student Support Services are needed. Space issues for all offices within the Department of Academic Achievement must also be addressed. An increase in staff in the Department of Disability Services

and in the Academic Advising Center would allow both programs to continue to provide quality services to our students.

As noted earlier, the Counseling Center continues to see more clients each year. Furthermore many of students seeking services at this time have previously diagnosed conditions and are on psychotropic medication. Therefore the Counseling Center is forced to spend the majority of their resources on direct service and crisis intervention, resulting in fewer resources for outreach and education. The inclusion of a Health Educator would provide a much needed educational outreach resource for many departments including the Counseling Center and Health Services. Realizing that many cultural groups are hesitant to use counseling services due to a history of discrimination and oppression, the Counseling Center will continue to find alternative ways to reach out to a diverse student population. Additional steps will also be taken to continue to reach out to our military veteran population.

Adjustments have been made to the First Year Experience Seminar (FYES) course, which is coordinated by the Associate Director of Residential Life. New topic areas have been added, course length adjusted, and community service requirements instituted; a new curriculum module related to alcohol and other drug education has been added. Further expansion of the FYES program is limited by a lack of financial and other resources. Participants' evaluations of the FYES and our orientation programs continue to be favorable. Retention data also support the effectiveness of these programs.

Results from the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I) benchmarking survey (administered biennially) demonstrate continued overall strong satisfaction with the residential experience at Westfield. Persistent high demand for housing from new and continuing students supports this data. With the recent growth of the student population, there is a need to expand the dining facilities on campus. Students have asked that a dining facility be placed in New Hall. Construction of the New Residence Hall has helped to satisfy the demand for student housing. However, even with this addition, demand for housing has outstripped supply. The College does not, however, anticipate constructing any additional housing in the foreseeable future.

A master plan was completed in 2006 to assess additional constructions needs of the outdoor athletics facilities. One of the Athletics Department's primary goals over the next few years is to provide live video streamed webcasts of its games to parents, friends, fans, and alumni. The department also plans to enhance its varsity programs through significant fund-raising efforts. To accomplish this goal, the College's development office hired an athletics fundraiser in September of 2006.

The Office of Admissions expects to see a decline in the New England high school population over the next five years that will challenge the College's recruitment efforts. One strategy for responding to this challenge may be to expand the College's recruitment territory to include states out of the New England area. Another strategy may involve recruiting more non traditional students. This may require additional recruiters and additional funding. In order for Westfield State to remain competitive, the College will also need to create new strategies to increase financial aid.

Standard Seven
LIBRARY AND OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

Library Description and Update

The Ely library provides print and electronic information resources to students and faculty at the College. An emphasis on digital resource and collaboration has allowed the library to partially mitigate the effects of its financial and physical limitations. The reference librarians and staff continue to provide high levels of service to the campus community. Beyond serving as a gateway to information resources on and off campus, the library also takes an active role in information literacy instruction and assessment.

The concerns about funding voiced by the NEASC visiting team in 2002 have proven to be well founded. The major change since the library's 2001 self-study report is the decline in collections funding for the library. The state's decision to eliminate funding for its Educational Resources Material line means that the library has lost \$366,542 of funding from this source. While the College has attempted to replace this shortfall, there has been a net loss of funding during a time of rapidly increasing costs in books and databases. This has had a significant impact on the library's ability to purchase materials to support the educational needs of our students and faculty.

In the face of declining financial support during the past five years, the library has been proactive in the development of services to students and faculty. In the field of electronic services, we have completed a comprehensive review of our database offerings. This allowed the library to revise its offerings, subscribing to additional databases supporting course offerings at WSC. The library currently provides access to over 125 databases with 19,000 full-text journals and a variety of reference resources. The library received a grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners in 2005 allowing the library to join the Massachusetts Virtual Catalog, which allows patrons to request materials from other libraries in the Commonwealth. The library continues to participate in local and regional library networks and consortia.

The library has maintained its emphasis on service and access. Staffing levels have remained constant with the hiring of a new director in 2005 and the replacement of two Reference/Instruction Librarians in 2005 and 2006. Services to patrons are available continuously from the library's web page. These services include catalog searches and a Full-Text Periodical Directory, developed and maintained by the Reference and Instruction Department which allows the library's periodical holdings, both electronic and print, to be searched from home, residence hall or office. Access to full-text digital materials is available via password-protected internet connections.

Information literacy instruction continues to be an important priority for the Ely Library. Classes taught have increased from 238 serving 2,909 students in 2001 to 282 serving 4,575 students in 2005. A recent sabbatical by the Information Instruction Coordinator resulted in a greatly improved teaching strategy for our English Composition classes, incorporating active learning and analysis. Initial feedback from faculty in this area indicates an improvement in finding and using information in class assignments. Reference/Instruction librarians continue to make contact with departments to meet with faculty members to review the benefits to their students of information instruction across the curriculum. The College's new Opening Day programs for faculty were used to publicize both the integration of information literacy in the curriculum and new services that the library is offering. The Instruction Coordinator sits on the Review of Common Core Curriculum Committee and the issue of computer literacy as part of a common core for students is being discussed.

An assessment instrument has been administered to the incoming freshman class for the past four years to gather information on their information seeking and computer skills. During the past two years problems have developed as the interface between the Banner system and WebCT has been

problematic, resulting in less than optimal data collection results. We are currently investigating a new testing system for next year's administration. When this program is fully operational, students will be surveyed again during their junior year to measure the effects of their first two years of college on their information literacy skills.

The library received a laptop cart this year to expand its ability to teach additional classes with its limited classroom space. Problems have been encountered with finding space on the first floor suitable for such use due to technology, lighting and sound issues. We are working with Facilities and Information Technology to solve these issues. The larger issue, however, is the lack of instructors to teach these courses. New reference/instruction librarians will be needed to handle the increasing demand for services in future years as well as additional classroom space.

The College's archives came under the library's management in 1999. Our first priority has been the development of a print finding aid for patrons. This process is almost complete and should be finished early next year. A recent development has been the establishment of the Global Women's History Archives, based on a series of distinguished conferences held at the College. A grant provided by the Tsunami Foundation for the development of this new archive allowed us to purchase Past Perfect software. This will allow us to create an electronic catalog of these materials which can eventually be placed on the web for patrons to search as well as be used in the development of web based exhibits. An 11" x 17" scanner for transfer of print material to digital format has been ordered as well.

