State University of New York

College at Oneonta

Middle States Self-Study Report

January 2003

President Alan B. Donovan
State University of New York College at Oneonta
Oneonta, New York 13820
Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. i

Executive Summary ............................................................................................................. ii

Preface .................................................................................................................................. 1

I. Overview .......................................................................................................................... 4
   A. College History, Setting, and Mission ............................................................................ 4
      1. Administrative Organization ...................................................................................... 5
      2. Mission ...................................................................................................................... 7
   B. The Comprehensive College Plan .................................................................................. 7
   C. Institutional Assessment Plan ....................................................................................... 9
   D. SUNY Mission Review Process ................................................................................... 10
   E. MSA Characteristics of Excellence ............................................................................. 11
   F. Design of the Self-Study ............................................................................................. 19
   G. Organization and Structure of the Self-Study .............................................................. 20
   H. Significant Surveys and Reports ................................................................................... 25

II. State of the College ......................................................................................................... 28
   A. Profile of Faculty and Students .................................................................................... 28
   B. Enrollment Trends ........................................................................................................ 29
   C. Curricular Accomplishments ..................................................................................... 33
   D. Fiscal Resources ......................................................................................................... 39
   E. Improved Facilities ...................................................................................................... 43
   F. Foundation Enhancements .......................................................................................... 46

III. Outcomes Assessment .................................................................................................... 47
   A. Context of Outcomes Assessment ................................................................................ 47
   B. Outcomes Assessment in Academic Affairs .................................................................. 48
      1. SUNY’s Requirements for Assessment--General Education ........................................ 49
      2. SUNY’s Requirements for Assessment--Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in the Major--Summary Report ........................................... 52
      3. State Education Department’s Quality Assurance Initiative ..................................... 54
      4. Examples of Outcomes Assessment in Attainment of Academic Affairs Divisional Planning, Staffing, and Budgeting Goals ........................................... 54
      5. Examples of Outcomes Assessment in Student Services Units of Academic Affairs .......................................................... 60
   C. Outcomes Assessment in Student Development ........................................................ 63
      1. Hunt College Union .................................................................................................... 64
      2. Residential and Community Life ................................................................................ 66
      3. Financial Aid ............................................................................................................. 67
   D. Outcomes Assessment in Finance and Administration ................................................ 67
      1. Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises .................................................... 68
      2. Food Services ........................................................................................................... 69
      3. Life Safety ................................................................................................................ 71
E. Outcomes Assessment in College Advancement .................................................. 73
1. 2001 Survey of Alumni for College Advancement ............................................. 73
2. Faculty Research Show ...................................................................................... 75
3. Scholarships ..................................................................................................... 77

IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes .................................................. 78
A. Context of Planning, Evaluation, and Budgeting .............................................. 79
B. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Structures .............................................. 80
C. Enhanced Divisional Planning, Evaluation, and Budgeting .............................. 82
D. Enhanced Institutional Planning, Evaluation, and Budgeting .......................... 86

V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality ..................................... 89
A. Instructional Quality .......................................................................................... 89
1. Professional Accreditation ............................................................................... 90
2. Middle States .................................................................................................. 92
3. Outcomes Assessment Task Force .................................................................... 94
4. Outcomes Assessment 1997-98 to Present in Division of Science and Social Science ............................................................................................................. 95
5. Outcomes Assessment--Current Status in Division of Science and Social Science ............................................................................................... 98
6. Outcomes Assessment--Progress to Date and Current Status in Division of Behavioral and Applied Sciences .......................................................... 106
7. Other Indicators of Academic Quality .............................................................. 114
B. Advisement ...................................................................................................... 117
C. Academic Support Services and Milne Library ................................................. 119
D. Assessing Learning Outcomes to Enhance Learning ....................................... 125
E. General Education ............................................................................................. 125
F. Faculty Development ......................................................................................... 126
G. Celebrating Academic Accomplishments ....................................................... 128

VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity ............................ 131
A. Increasing Selectivity ....................................................................................... 131
B. Meeting Enrollment Targets with Stronger Students ........................................ 132
C. Recruitment and Marketing Strategies ............................................................ 134
D. Institutional Scholarship Opportunities ............................................................ 136

VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention ........................................... 139
A. Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention .................................................................. 140
B. Campus Environmental Issues ......................................................................... 143
C. Quality of Student Life and Learning ................................................................. 148
D. Student Opinion Survey and SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey ......................... 149