Recent improvements in the technology infrastructure support the library's activities. The computers in the instruction classroom were replaced in 2005 and the server for the library's Endeavor system was replaced in 2006. The library was also in the phase one roll-out of wireless access on campus which enabled patrons on the first floor and mezzanine areas to connect to the campus network. The librarians would also like to have the stacks areas connected to the wireless network. The Library Director serves on the Information Technology Steering Committee, facilitating communication between the library and the Department of Information Technology regarding library needs and plans.

The library will be part of the Ely Center renovation project, scheduled to start in 2007. This project will provide an improved elevator for the library's stacks area, a new entrance for the library and an improved HVAC system. Funding for an improvement to the freight elevator, which currently provides access to the instruction classroom and Education Resource Center is included as well.

Assessment

The library uses metrics such as database usage and circulation to target areas for improvement. Changes have been made to the database package based on use and these figures continue to be monitored. During this academic year the library will be participating, along with other Massachusetts public academic libraries, in the LibQual+ survey. This nationally-normed survey, funded with an LSTA grant provided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), will help us understand the needs of our students and faculty and better align library services to meet them. While the initial administration of this survey is grant funded, if the survey provides useful information we intend to seek additional funding to continue its administration on a regular basis. Another grant, funded by the MBLC this year, will provide the library with a report prepared by a professional preservation consultant to help develop preservation and digitization priorities for our archival collection. At the request of the librarians this past spring, a consultant was hired to review Ely Library services and discuss ideas for future changes.

As mentioned above in the section on information literacy instruction, the library has developed a survey intended to assess the skills of incoming freshmen and juniors. Areas for instruction are targeted based on gaps in past semesters. This survey is a work-in-progress as new methods to deliver the survey during freshman orientation need to be developed. We are working with Academic

Affairs and Information Technology to revise our testing procedures to gather the needed information in a timely fashion in future years.

Academic Computing Update

The College now supports eleven computer labs with a mix of Windows PC, MAC and UNIX based systems. The number of classrooms that are equipped with technology with multimedia front-end podiums has grown from five (5) to sixty four (64). Specialized computer labs/facilities have been added to Physical Science, Urban Education, and Wilson 424, Academic Advising, and the Reading and Writing Center. A cyber café consisting of 10 desktop computers has been created in the Ely Campus Center. All classrooms on campus are wired for access to the campus-wide LAN and the Internet. All classrooms are capable of distance learning via videoconferencing. Portable equipment is available in the form of video codec's and video monitoring equipment.

The implementation of the Bradford Campus Manager for Window and Macintosh operating systems allows Infrastructure Services to easily manage antivirus, policy updates, operating system updates and overall client management to ensure optimal network performance. Information Technology has deployed two "remote" student Help Desks in strategically placed, high traffic areas to allow for greater service and visibility of the services available to students. A yearly updated brochure is published describing the numerous services supported by Information Technology and is provided to all incoming faculty, staff and students.

Information Technology continues to look at new ways to implement and maintain software and hardware. Agreements such as the Campus Microsoft Agreement and software assurance agreements with Apple guarantee that college-owned computers will have the latest operating systems and commonly used software packages.

The distance learning classroom (Wilson 114) was reconfigured and redefined as the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT). This area is staffed by an Associate Director, one full-time staff, part-time clerk and a number of student workers. The primary goal of CIT is to provide faculty and staff with resources and training as well as allow them to create and use multimedia materials for WebCT courses online, and traditional courses offered by the College.

The increased demands of assessment data collection in teacher education programs have required specialized support. The College purchased the TK20 Campus Tools Higher Education data management and reporting system in spring 2006 as the main data management system for all teacher education programs. The program allows us to collect and analyze learning outcomes data embedded in coursework and in programs. The advising module will allow both students and faculty the opportunity to track the progress of teacher candidates and it will allow us to run program and unit level reports to track candidate progress against program and unit benchmarks. The field placement module will be a significant tool for collecting and analyzing data about our pre-practicum and practicum placements. Also all teacher candidate accounts have a field tab, where the students and advisors can access field information and track progress. In general, the program will not only provide valuable data for program approval and accreditation, it will also allow us to provide up to date information for individual teacher candidates in undergraduate and graduate teacher or other school personnel licensure programs. This system is current configured only for the teacher education programs but its use could be expanded to other programs on campus.

Administrative Computing Update

With the College's newly purchased academic/administrative computing suite known as Banner, the access to academic and administrative information is now available around the clock as the College expands access to the Web and recruits more distant (national and international) students. In early

2002, the College began to move forward on a mission to bring the academic/administrative computing suite to a new level by upgrading PLUS 2000 from a DEC/ALPHA open VMS platform to an Oracle driven database management environment using Sun/Solaris architecture as the hardware/operating systems backbone. The College contracted with SunGard SCT to assist with the migration of legacy data into this new relational database platform. The phased implementation approach began in the fall 2003 semester and a full implementation for all systems including student records, finance and alumni was completed by the fall 2005.

Service to students and faculty has greatly improved since the Web for Students software was implemented. The Web-enabled applications that include admissions and bill payment, course registration and course add/drop facilities, and degree audit has provided access to information that students use to make informed decisions about their academic careers. Web for Faculty has provided web-enabled access to information that faculty can use for student advising. Access to faculty schedules, class lists, course registration, and the ability to e-mail students in their classes has worked as part of an overall plan to establish the Web as primary platform to conduct educational administrative functions.

All faculty, staff and students take advantage of college computer resources through the implementation of Microsoft Active Directory services that requires everyone to have a username and password to access such services. E-mail has been upgraded to Microsoft Exchange which provides the additional benefits of a global address book and web mail. In February of 2006, the College established e-mail as official means of communication to students.

Academic Computing Analysis and Assessment

While the Center for Instructional Technology is able to support course development on WebCT, development and implementation of alternative technology solutions to educational problems is the responsibility of the individual faculty members. Future CIT budgets should include resources for development of innovative technological approaches to teaching and learning. CIT will include a separate item within its budget proposal next fiscal year to allow for such funding. Such a proposal would coincide with the College's strategic plan.

Standard Eight
PHYSICAL and TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Physical Resources

Description and Update

Since the writing of the 2002 Self Study there have been substantial additions and improvements to college facilities. The College has also completed several planning documents that are consistent with goals and objectives contained in the Strategic Plan. The College is currently participating with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and Division of Capital Asset Management in a five year initiative to develop a system-wide master plan for capital renewal and construction at the state's public community and state colleges. The College's portion of the plan is expected to be completed by the spring 2007. The plan is to provide a framework for the future renovation of existing college facilities and the construction of new facilities. A new Outdoor Athletic Facilities Master Plan, completed in 2005, will act as a planning document for the continued improvement and expansion of outdoor playing field and NCAA regulation athletic facilities used by varsity sports teams, academic classes and intramural sports activities.

In the summer of 2003, the College completed work on a \$15.5 million athletic/academic facility. This facility was named in honor of President Frederick W. Woodward for his dedication to this project. The building houses both the Athletic Department and the Department of Movement Science, Sport and Leisure Studies. Included in the facility is a field house, administrative and faculty offices, a training room, equipment room, locker rooms, fitness room, concession and meeting areas, student lounge, computer/library room, specialized laboratories and aerobics room. The College received the 2005 Award for Innovative Architecture Design Award by Recreation Management Magazine for building design. Over the past three years, this building has proven to be a welcomed asset for both college and community use. Over the past summer, the College initiated a series of projects to improve outdoor facilities behind the Woodward Center. Projects included a complete redesign and resurfacing of the college track and Alumni Field. A new Athletic Storage Facility designed and constructed for the front of Alumni Field, creates a new main gate for the complex. The facility houses expanded restroom facilities, a new concession and ticket area and storage facilities for equipment. The facility also received additional landscaping improvements including brick patio areas, paved sidewalks to bleacher areas, flagpoles, fencing and a paved access road to other fields located at the facility. The College is presently in the process of constructing a new \$350,000 press box for the field that is scheduled to be completed by January of 2007.

The College continues to improve access for members of the college community and visitors to the campus. New elevators have been constructed in Parenzo Hall and Bates Hall to provide access, to all floors and facilities. The College will break ground during the summer of 2007 on a 12.5 million dollar project to construct a new central access core to the Ely Library Campus Center. The project has long been needed to provide access to facilities located in the building. The plan calls for the construction of a new elevator, renovations to two existing elevators, construction of accessible restroom facilities, relocation of the current bookstore and various other renovations to improve access. The project is expected to be completed during the FY 2009 academic year.

The College has continued to undertake a variety of projects to improve both academic and student support facilities over the past several years. The College spends approximately eight to ten percent of the annual operating budget on capital renovation and renewal projects. Funding for the improvements comes from a variety of sources including grants, gifts and state capital appropriations. The majority of project funding at the College continues to be allocated from local college trust funds and the college endowment.

Major technology-related improvements include the construction of two specialized computer laboratories in the Computer Science Department, upgrades to other computer laboratory furnishings and the installation of smart technology in over 30 classrooms, meeting spaces and lecture halls. Since the last accreditation team visit, the College has also made additional improvements to the telephone and data infrastructure and the installation of wireless technology in academic buildings. During the next several years, the College plans to install wireless technology in all campus buildings.

Improvements in specialized teaching facilities have included the upgrade of science lab including environmental rooms, autoclaves, fume hoods, chemical storage facilities and sanitation equipment. Music department facilities have been enlarged and improved. A new music library was constructed. Practice rooms and several faculty teaching studios were enlarged and renovated. The Ely Black Box Theater also received improvements and upgrades to theatrical lighting, the installation of a new curtain system, new seating and riser system.

Over the past two years, the College has renovated a variety of faculty, staff and student support offices. Renovations to offices have taken place in the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, Student Administrative Services Department, Finance, Academic Advising and the Center for Teacher Education. The Honors Program was relocated to renovated offices. The entire office of Academic Affairs was renovated to provide additional staff space and to improve the aesthetic quality of the space. An existing meeting room was also renovated and was equipped with technology and new furnishings. A new suite of offices was created for the Department of Political Science in Parenzo Hall and several new faculty offices were created as part of the Bates elevator construction project. Office space for adjunct faculty was also created in both Parenzo Hall and the Ely Campus Center. New offices were created to house staff in the President's Office and in the Division of Advancement and College Relations. A new Board Room was also constructed in the 333 Western Avenue Building to provide meeting space for the college board of trustees, faculty and staff.

Residential and recreational facilities for students have also been upgraded. In 2005, the College opened a new 32 million dollar, 400 student residence hall to address existing overcrowding in the residence halls and to provide additional space for residential students. The building was constructed with the assistance and support of the Massachusetts State College Building Authority. The building is comprised of 80 student apartments ranging in occupancy from three to six students. The building is fully air conditioned and is fully accessible to students with physical challenges. In addition to the new residence hall, significant renovations have been made to Davis, Dickinson and Lammers Halls including the installation of fire suppression and alarm systems, student bedroom renovations, new furnishings and renovations to community space. In 2005, the College constructed a new coffeehouse (Jazzman's) in the Ely Campus Center Main Lounge. This past summer, substantial renovations were made to the Subway Shop, also located in the Main Lounge. In support of college efforts to improve service to students, new space was constructed in Wilson Hall to house a new student computer support office and an office for the new college one card/ID initiative.

In 2006, a multi-year project to renovate Scanlon Hall has begun. Phase one of the project was completed over the summer. A new electrical switch gear was installed along with a new emergency generator. A new fire suppression system was also installed along with a total replacement of the building fire alarm system. This coming summer, we hope to complete phase two of the project. Work will include the construction of a new elevator to improve access, a new front entrance, and stairwell improvements.

Analysis and Assessment

The College continues to make significant progress on revitalizing our facilities, a strategic plan priority. It is hoped that the completion of the state and community college master plan and the Westfield State College Master Plan will guide funding

Record enrollments over the past two years have placed stress on college facilities, particularly classroom space and faculty and administrative office space. The College cannot continue to accept increasing enrollments unless additional academic and support facilities are constructed. Over the past thirty years, academic space has increased only slightly. New academic majors and the need for specialized teaching facilities require the construction of new facilities and the renovation of existing facilities. There continues to be a need for appropriate faculty office and meeting facilities. Science laboratories need to either be extensively renovated or new labs constructed to meet changes in pedagogy. The College has requested the construction of a new academic building as its first priority in the college master plan recommendations. The construction of this building will provide needed space for faculty and teaching space to accommodate the growth of several existing academic departments. It will give the College flexibility to realign academic departments and provide needed facilities, faculty offices and new science laboratories. New facilities also need to be considered to support expanding academic programs in social work, environmental science, gerontology, and interdisciplinary programming. Library facilities need to be expanded and modernized. The library lacks appropriate teaching facilities, small seminar/group study space, office, computer and specialized study areas. Also a new specialized facility needs to be considered to provide adequate performance, production, practice and teaching space for the departments of Communication, Theater, Music and Art.

Although there have been extensive upgrades in technology over the past several years, new advances in this area will continue to require facility renewal and financial support. The classroom of thirty years ago will not meet the needs of current or future students. In the future the College is going to have to adjust furnishings to address laptop technology and new teaching methodologies. Existing faculty offices and academic support areas will also need to be continually upgraded to meet changing needs.