VIII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal IV - Pluralism .............................................. 150
A. Recruiting and Retaining Underrepresented Members ...................................... 151
B. Pluralism in Academic Offerings ...................................................................... 154
C. Promoting Pluralism ........................................................................................ 155
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology ........................................................... 158
   A. Technology-Friendly Campus Environment .............................................................. 160
   B. Enhancing Access ...................................................................................................... 162
   C. Training Opportunities ............................................................................................ 164
   D. Assessing the Impact of Technology ........................................................................ 166
   E. Leadership in Technology .......................................................................................... 167

X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community ..................................................... 170
   A. Fostering Collegiality ................................................................................................. 170
   B. Enhancing Communication ....................................................................................... 174
   C. Improving Facilities ................................................................................................. 176

XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition ...................................... 179
   A. Academic Reputation ............................................................................................... 179
   B. Promoting Excellence ............................................................................................. 181
   C. Increasing Scholarship Opportunities ..................................................................... 183
   D. Creating Traditions ................................................................................................. 184
   E. Building Relationships ............................................................................................. 185

XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions ............................ 189

XIII. Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 198
Acknowledgments

This self-study report was prepared through the efforts of the SUNY College at Oneonta

Middle States Association Steering Committee:

Carolyn Haessig, Co-Chair, Professor of Human Ecology and Director of Graduate Education
Armand La Potin, Co-Chair, Professor of History
Craig Bielert, Professor of Psychology
Marguerite Culver, Acting Dean of Academic Support Services
Thomas Freeman, External Consultant
Alanna Gothard, Political Science Student
Glenn Mayer, Assistant to the President for College Communications; Editor of Self-Study Report
Jeanne Miller, Associate Vice President for Student Life
William Pietrafice, Professor of Biology
Janet Potter, Associate Provost for Library and Information Services
Peter Shea, Associate Vice President for Finance
Barbara Stoehr, Assistant Dean of Education
Andrew VanBenschoten, Former Chair of College Council
Barry Warren, Director of the Center for Economic and Community Development
Lisa Wenck, Associate Vice President for Administration
Nancy Wolters, Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support

Secretarial services were provided by Jean Jester of the Office of Graduate Studies.
Executive Summary

The College at Oneonta has become a college of choice within SUNY in the past five years, thanks largely to the concerted efforts of the entire campus community and the guidance of the Comprehensive College Plan (CCP). The CCP, whose original concepts were adopted in 1990, consists of seven major goal areas. While all are important in guiding institutional mission, the College has been particularly active in promoting the goals of academic quality, admissions selectivity, and retention. Our successful efforts in achieving many of the objectives within these goal areas have been brought about through the creation or modification of College structures and operations, as well as the introduction of new process initiatives in data gathering, analysis, and assessment.

This institutional self-study report documents and highlights the College’s efforts in articulating objectives within the CCP goal areas, the implementation of specific initiatives to achieve them, and the modification of these initiatives based on planning and assessment processes. It also notes areas of continuing challenges as well as a number of concerns for on-going attention. Among these are the challenges of continuing to recruit and retain more academically qualified students; attracting and retaining first-rate faculty and staff, a critical component in achieving academic quality; keeping abreast of the technological revolution, especially as it affects teaching methodologies; and adjusting to changes in the programmatic and social needs of our students. The greatest challenge may be, however, to continue the dramatic positive momentum that the College has experienced in the last five years, given the fiscal uncertainty and other challenges that we face in the future. Undoubtedly, institutional self-evaluation, assessment, and planning processes will be even more important in the future than they are now.

Much of the past five years’ focus began with a “Retention Summit,” held in January
Executive Summary

1997 following an academic year in which the College experienced a low point in such indices as the number of applications, academic quality of entering freshmen, retention of students, and the evaluation of the institution by our students on the Student Opinion Survey. Maintaining a stable enrollment was and will continue to be a major objective for the College. The tuition-based funding mechanisms of the SUNY System Administration are sensitive to enrollment mix, notably of upper-division and graduate students. Improvements in retention were and continue to be essential to the fiscal well-being of the College, and those improvements depended in part on recruiting better qualified students who would persist at the College. During the Retention Summit, an external consultant made it quite clear to us that academic quality was primary in recruiting and retaining an ever more qualified student body. Following the summit, the charge of the College’s Enrollment Management Committee was revised and its membership revitalized. A complete re-engineering of recruitment, orientation, first-year experience, and advising practices started at that time as well.

Significantly, these initiatives were followed shortly by an institutional commitment to review academic programs and enhance faculty recruitment and development. The process of developing a means for measuring student outcomes commenced. Along with the expanded assessment in Academic Affairs as part of the Middle States process (later redirected by the SUNY System requirements for specified assessment practices in General Education and Departmental Major programs), academic programs have also benefitted from several academic infrastructure funds, totaling $4 million in the past seven years; a highly successful restructuring of academic computing; and, best of all, the hiring of 80 new, tenure-track faculty in the past three years.

Much of what the College has accomplished in the past decade would not have reached fruition without major changes in decision-making processes, achieved by the integration of institutional planning mechanisms and greatly increased analysis and use of data. The creation of a
Executive Summary

Strategic Planning Advisory Group (SPAG) in 2000 addressed the need to provide greater participation in College planning from a broader group of constituents. In Academic Affairs, the creation of the faculty Outcomes Assessment Task Force in 1997 facilitated implementation of assessment processes used to enhance student learning both at the course and programmatic level. Based on results of the Student Opinion Survey, the Division of Student Development coordinated the College’s efforts to address such issues as admissions recruitment, freshman orientation to campus life, course registration processes, and advisement. Through the Enrollment Management Committee, this work has resulted in the formation of a number of programs of major institutional significance. The Finance and Administration Division developed a facilities master plan in 1995, which prioritized projects within our fiscal resources. These projects--renovation of academic facilities and residence halls, for example--supported the on-going goals of other divisions as spelled out in the Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the Division of College Advancement conducted a major survey of our alumni in order to promote alumni relations and enhance fund-raising.

The entire Middle States decennial review process in general, and, in particular, the deliberate decision to begin it a year earlier in order to enhance institutional soul-searching and to address concerns, has yielded valuable insights into the challenges the College faces. We know now that if we are to continue to meet or exceed many of the goals we set in our Comprehensive College Plan, we must integrate even better our planning and assessment processes at the programmatic, divisional, and institutional levels. The College administration responded to this area of concern cited by the MSA Steering Committee by re-structuring the format of programmatic and divisional annual reports in a uniform way to address a “goals-oriented” approach tied to the CCP. The MSA Steering Committee also noted the need to provide a consistent process for revision of the CCP itself, tied both to planning mechanisms and contributions from the College community. College
Executive Summary

officials delegated the responsibility for the review of changes to the CCP to SPAG with input from the College Senate. Equally significant, the MSA Steering Committee recommended that data management at the College be strengthened. College officials created the Institutional Research Council (IRC), consisting of representatives from all divisions of the College. IRC will identify data-gathering instruments and share information that can be used by each institutional unit. And in response to an MSA Steering Committee concern about the institutional goal of increasing recruitment and retention results, the charge to the Enrollment Management Committee has recently been increased to formulate a comprehensive plan to assure the College’s continued success in these areas.

This report has been prepared after several semesters of campus discussions, surveys, and deliberations by the Middle States Steering Committee. This committee and its subgroups are composed of faculty, staff, and students. The Steering Committee was co-chaired by two faculty members who have been assigned administrative duties, and the committee was assisted by an external consultant with broad experience in higher education, administration, and planning. During the course of the discussions, the report was reviewed by the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, President’s Cabinet, Council of Deans, department chairs, and College Senate. All members of the College community have been afforded a chance for their comments and suggestions during fall 2002. The report has been edited by the Assistant to the President for College Communications. Final approval was made by the President’s Cabinet in consultation with SPAG and the Middle States Steering Committee.
Preface

Since January of 2001, the SUNY College at Oneonta has been actively engaged in self-study led by members of the College’s Middle States Steering Committee. The process started a year earlier than is generally expected, thereby allowing the committee to identify and discuss certain institutional challenges and, when and where appropriate, to make recommendations to the administration. Subsequent actions taken by the College in response to these recommendations have been included in this self-study report.

Using the Comprehensive College Plan (CCP) goals and the MSA Characteristics of Excellence, both of which are congruent with the College’s mission, members of the MSA Steering Committee engaged all constituents of the College community as well as the community at large in on-going dialogue regarding College activities. The committee also examined statistical and other data about past and present initiatives of the College’s four administrative divisions. The focus of these inquiries was to determine how effective the College has been in achieving its mission through the guidance of the CCP and the extent to which evidence affirms the College’s effectiveness. The Steering Committee’s findings and the College’s responses to the committee’s 16 recommendations are contained in this report and its appendices.

What follows in this preface is intended to provide some illustrative, but not all-inclusive, examples of the processes that form the basis for the College’s on-going assessment, planning and budgeting efforts, as well as some of the accomplishments that have resulted from initiatives begun from 1993 to 2002. The examples cited below are discussed in detail throughout the self-study report. Several initiatives are recent and are a consequence of the self-study process. The College will use these processes and continue many of these initiatives as it meets the challenges of the 21st century.

Processes for assessment, planning and budgeting now include the following:
Assessment data used as a basis for planning and goal setting. The College’s sound fiscal situation and record of accomplishments is the culmination of prudent management and the ubiquitous use of the Comprehensive College Plan.