The Campus Center was constructed for a college population that is half of the current population. A study needs to be completed to look at how the existing campus center can be improved to meet the needs of students. Additionally, student support departments such as the Reading and Writing Center, Academic Achievement and Academic Advising Center need to be expanded.

Westfield State College continues to be one of the most popular state colleges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The recent addition of key facilities such as the New Residence Hall and Woodward Center and the continued renovation of existing facilities have only enhanced the marketability of the campus. The College has been able to meet the continued growth and expansion of existing academic programs by developing a fiscal plan that has allowed for not only new construction but also the renovation and renewal of existing facilities and college infrastructure. Planning will be a critical component of the future growth of the College. Given the uncertainty of state funding, meeting the needs of the institution will remain a challenge.

Technological Resources

Description and Update

The mission of the Department of Information Technology at Westfield State College is to be the technology partner for all members of the college community in teaching, learning, and service endeavors, closely aligning its activities and service with the College's mission and strategic

directions. Ensuring that Westfield State College is successful in a highly competitive and technology intensive environment, Information Technology seeks to deliver its services in an efficient manner, responding to the constantly changing needs of its user community. In support of both teaching and administration, Information Technology is a complete service provider to the Westfield State College community, dedicated to advancing the stature, influence, and competitiveness of the college through the effective and timely deployment of telecommunication, media, and data technologies. The Department of Information Technology continually strives to innovate and improve the quality of technology services and does so in a fiscally responsible manner. The Department of Information Technology solicits and values the contributions of individuals both inside and outside the Department, providing its own staff with a working environment that promotes professional growth, job satisfaction, and leadership opportunities.

The organizational structure of the Information Technology department has evolved to include Media and Technical Services and Telecommunications. The Department of Information Technology is under the umbrella of the Division of Academic Affairs with the Executive Director of Information Technology a direct report to the Senior Vice President.

The core campus network has grown from a 10-Megabit segment to a Gigabit Ethernet backbone which supports data and video with 100 Mbits/second switched to the desktop. Currently, there are over 3,000 network connections, including servers, network devices, end-user stations, and peripheral devices. The residence halls have likewise seen high expansion rates since three initial users were connected from a residence hall setting in 1993. Currently, there are approximately 2,500 connections from residence hall rooms. We provide a full DS3 connection at 45 Mbps. Information Technology has engaged in a wireless network initiative that is active in strategically positioned locations: Wilson Hall, Bates Hall, the Library, campus center and the dining commons. A new initiative was begun in the fall of 2006 to replace the external, auto-sensing hubs with 3Com, Power over Ethernet (POE) hubs in specified residence halls. This will effectively quadruple the port density in the affected rooms.

Major upgrades to information sharing processes will be undertaken as short-term projects. A new e-mail system has been implemented (Microsoft Exchange 2003), deployment of a campus-wide calendar and scheduling system has been completed (Virtual EMS), and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) and wireless technologies, as part of the College's commitment to new technology, have been investigated.

Information Technology has implemented a lifecycle standard for its computer lab and faculty/staff hardware. Lab hardware is updated every three years and faculty/staff hardware every four years. Servers maintained by Information Technology have been added to the desktop computer replacement program and are changed out every 3, 5, or 7 years depending upon the function of that individual server.

The College's distance learning classroom/facility has undergone major change and renovation to house the new Center for Instructional Technology. This space was redesigned for the specific purpose of creating a facility that would support faculty training in the creation and use of multimedia materials to be used in distance learning courses as well as traditional classes. Distance learning via videoconferencing is still a component of this facility but with network infrastructure upgrades and portable equipment, videoconferencing is capable in any classroom.

New construction and many upgrades have occurred to the campus network over the past five years. The new residence hall and the Woodward Center were brought onto the campus network. Many upgrades to buildings and residence halls have been implemented and continue. Courtney Hall was completely rewired and new network gear installed. Other areas receiving network upgrades include: Scanlon Hall, Public Safety, 333 Western Avenue and the power plant. A major undertaking within the residence halls has begun with the installation of 3 com wall hubs. This newer technology will

replace the freestanding router hubs and electrical cord that currently is needed in order for all students within a residence hall room to have access to the network.

The campus wireless initiative will provide access to all members of the campus community around the clock. The current areas capable of receiving a wireless signal are: two academic buildings and partial coverage of another, Campus Center, Library, Dining Commons, Scanlon Banquet Hall. Phase One of the wireless initiative is to continue with the expansion of wireless network to include all academic buildings by summer 2007. Phase Two will address all residence halls and open space. The end result will be blanket coverage of the Westfield State campus and allow for any user to receive a wireless signal anywhere on campus.

Upgrades and renovations to classrooms have grown to nine classrooms a year. The current number of enhanced classrooms is 64. Classroom technology consists of mounted video/data projectors and multimedia front-end podiums that include a computer with network and internet access, DVD/VHS players, sound system, switching control boxes and a visual presenter.

Computer Lab technology is upgraded every three years as a part of our lifecycle computer replacement program. We have also begun to address the other physical needs of the computer labs. Wilson 139 underwent major renovation to change it from an “open” lab to a “classroom” lab. New furniture, carpeting, air conditioning and wire management have transformed the facility to a modern teaching space. We will continue to look at other labs for physical renovation as they coincide with the technology change outs. Information Technology will explore different layouts to allow for student collaborative space within the computer labs.

Analysis and Assessment

A number of different methods are used and information is available that allows the Information Technology Department to assess and address the changing needs of the campus community and to adequately supply the campus with whatever technology is needed to accomplish its mission.

Information Technology directors meet weekly with the Executive Director to review the current and future needs of the campus. Information Technology staff meet with campus faculty and staff to solicit the needs for technology in classrooms, infrastructure, administrative systems, telecomm, as well as software for the teaching and open computer labs.

The Information Technology Steering Committee includes faculty, staff and administrators and provides the Executive Director with guidance and support. The Committee meets monthly and discusses various technology topics and issues of interest to the campus. Monthly meetings of the state and community college chief information officers allows for the exchange of ideas and cooperation on projects, service agreements and purchases for the state higher education institutions. Information Technology staff meet regularly with colleagues from around the state to exchange ideas and information on new initiatives and best practices.

The lifecycle computer replacement program keeps us ahead of the technological curve in supplying faculty and staff with current technology. This lifecycle program also addresses the campus servers. The Information Technology Department consistently is aware of performance of these computers and makes decisions based upon the workload of these computers as well as the needs of the faculty and staff using them and the services they provide.

Information Technology directors and staff meet throughout the year with vendors of a variety of technology products and also attend trade shows to keep current of the latest technological advances. Information Technology has established partnerships with several such vendors which facilitate excellent communications and an avenue to receive timely updates.

Information Technology staff are constantly researching current trends, best practices, and new technologies and where and if appropriate finding ways to integrate these into the current systems.

We are scheduled to increase bandwidth to 50 Mbps prior to the end of the June 2007, completing the migration from a DS3 connection to Ethernet. The wireless initiative will culminate in a few years with blanket coverage of the campus and all open space capable of receiving a wireless Internet signal. The replacement of older instructional equipment is being addressed with the creation of a “lifecycle” replacement program for peripheral and multimedia equipment for the multimedia classrooms. The College is nearing the end of the process of upgrading 9 classrooms and auditoriums yearly and close to 100% of our facilities having multimedia capabilities.

Information Technology developed a strategic plan for the years of 2003 -2007. As we near the completion of the action items associated with that plan, Information Technology will begin to formulate the next set of goals that will align with the College’s strategic plan. The goals will focus on taking advantage of the major hardware and software purchases over the past few years to offer more services to the campus community.

Standard Nine FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Description and Update

Since the time of the Self Study and Visiting Team Report, many changes have been made at the College. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) has been promoted to the Vice President of Administration and Finance (VP A&F). In addition to the previous financial responsibilities, the VP A&F has also been placed in charge of Facilities, Central Receiving, Fixed Assets, the Copy Center, and Mail Room. The College also upgraded its administrative computer system from the Financial Records System (FRS) to the Banner System. Every function of this system is on-line, including student applications, bill paying, employee applications, purchasing requisitions, etc. The Banner System also adheres to the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO), the Government Accounting Standard Board (GASB) and the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Over the past four years, the College's state appropriated base budget has increased only \$2.1 million, from \$18.4 million in fiscal year 2003, to \$20.5 million in fiscal year 2007. This represented a total increase of 12% or an average annual increase of just under 3%, barely keeping up with inflation. In addition, much of this increase in base budget was necessary to fund collective bargaining agreements. Over this same time frame, the College's enrollment increased by 21%. The result of this growth led to increased demand for a host of services from all areas of the College, including instruction, utilities, and a list of essential deferred maintenance projects. In an attempt to offset the modest increase in state aid, the College increased its local fees from \$3,588 in 2003, to \$4,980 for fiscal year 2007. This represents an average annual increase of approximately 9%.

Some Highlights:

- Annually exceeded the state requirement of 5% in deferred maintenance. The College allocated an additional \$1.7 million dollars bringing the amount spent on deferred maintenance to 10.1%.
- Continued to subsidize reductions in state funded scholarships, reaching an all-time high of \$1.7 million dollars awarded in scholarships for fiscal year 2006.
- Constructed a 400-bed residence hall, however total residential population has continued to exceed 100% of available space.
- Implemented three goals of the College's first Strategic Plan, resulting in budget allocations exceeding \$700,000 over three semesters.
- As part of the settlement of the faculty contract, the College agreed to fund 3% of the total contract each year. In the first year, this amount exceeded \$650,000.
- Unrestricted Net Assets grew from \$8.0 million in fiscal year 2004 to \$10.2 million in fiscal year 2006. Much of this increase has been pledged to the Commonwealth's Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) for capital projects.
- The College moved all its operating and reserve funds from long-term to short-term investments. These actions resulted in an immediate increase in the interest rates earned,

rising from the 2% range to almost 6%. The net effect for the College was an annual increase in investment earnings of approximately \$400,000. These short-term investments also have the advantage of being 100% guaranteed by FDIC and DIF insurance.

- The College has received ten consecutive annual audit reports from PriceWaterhouseCoopers, all with no findings or items to be reported in the Management Letter.

Analysis and Assessment

The College continues to be financially stable, with unrestricted net assets of \$10.2 as of June 30, 2006. However, with the on-going reductions in state aid for operations, including payroll and fringe benefits, financial aid, library, and deferred maintenance, the College will be required to continue with modest annual fee increases.

To help minimize the impact of these annual fee increases and continue its efforts to maintain the integrity of the mission of the College, the Budget Committee will strive to allocate scarce resources in the most efficient way possible. As it has done in the past, Instruction, Academic Affairs, and Deferred Maintenance will see their requests reviewed and approved before all other functional areas. In fiscal year 2006, 52% of the Colleges expenditures were allocated to these three areas.

The College will also continue its vigorous lobbying efforts with the Board of Higher Education (BHE) and the Department of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) for additional resources. The BHE has developed a formulaic approach towards funding that addresses state institutions' needs by considering their enrollments, staffing, and facilities. These requests are then presented to both the House and Senate for review and debate, with any final appropriation the result of compromises made by both legislative and executive branches. Thus, the need to educate our local legislators regarding the vital role Westfield State College plays in the Commonwealth is very important, and efforts in this direction will, the College hopes, enable the Legislature to be more supportive of our financial needs.

Recently, the Governor imposed 9C reductions in all state agency budgets in order to balance the Commonwealth's fiscal year 2007 shortfall. This resulted in a net loss to the College of approximately \$646,034, or about 1% of our total operating budget. To offset this unexpected mid-year reduction, the College has put a hold on all unencumbered funds, and will review all personnel, travel, and purchase requests, as well as placing a hold on and delaying a number of deferred projects. However, with these cost-saving measures, as well as the increases in enrollment and investment income noted earlier, the College fully expects that it will readily continue its mission to provide the best quality of education, in a safe and friendly environment, in the most affordable manner to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Standard Ten

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Description and Update

Information about Westfield State College is available to internal and external audiences through a variety of media. The College complies with all federal and state reporting requirements as well as those of national program accreditation agencies such as NCATE. It maintains an extensive public website and produces brochures and an official publication which is available in print as well as online. The information available in the website and in the *Bulletin* is listed in the Appendix 3 as *Public Disclosure Chart*.

Administrative changes that have occurred since the 2002 self-study have strengthened the College's communications capabilities and its accountability. At the time of the 2002 self-study, institutional research functions were the responsibility of the Registrar. Now, a full-time position is dedicated to institutional research and assessment. This change will help Westfield State College generate data in a more thorough, timely, and responsive fashion.