Advisement documents revised to make them more “user friendly,” assisting both faculty and students in academic planning.

A capital facilities plan that includes comprehensive campus development projects based on needs assessment and consumers’ preferences with prioritization based on funding sources and congruency with the CCP.

A revised, College-wide annual report format that emphasizes congruency between unit/divisional goals and initiatives and institutional goals.

A revised comprehensive planning approach implemented in all of the College’s divisions.

A new evaluation, planning and budgetary approach implemented by the Council of Deans.

A broad-based, advisory council--the Strategic Planning Advisory Group (SPAG)--that meets on a regular basis.

A more comprehensive approach to data development and use, including special studies, as reflected in the creation of the Institutional Research Council (IRC).

The following are examples of initiatives that are products of assessment and planning:

- The College has reallocated resources to support new programs in Music Industry, Environmental Sciences, and Computer Art.

- The campus has complied with SUNY’s General Education requirements and has sought additional specialized accreditation. The campus has maintained continuing specialized accreditation of the Human Ecology Department by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), the undergraduate Dietetics program by the American Dietetic Association (ADA), and Chemistry programs by the American Chemical Society (ACS). The Dietetic Internship received ADA accreditation in 1999; the Division of Education received NCATE accreditation in 2000; and the Division of Economics and Business is currently in the fourth year of the five-year review cycle for possible accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business--International.

- The College has enhanced admissions and retention efforts. Enrollment management has become a higher priority, admissions efforts have been improved and more focused, and the College has enhanced the quality of the academic and student life experiences. The College has made real gains in the quantity and quality of applicants for admission, increasingly becoming a “college of choice” for first-year students. This has permitted the College to become increasingly selective and to accept better prepared students. Student retention has been significantly improved by enrolling better prepared students, improving programs, and
responding as a campus to meet student needs and improve their perceptions of the campus.

- The College endowment now totals more than $17 million, and most of the interest is applied to student scholarships. Scholarship assistance for students has increased from $137,000 in 1993 to $830,000 in 2002. Presidential Scholarships, introduced in 2002, are merit-based and provide tuition-equivalent awards for four years.

- Substantial improvements and enhancements have been made in the availability, appropriate use, and support of technology and resources for learning. The Milne Library services and initiatives receive highly positive responses from students in a number of surveys. Student assessments of Learning Support Services have been increasingly positive.

- Noteworthy improvements in a number of services for students--ranging from advisement and integration of technology to food-services and financial aid--have been made in response to student opinions and preferences. Student perceptions of institutional quality have shown significant increases as reflected in various surveys.

- Due to careful planning and budgeting, the College has been able to hire 80 tenure-track faculty in the past two years. The new faculty have enhanced the construction and delivery of academically challenging programming and courses. In a 1996 survey, 74.8 percent of alumni rated the quality of instruction as good, good to excellent, or excellent; in the 2000 survey, the percentage increased to 88.6 percent. An Employee Recruitment and Retention Task Force, created in spring 2002, has been charged to develop plans for recruiting and retaining high-quality faculty and staff.

- Efforts to assess academic majors and the General Education program have been revised and documented according to the expectations and requirements of several accrediting bodies. Nearly half (47%) of the College’s students are enrolled in programs that have, or, in the case of Economics and Business, are seeking professional/specialized accreditation. The College’s students who take the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations have achieved a 98% pass rate. The Provost has appointed a Graduate Task Force to review graduate programs.

- The Center for Multicultural Experiences, the Center for Social Responsibility and Community, and the Center for Economic and Community Development have been developed to enhance academic programs and strengthen ties to surrounding communities.
I. Overview

[An overview of the College’s compliance with the MSA Characteristics of Excellence is included as Section E of this chapter, and specific illustrations of the characteristics are included throughout this report. Characteristics of Excellence #2, 7, 10, 12, 13, and 16 are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

A. College History, Setting, and Mission

The State University of New York College at Oneonta was founded in 1889 as a normal school with approximately 200 students. The College continued to serve its primary mission of training teachers for some 60 years, establishing a three-year Education program in 1923 and awarding its first Bachelor of Education degrees in 1942. In 1948, the College was incorporated into the newly created State University of New York, and the first graduate degrees in Education were offered in the same year to address the need for advanced training for the state’s teachers. In 1964, the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies was established in a public/private partnership between the College and the New York State Historical Association.

As societal changes created greater access to college and greater demand for a liberal arts education, the College at Oneonta became a multipurpose institution with the addition of several programs in the arts and sciences and the adoption of its current name in 1963. The State University of New York College at Oneonta is now one of 64 SUNY campuses and one of 13 in the SUNY “sector” comprised of the four-year liberal arts colleges. In the Carnegie classification, the College falls into the category of “Master’s (Comprehensive) Universities and Colleges I.”

The College’s 250-acre main campus overlooks the scenic Susquehanna River Valley in the central southern tier of New York. On Otsego Lake in nearby Cooperstown, the College maintains a complex housing the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies and the Biological Field Station. The State University College at Oneonta plays a crucial role in
the Central New York region. The city of Oneonta is located 60 miles or more from the larger
upstate cities of Albany, Binghamton, and Utica. As such, the College provides significant
educational, cultural, and economic opportunities for its students, its employees, the city of
Oneonta, and the surrounding communities in the rural region. As a state-supported institution,
the SUNY College at Oneonta maintains a commitment to public service.

1. Administrative Organization

The SUNY System is overseen by a Board of Trustees, appointed by the Governor. The
College is subject to the regulations of the SUNY Board of Trustees, SUNY System
Administration, and the State Education Department, as well as the annual state budget process.
A local College Council, consisting of nine members appointed by the Governor and an elected
student representative, advises the College President and provides local oversight of some
College functions. [CE13]

Overseen by the President, the College is organized into four divisions--Academic
Affairs, Student Development, College Advancement, and Finance and Administration--with a
vice-president leading each division (See Appendix I A or inside back cover for an organizational
chart). The College’s academic departments and programs are organized in a divisional structure
overseen by deans, who, collectively as the Council of Deans, work with the Provost/Vice
President for Academic Affairs. [CE12]

In the SUNY system, the faculty of a college participate significantly in the initiation,
development, and implementation of the educational program of the college. At the College at
Oneonta, the College Senate acts on behalf of the faculty. The Faculty Presiding Officer,
Alternate Presiding Officer, and Secretary serve respectively as Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary
of the College Senate.
I. Overview

The College Senate, which meets twice a month, consists of elected representatives of the academic departments and programs, professional programs, administration, and students, with the student delegation comprising 11 percent of the total body. The authority of the College Senate, as the official representative body of the College, and its advisory relationship to College President, are recognized and defined by the SUNY Board of Trustees. [CE12]

The College Senate has 11 standing committees, which are elected annually by the instructional and professional staff. The committees consider proposals submitted to them by members of the College community, make recommendations to the College Senate, and address concerns in curriculum, instruction, student life, public events, and other areas. Both the College Senate at large and the Senate Steering Committee may create ad hoc committees as needed.

Student governance at the College is a function of the Student Association. The association consists of legislative, executive, and judicial branches in traditional governmental style, working within an operating framework provided by a constitution. The Student Senate is the official elected legislative body, which establishes and amends Student Association policies and allocates funds to student organizations. [CE12]

The College’s 405 full- and part-time teaching faculty currently offer 66 curricular programs (majors or options within majors), leading to baccalaureate degrees for approximately 5400 matriculated undergraduates, and nine graduate programs leading to master’s degrees for some 250 graduate students. Through the years, the College’s programs have adapted to meet the needs of an ever-changing student body. While Education remains the College’s largest major, the programs in Economics and Business have grown to the second largest, reflecting the nation’s emphasis on the economy and the state’s status as a center of world commerce. In response to societal needs and changes, the College has introduced increasingly popular majors
in Music Industry, Environmental Sciences, and Mass Communication in recent years, and its
newest major--Computer Art--reflects the College’s commitment to both emergent technology
and the traditional liberal arts.

2. Mission

The College’s mission is to “foster the individual student’s intellectual, personal, and
civic development” through a dedication to “excellence in teaching, advisement, and scholarly
activities, and the cultivation of a campus environment rich in opportunities for participation,
personal challenge, and service.” The College’s Mission Statement was adopted in 1990
following a comprehensive review of the College, the needs of its constituencies, and the future
directions of higher education [CE2]. Revised in 1998 to look forward to the new millennium,
the current Mission Statement is attached to this self-study report as Appendix I B. The original
1990 version is attached as Appendix I C.