A new Division of Advancement and College Relations has been established, housing Marketing, Development and Advancement, and College Relations. This division is led by a new vice president with oversight of all fund-raising and external communications of the College. This authority provides clearer pathways of responsibility and more opportunity for consistency, and therefore integrity, in the College's communications. The newly created Marketing Department includes marketing, visual communications, publications, website management and photography. A full-time Director and Assistant Director of Marketing are new or redefined positions that reinforce the consistency of communications. The new division also supports an expanded fund-raising effort from private, corporate, and government sources. The position of Coordinator of Government and Community Relations also serves to enhance the College's outreach and openness. In the President's Office, the Assistant to the President for Communications also works with the College's external constituents.

The Westfield State College *Bulletin* remains the official source of College policies and curricula for the undergraduate student. The *Bulletin* includes information related to mission and accreditation; admission standards and procedures for both new and transfer students; tuition and fee charges and refunds; financial aid eligibility and availability; academic policies and procedures; departmental curricula and course descriptions; and a current detailed listing of administration, staff, and faculty. The *Bulletin* is updated annually by the Registrar in consultation with academic and non-academic department heads throughout the campus community. Changes to, and additions of, policies and curricula that have been approved through the Governance system, are shared directly with the Registrar to update and include as necessary. This information is summarized by the Registrar and shared with Graduate and Continuing Education and the Admissions Office to ensure the proper updating of other publications. In addition to the printed *Bulletin*, an electronic "pdf" version is available on the College's website.

Since the last NEASC review, several significant changes have occurred in the *Bulletin's* updating process. First, greater care is taken to eliminate courses that are no longer offered by the College or offered on an infrequent or sporadic basis. The majority of information comes directly from the departments and/or governance committees; our Registrar, hired March 2006, has assumed the responsibility of editing the *Bulletin*. Secondly, the 2006-2007 *Bulletin* is the first to include the College's Strategic Plan, institutional priorities, and goals. Finally, with the fall 2006 entering class, a more systematic approach was taken to guarantee that new students received a copy of the *Bulletin* for their records.

In conjunction with the *Bulletin*, the Registrar also publishes the official course offerings booklet utilized by undergraduate day students during the advising and registration period each semester. Although some policies are copied directly from the *Bulletin*, additional resources and information are included. Recently the course offerings bulletin was reviewed by the Retention and Graduation Committee (consisting of administrators, faculty and a student). The input from this review process will be utilized in the next publication of the course offering booklet.

Information about graduate and continuing education programs is available through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education. This Division publishes a yearly *Graduate Catalog* describing graduate programs, courses, policies and faculty. The *Graduate Catalog* is reviewed annually by program coordinators and administrators to ensure accuracy. Subsequent versions include a published revision date to reflect any changes in content that may have resulted from annual review and recent college governance. A course catalog containing the current calendar and graduate and undergraduate evening course offerings is published three times per year. Course catalogs place policy, procedural, and cost information into the hands of students. This information is also available through the College's website.

The Marketing Department serves as a clearinghouse for information to be disseminated either through the web, publications, or other methods of marketing. By having all marketing efforts pass through a centralized office on campus, the integrity of the College's communications and identity are ensured. The office is staffed by a director who serves as the College spokesperson and marketing team chair, a publications coordinator who oversees production of all print materials including admissions recruitment packages, a full-time webmaster who maintains the content of the website to ensure that it is up to date and in compliance with policies, and the campus photographer.

Changes in both technology and communication goals have resulted in changes in the way information about the College is delivered. Increased use of e-mail, a college Intranet and a redesigned and updated College website gradually brought about the replacement of the weekly internal campus newsletter. Two new publications have emerged: *The Resource*, a monthly internal newsletter produced by the Human Resources Department; and *Community Connections*, a monthly internal/external newsletter produced by Advancement and College Relations.

Community Connections grew out of a desire for the College to have a more direct communication impact on the surrounding community, rather than relying strictly on media coverage. The goal is to create more community awareness of campus events and accomplishments, as well as encourage a stronger identity for the College within the broader community. Plans are being made to produce a Spanish-language version of *Community Connections*, as well as possibly a Russian-language version, to reach out to two of the most rapidly growing regional populations.

The mechanics of distributing news releases about the College have also changed to essentially a paperless process of sending news by e-mail. This, of course, increases the speed and convenience of distribution. It also allows for continually expanding outlet possibilities for news releases. By simply adding e-mails to targeted lists, the College can reach beyond the standard media to newsletters, websites, businesses, schools, public agencies, as well as legislators and other individuals who might be interested in or impacted by events at the College.

Changes have also been made in the College's periodicals. *Alumni Express*, the alumni newsletter, and *Focus*, the College magazine, have been consolidated into one magazine retaining the *Focus* title, and published three times a year. The strategy of a fresh, yet familiar, editorial perspective helps to bring balance to the publication, for the benefit of over 36,000 readers. This publication has become a key instrument for reaching potential donors and for informing the public of the activities of students, faculty and staff, alumni and development, and athletics. It also includes a message from the President as well as *Class Notes*. Another new publication, which will be published annually, is *Fast Facts*. This convenient booklet is a concise compendium of important information about the College.

This publication is distributed once a year to campus employees, given to legislators, and distributed to the public at outreach events. It is also available in various locations around campus and in the community.

The College's advertising campaigns have increased over the past two years. The Marketing Department created a TV spot targeted at high school students ages 14-17, to respond to the declining numbers of students who will be entering college in the next few years. Print advertising is used only in targeted issues of publications, such as career and education issues, back to school issues, or issues related to an upcoming event.

Beginning in fall 2005, the College's website underwent a complete revision. Based on feedback from focus groups and with the aid of an external web consultant, the site map was re-created, the visual elements were re-designed, and the site was implemented in September, 2006. The new site has many elements that are essential to its usefulness as a marketing tool for the College. These elements include a tracking system to record how many hits the site gets, several areas to post information on events that pertain to students and the public with an auto-archive feature, ease of navigation throughout the site, a consistent look that aligns with the identity of the College, a content management system, and flash animation and streaming video. The website is the major tool for marketing, and is continually evolving. The College hired a new webmaster in July 2006. Her responsibilities include keeping the site current and working with individual departments to update and improve their pages. The website not only informs the public, but allows for electronic requests for information and directs the public on how inquiries can be addressed.

Analysis and Assessment

Future plans include early reviews of both the College *Bulletin* and course offerings booklet with an eye toward better utilization of the online course offerings available through the Banner student information system. It has been many years since a major revision of the *Bulletin* has occurred. The new Registrar has been charged with a major review and revision of the *Bulletin* which may result in expanding its current content to better serve more of the student population through a single volume. Steady improvements to the *Bulletin* and website demonstrate Westfield State's commitment to providing complete and accurate information. For example, as part of the College's assessment plan (see Standard 2), program-level learning outcomes are being included on department websites.

The use of technology has enhanced our capacity to make available more information to the public; however, cyberspace also requires constant monitoring and updating, to ensure both currency of material and the survival of archival material. Thus, periodic review of both print and electronic media is an ongoing concern. To address these concerns, the College files archival editions of all catalogs and the *Bulletin* for reference.

Westfield State is dedicating more resources to external communications, which is already resulting in a broader and deeper flow of public information. The creation of a new administrative division dedicated to communications oversight provides not only for extended coverage, but also for quality and accountability. The College's marketing efforts are building momentum, and the recent revitalization of the College's Strategic Plan (see Standard 2) will help keep the College's publicity efforts on track.

Standard 11 INTEGRITY

Description and Update

Westfield State College continues to observe the standards of integrity for which it was commended in the 2002 site visit report. The College complies with all laws and regulations of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In addition, the College is committed to meeting all standards set by the NEASC Commission on Institutions of Higher Education and by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE), which is the governing body for the institution. As a member of the Massachusetts public higher education system, Westfield State College adheres to the stated mission of the six comprehensive state colleges and achieves “cooperation, collaboration, and participation” with its sister institutions. In meeting the standards of the Commonwealth and the BHE, Westfield State College uses “public funds efficiently,” as demonstrated in periodic voluntary and mandated audits. In addition, the College is assessed annually by the BHE on certain performance measures; the resulting public Performance Measurement Report indicates that Westfield State consistently meets or exceeds the Board of Higher Education’s benchmarks. Moreover, Westfield State College strives for “continuous improvement and accountability in all aspects of teaching, learning, and outreach” through establishment and dissemination of a Strategic Plan; institutionalized systems of individual and departmental accountability and evaluation; the pursuit of national accreditations for its academic programs; and memberships in professional organizations.

The institution maintains an expectation that its board, faculty, staff and students will exercise integrity and act responsibly in all activities where they are agents of the College. The standard has been set through College policies and procedures as well as standards such as the Whistleblower Policy, approved in spring 2006; Code of Expectations for students, faculty, staff and supervisors; Collective Bargaining agreements with the MSCA, APA and AFSCME; State Ethics Commission regulations applicable to individuals having significant institutional decision-making authority and active involvement of the College’s Foundation Board.

Employee policies and expectations are outlined in the collective bargaining agreements, Equal Opportunity policies, and employee handbooks both for faculty and staff and a Code of Expectations for staff. These policies may outline both a disciplinary and grievance procedure and/or administrative process. Over the last few years, the College has adopted new programs which enhance the integrity of established policies and procedures. Examples of these new efforts include a salary equity review process for Association of Professional Administrators (APA) and the creation of a part-time Ombuds at the College who is available to assist and mediate faculty, staff and student issues. The College, as part of its strategic plan is evaluating the scope of the position of Equal Opportunity Officer.

Since 2001, the College has posted its policies and procedures and official forms on its intranet website, accessible to all employees, to help ensure widespread understanding and compliance with all legal requirements (examples include Affirmative Action Policies, Collective Bargaining Agreements, and the W-4 Federal Withholding Form). Additionally, the College created a new position of College Ombuds in order to provide an independent, impartial and confidential process through which members of the college community may pursue an informal resolution of any college-related concern. The College Ombuds may, with or without receiving an inquiry from any member of the college community, identify systemic and recurring problems, and report to the president any policies, rules or procedures which appear unclear or inequitable or which might jeopardize the rights or privileges of any members of the college community.

The College has well established, clear provisions and policies relative to student academic and non-academic conduct. Student academic and social policies are published and distributed through printed and online versions of the Student Handbook and through the College Bulletin. The policies support the mission and strategic plan of the College by encouraging civic responsibility and citizenship and allowing for participation in decision making. In 2005, a revised Academic Honesty Policy was approved by the Academic Policies Committee and the President. Students also have a role in reviewing and approving these policies through the College's governance structure. The student misconduct process provides an opportunity for students to have an impartial hearing with an administrator or panel with student, faculty, and staff representation. Standards of conduct are established in consultation with students and clearly outlined and disseminated in a variety of ways including official publications, orientations, flyers, brochures and posters disseminated throughout the campus. Centralization of all student life policies and procedures helps to insure equity and consistency. Students who may feel aggrieved by others (whether peers, faculty, or staff) have the opportunity to file complaints through the appropriate channels which include Student Conduct, Affirmative Action, and Academic Affairs administration and/or meet with the College's Ombuds.

Through its mission statement, strategic plan, policies, procedures, practices and actions, Westfield State College fosters an environment free of unlawful discrimination which promotes respect for diversity. The establishment of the Committee for a Better Workplace in 2003 underscored the College's commitment to building more effective mechanisms for communication, conflict resolution and administrative responsiveness. Among the outcomes of the committee's recommendations has been the establishment of an Ombuds position which addresses concerns of discrimination in a less formal venue. The Ombuds works with individuals to help find and implement a solution or may refer such individual to formal avenues within the institution if the circumstances appear to warrant such action. In addition, there has been expansion of membership on critical committees including the Budget Committee and the President's Council. Further, in accord with the strategic plan to "create a welcoming environment," a new administrative position which will coordinate diversity initiatives has been established; a commitment of greater resources has been made to staff development; and a greater focus has been placed on the recruitment of a more diverse faculty through the creation of the diversity recruitment resource group.

The College's human resources and equal opportunity policies and practices related to hiring, advancement, classification, performance evaluation and compensation are well publicized through several electronic and paper media. All have been reviewed within the past two years and revised where appropriate. In the past several years the development of the Human Resource/Equal Opportunity webpage made policies more readily available. Complaint/grievance procedures are well documented with our four collective bargaining agreements and within our equal opportunity/discrimination policies. The College Ombuds Office supplements, but does not replace, any formal college procedures or any procedures required under any applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement or state or Federal law. The state-wide affirmative action plan, which has been in place in its current form for over ten years, is currently undergoing significant revision.

Our commitment to integrity in all domains of the institution is reaffirmed through period review of policies by the appropriate administrative or governing bodies. Additionally, the College Ombuds may identify systemic or recurring issues or any policies, rules or privileges which appear unclear or inequitable or which might jeopardize the rights and privileges of any members of the college community.

Plans

As reported in Standard One, The *Westfield State College Strategic Plan 2005 – 2010* is the most significant recent milestone in the evolution of the college mission. Simply stated, our plan is to continue to plan. Meaningful and effective change is the result of careful consultation with all stakeholders, a commitment to funding strategic priorities, and a record of holding ourselves accountable. Westfield State is prepared to maintain a long range vision; we have now established a foundation that will support systematic structured change.