B. The Comprehensive College Plan (CCP)

The College’s mission is translated into action through the Comprehensive College Plan
(CCP), an ever-evolving document that grew from six “challenges for the future” in the 1990
Mission Statement put forth by the Commission on the Future of the College, a broad-based
group consisting of representatives from the entire Oneonta community [CE2]. Since its
adoption in 1997 following broad discussion by the campus community, the CCP has been
revised several times: 1998, 1999, and most recently in 2002. The most recent revision was
based on recommendations made by the College’s Strategic Planning Advisory Group (SPAG),
whose function is described in greater detail in Chapter IV, Section D, of this report. Following
discussion by the campus community, the revisions to the CCP were approved by the President
and his Cabinet. [CE2, 16]
I. Overview

After the visit of the Middle States team in 1993, the College refined its process for institutional planning. The previously created Future Directions Committee, charged with monitoring the implementation of the Mission Statement, worked closely with a broad-based College task force, the Strategic Planning Group (predecessor of the Strategic Planning Advisory Group), to review the six broad goal areas that the College needed to address in carrying out its mission: academic quality, retention, admissions selectivity, pluralism, community, and image and tradition. This review led to the refinement of six specific goal statements (one within each area) and new objectives and strategies to achieve them. With input from the broader campus community, this revised document was developed into the Comprehensive College Plan in 1997 to serve as the foundation in the process of programmatic planning and assessment.

Throughout its existence, the CCP has guided the campus community in pursuing the overall goals of the College, and the plan has been modified to accommodate the changing needs of the campus community and to meet the changing demands of a modern institution of higher education. For example, after the six “future directions” were formed into goal areas of the original Comprehensive College Plan, a seventh area, technology, was added to emphasize the importance of educational technology in contemporary higher education. A greatly expanded version of the CCP was developed in 1998 to incorporate specific implementation strategies, assessment mechanisms, and assignments of responsibility. The plan was updated in 1999 during the SUNY Mission Review process (described in Section D of this chapter) to reflect the College’s progress in achieving objectives and to coordinate with revisions to the Mission Statement. The Comprehensive College Plan was last revised in 2002 in response to recommendations generated during the first year of the current self-study process.

The successor to the ad hoc Strategic Planning Group is the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, a more broadly representative standing group charged with reviewing and recommending
revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan and with advising the President and his Cabinet. Following consultation with the broader College community, the President and his Cabinet decide upon revisions to the plan. The 1999 and 2002 versions of the Comprehensive College Plan are included in this self-study report as Appendix I D and Appendix I E, respectively. The design of this self-study is based upon the College’s goals as stated in the 1999 revision of the Comprehensive College Plan, which was in effect when the Middle States Steering Committee began its work in January 2001. [CE16]

C. Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP)

In the spring of 1997, a College-wide Task Force, which consisted of representatives of the students and the College’s divisions, was convened to draft the College’s Institutional Assessment Plan (See Appendix I F). The Task Force used guidelines developed by MSA and the expertise of faculty and other College personnel to develop the IAP and a list of nine underlying assessment guidelines. The IAP includes eight areas that have served as focal points for organizing the College’s assessment activities: Academic Majors, General Education, Student Development, Information Literacy, Basic Skills, Student Services, Human Resources, and Facilities. The plan was shared with the College community through a number of public hearings in the fall of 1997 and modified as a result of the recommendations.

After the IAP was drafted, the Division of Academic Affairs assumed responsibility for on-going assessment of programs in the academic area, including General Education and Academic Majors. The Division of Student Development assumed responsibility for programs and student services housed in that area; the Division of Finance and Administration for facilities, human resources and some student services; and the Division of College Advancement for scholarships and alumni
activities. Members of the task force and Student Development administrators held an initial round of campus-wide workshops in 1997-98 to assist faculty and staff in understanding and undertaking assessment. The Institutional Assessment Plan guided many of the College’s efforts in assessment in recent years.

D. SUNY Mission Review Process

In 1998, SUNY System Administration initiated a mission review process for individual campuses. In that year, the College at Oneonta began its participation in the mission review process, which included the College’s projections of its institutional position within SUNY and identification of benchmarks for measuring success. Following an inclusive campus discussion and re-examination of the College’s Mission Statement and Comprehensive College Plan, the College implemented revisions to several areas of the CCP. In December of 2000, the College prepared a Memorandum of Understanding (See Appendix II C) in conjunction with SUNY System Administration that addressed the following areas: Enrollment/Admissions Selectivity, Student Outcomes, Intercampus Collaboration, Academic Program Directions, Infrastructure and Technology, and Mission Review Funding. [CE10]

The SUNY Mission Review process was exceedingly helpful to the campus in several ways. Initially, the preparation of the Memorandum of Understanding encouraged campus personnel to clarify the College’s mission as a comprehensive college within SUNY and to address the challenges it faces in attaining its institutional goals through the CCP. The process also encouraged the College to articulate benchmarks for measuring its success in reaching the CCP goals. The SUNY Mission Review process provided valuable preparation for the Middle States self-study process.

The SUNY Mission Review process also provided the College with incentives to encourage mission goals. The College received funding, available to SUNY institutions on a
I. Overview

competitive basis for the enhancement of academic quality, to facilitate the candidacy of the Division of Economics and Business for accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business--International.

E. MSA Characteristics of Excellence

In conjunction with the Comprehensive College Plan, the Middle States Association’s Characteristics of Excellence guided the organization of the College’s current self-study. Members of the Steering Committee considered the MSA’s 16 Characteristics of Excellence as an integral part of the self-study process (See Appendix I G). To organize the self-study, the Steering Committee incorporated the Characteristics of Excellence and the Comprehensive College Plan goals into a matrix (See the following page) based on the four divisions of the College. Working from the matrix, each of the Steering Committee’s six sub-groups studied relevant areas and functions of the College based on specific Characteristics and areas of the Comprehensive College Plan.

The sub-groups gathered and analyzed evidence, including both quantitative and qualitative data. After reviewing the findings in 2001, the Steering Committee concluded that the College continues to address the expectations set forth in the Characteristics. Supporting evidence is integrated throughout this self-study report. An “MSA Characteristics Index” is included as Appendix I H to help readers locate discussion and supporting materials related to specific Characteristics. A general description of the College’s compliance with the MSA Characteristics is included in this chapter.
# MSA – Oneonta Self-Study Matrix

**November 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Affairs (Intellectual Growth, Curriculum, and programs)</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A,D,E,F,G</td>
<td>A.D</td>
<td>A.B,C,D,E</td>
<td>A.B</td>
<td>A.B,C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Mission & goals
6. General Intellectual skills
7. Curricula
8. Library/learning resources
9. Effective assessment
15. Accuracy in published info
16. Responsiveness to change, Mission & goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Affairs (Faculty, Leadership &amp; Governance)</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.B.C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Humane & Equitable Policies
5. Faculty
15. Accuracy in published info
16. Responsiveness to change, Mission & goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Development (Personal &amp; Social Growth &amp; Development, Student Services &amp; Programs)</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.C</td>
<td>A,B,C,D</td>
<td>A,B,C,D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A.C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Humane & equitable policies
2. Mission & goals
3. Clear admission...policies
4. Appropriate student services
6. General intellectual skills
9. Effective assessment
15. Accuracy in published info
16. Responsiveness to change, Mission & goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advancement</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A.B.C</td>
<td>D.E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Mission & goals
9. Effective assessment
15. Accuracy in published info

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance &amp; Administrative Services (Institutional Resources)</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A.B,C,D,E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Mission & goals
8. Library/learning resources
9. Effective assessment
11. Financial resources
14. Physical facilities
16. Responsiveness to change, Mission & goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance &amp; Administrative Services (Human Resources)</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Humane & equitable policies
9. Effective assessment
15. Accuracy in published info

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steering Committee</th>
<th>CCP Academic Quality</th>
<th>CCP Admissions Selectivity</th>
<th>CCP Retention</th>
<th>CCP Pluralism</th>
<th>CCP Technology</th>
<th>CCP Community</th>
<th>CCP Image and Tradition</th>
<th>MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Humane & Equitable policies
2. Mission & goals
10. Self-study
13. Governing board
16. Responsiveness to change, Mission & goals |
I. Overview

1. **Integrity in the institution’s conduct of all its activities through humane and equitable policies dealing with students, faculty, staff, and other constituencies**

   The College maintains a commitment to federal, state, and local policies that govern interactions among individuals and institutions. The College’s policies on Affirmative Action, sexual harassment, handicapped accessibility, non-discrimination, campus security, and other relevant areas are published regularly and distributed to all of the College’s constituencies through publications, campus mailings, and postings as appropriate. The *College Catalogs, Student Handbook, Code of Student Conduct, Faculty Handbook*, and other relevant publications are updated regularly. Additionally, the College has demonstrated a commitment to promoting pluralism and community in its mission statement and its programs such as the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs and the Center for Social Responsibility and Community.

2. **Clearly stated mission and goals appropriate to the institution’s resources and the needs of its constituents**

   The College’s mission statement offers a guiding statement of purpose for the campus community, while the Comprehensive College Plan provides “action goals” for the implementation of the mission. Centrality to the College’s mission and goals are key considerations in resource allocation. The College has a structure and procedure in place to review and revise the Comprehensive College Plan with significant opportunities for input from all constituencies of the campus community.

3. **Clearly stated admissions and other student policies appropriate to the mission, goals, programs, and resources of the institution**

   The College’s admissions policies are stated clearly in its admissions publications and in staff-to-student and student-to-student recruitment communications. The *College Catalogs, Student Handbook, Code of Student Conduct, Faculty Handbook*, and other relevant publications
I. Overview

demonstrate clearly stated policies.