Overall planning will focus on initiatives in four critical areas: physical plant/infrastructure, programmatic development, recruiting a more diverse student and faculty body, and strengthening development and fundraising. Some of these initiatives will address existing unmet needs; others will support the college mission to emphasize teaching, student advising, and student involvement in the life of the College and the community so that students develop intellectually and use their knowledge and skills to improve the social and economic conditions in their communities.

The Westfield State College Master Plan is currently undergoing revision and remains in draft form. However, a central theme has emerged from campus constituents. Its vision is to strengthen WSC as a compact, walkable campus centered around a traditional green and featuring high quality, up-to-date academic and support facilities. As the plan is completed it will reflect the values enunciated in the college mission statement and the priorities established in the strategic planning process (described above in Standards 1 and 2).

The college enrollment has increased by approximately ten percent over the past six years. While we do not anticipate any further significant growth in our undergraduate population, what has occurred has put increased stress on the physical plant and infrastructure. The WSC Foundation recently purchased an historic building in downtown Westfield which may help alleviate some of our administrative office space needs. Plans are to use that building to offer credit and noncredit courses and programs through the Division of Graduate and Continuing Education, to provide some additional office space, and to create some graduate student housing. On the central campus, however, office and classroom space will continue to be inadequate, requiring the construction of a new building that incorporates innovative learning spaces reflective of best pedagogical practices.

WSC has begun to take steps to enroll a more diverse student body. The College is located near two urban centers—Springfield and Holyoke—with populations diverse in ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Actions that have already begun to position the College to better serve these populations will be continued and expanded over the next five years. Likewise, because of changing demographics, we are looking at ways to increase the numbers of non-traditional students attending the College in either the day or evening divisions. Efforts are underway to increase the numbers of faculty of color hired, but this is an area that will continue to need our attention. Additionally, efforts to retain and support diverse students, faculty and administrators will be a focus area.

Work to expand pedagogical alternatives and to examine the College's general education curriculum has recently started (see Standards 4 and 5). The College plans to continue these efforts to enhance the quality of its curriculum and to provide more opportunities for faculty to collaborate across disciplinary boundaries. Faculty continue to demonstrate an enthusiasm for interdisciplinary teaching and collaboration; this is a significant strength for our campus. Interest in distance learning is also beginning to grow. Continued work on monitoring student academic success and responding to their academic needs will remain an important focus. Finally, graduate programs will be expanded in areas that serve regional needs and outreach activities will be strengthened.

Because of the exigencies of the funding process in Massachusetts, Westfield State College recognizes that it must engage in additional and innovative fundraising activities. The College's

recently created division of Advancement and College Relations will provide the administrative expertise necessary to support our fund raising goals.

Appendix 3: Public Disclosure Chart

This information is located on our website at the following address: www.wsc.ma.edu/publicdisclosure

Number	Information	Web Address	Print Publication
10.2	How can inquiries be made about the institution?	https://infoweb.wsc.ma.edu:9102/pls/WSCB/bwskwpro.P_ChooseProspectType	WSC Bulletin, Admissions View Book
10.2	Notice of availability of publications and of audited financial statement	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Administration/Finance_Office/Office_of_the_Vice_President_for_Finance/index.html	Annual Report from VP of Finance and Administration
10.3	Institutional Catalog	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/College_Bulletin.html	WSC Bulletin
10.3	Obligations and responsibilities of students and the institution	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Current_Students/Student_Handbook/index.html	WSC Bulletin, Student Handbook
10.3	Information on admissions and attendance	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Institutional mission and objectives	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/About%5FWSC/Mission_Statement.html	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Expected educational outcomes	Some departmental websites: http://www.wsc.ma.edu/tec/NCATE/CF.htm#outcomes ; http://biology.wsc.ma.edu/students/learning-goals ;	WSC Bulletin Accreditation Reports
10.5	Admissions requirements & procedures	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Transfer credit policies and procedures	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/Transferring_to_WSC.html	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Fees, charges and refund policies	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/Cost_of_Attending_WSC.html	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Rules and regulations for student conduct	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Current%5FStudents/Student_Handbook/index.html	WSC Bulletin, Student Handbook
10.5	Other information about	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/	WSC Bulletin

	attending and withdrawing	Division of Graduate and Continuing Education/Policies.html	
10.5	Academic programs	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Courses currently offered	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/College Bulletin.html	WSC Bulletin, Course Offerings Booklet
10.5	Other available educational opportunities	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/	WSC Bulletin
10.5	Other academic policies and procedures	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/Academic Affairs/Faculty Resource Guide/Academic Policies and Procedures.html	WSC Bulletin, Course Offerings Booklet
10.5	Requirements for degrees	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/College Bulletin.html	WSC Bulletin
10.6	List of faculty & qualifications	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/directory/acad.aspx	WSC Bulletin
10.6	Names and positions of administrative officers	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/directory/admin.aspx	WSC Bulletin
10.6	Names and affiliations of Board of Trustees	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/president/trustees.htm	WSC Bulletin
10.7	Locations and programs available of branch campuses and other instructional locations	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/Division%5Fof%5FGraduate%5Fand%5FContinuing%5FEducation/	DGCE Course Offerings Booklet
10.8	Programs, courses, services not available in any given academic year		Contact Office of Registrar
10.9	Size and characteristics of student body	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/fastfacts.pdf	WSC Bulletin <i>Fast Facts</i>
10.9	Description of campus setting	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/About%5FWSC/	WSC Bulletin
10.9	Availability of academic and other support services	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/Academic_Affairs/index.html AND http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/Department_Of_Academic_Achievement/index.html	WSC Bulletin
10.9	Range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities for students	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Current%5FStudents/	WSC Bulletin, Student Handbook
10.9	Institutional resources from which a student can	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Current%5FStudents/	WSC Bulletin

	reasonably be expected to benefit	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Academics/Academic_Advising_Center/index.html	
10.10	Institutional goals for students' education	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/About%5FWSC/Strategic%20Plan/Strategic%20Plan%20.html	WSC Bulletin
10.11	Student success in achieving institutional goals	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/fastfacts.pdf	WSC Bulletin
10.11	Total cost of education	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/Cost_of_Attending_WSC.html AND http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/Financial_Aid/index.html	WSC Bulletin
10.11	Expected amount of student debt	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/Admissions/Financial_Aid/Grants_and_Loans.html	Peterson's Annual Survey of Undergrad Financial Aid
10.13	Statement about accreditation	http://www.wsc.ma.edu/neasc/	WSC Bulletin