4. **Student services appropriate to the educational, personal, and career needs of the students**

The College provides a number of effective student services that address this characteristic directly, including Academic Advisement, Learning Support Services, Disabled Student Services, Residence Life, Career Development, and Counseling, Health and Wellness. Student surveys reveal increasing levels of satisfaction with student services.

5. **Faculty whose professional qualifications are appropriate to the mission and programs of the institution, who are committed to intellectual and professional development, and who form an adequate core to support the programs offered**

Outstanding teaching and professional competencies are documented qualities of the College’s faculty. With a student-faculty ratio of approximately 19/1, faculty can devote time to the needs of individual students. Significantly too, current students and alumni rate instructional quality highly in surveys. Fifty-two faculty (32 currently on staff) have received the prestigious refereed SUNY’s Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, and 13 (11 currently on staff) have received SUNY Distinguished Professorships. Approximately half of all College majors are in academic programs approved by or seeking approval from specialized accrediting bodies that require rigorous standards of professional competency for educational staff. Development opportunities are available locally through such avenues as the Ford Grant Program and nationally with the assistance of the College’s Grants Development Office. The College has ensured that faculty resources are adequate to support programs by assigning positions to areas of high demand.

6. **Programs and courses which develop general intellectual skills such as the ability to form independent judgment, to weigh values, to understand fundamental theory, and to interact effectively in a culturally diverse world**

The SUNY Gen Ed 2000, through its required student learning outcomes, fosters skill
I. Overview

development and the inculcation of ethical and moral values. So too, the student learning outcomes articulated by departmental faculty in their Middle States assessment reports since 1997 espouse these characteristics. The Center for Social Responsibility and Community and Center for Multicultural Experiences provide programs, often integrated and coordinated with academic majors and minors, that offer students awareness of issues and experience in the culturally diverse world. In addition to the mission statement’s emphasis on developing students’ skills in these areas, the Comprehensive College Plan includes pluralism as a goal area.

The College had a Cultural Diversity perspective in its General Education core as early as 1996, which is now carried forward as the Other World Civilizations requirement in SUNY Gen Ed 2000. The College’s Office of International Education provides programs that are available to all students. Students’ favorable perception of multicultural course content has risen on recent surveys.

7. Curricula which provide, emphasize, or rest upon education in the arts and sciences, even when they are attuned to professional or occupational requirements

The student learning outcomes and disciplinary areas in SUNY Gen Ed 2000 are rooted in a balance of professional core courses with liberal arts offerings. Several new majors at the College, such as Computer Art, balance technology with a commitment to the liberal arts. The philosophy of the new College Honors Program recognizes the significance of the liberal arts.

8. Library/learning resources and services sufficient to support the programs offered and evidence of their use

In the last five years, as a consequence of technological, environmental, and procedural enhancements, Milne Library has increased its significance as a major learning resource center for the College. The addition of computer labs in all residence halls and academic buildings, the networking of the entire campus, and the adoption of the Universal Computer Access for Students program are evidence of the College’s commitment to educational technology. Student
I. Overview

surveys indicate positive feelings about Milne Library, technology services, and other learning resources.

9. Policies and procedures, qualitative and quantitative, as appropriate, which lead to the effective assessment of institutional, program, and student learning outcomes

Assessment activities are ongoing throughout the College. Institutional surveys that yield data on student and alumni perceptions on a wide variety of campus initiatives--including facilities, residence hall programs, and the quality of instruction--are used by all divisions. Specific assessment processes are undertaken in each division to enhance and refine programs and procedures within and across the divisions. Assessment in the academic area is undertaken by faculty for a number of purposes. SUNY System Administration, individual professional accrediting agencies, and Middle States require assessments that engage the division on the course level (student learning outcomes) and the programmatic level. Within SUNY’s guidelines for Gen Ed 2000 are assessment standards that each campus is required to address. The College has had an Institutional Assessment Plan since 1997, conducted workshops for faculty and support staff on assessment techniques, and created a broad-based faculty group--the Outcomes Assessment Task Force--to assist faculty with assessment and advise the divisional deans in the production of annual programmatic reports. The College has used data gleaned from assessment processes to improve teaching and learning, validate the effectiveness of the teaching-learning experience, and improve student services.

10. Ongoing institutional self-study and planning aimed at increasing the institution’s effectiveness

The College engaged in a SUNY-wide Mission Review process prior to this Middle States review. The SUNY process provided an opportunity for the College to review its initiatives based on its mission statement and the Comprehensive College Plan. Significantly too, the College began the Middle States reaccreditation process a year early so that the MSA
steering committee could analyze institutional initiatives, identify challenges to the College, and formulate recommendations to meet these challenges. The standing Strategic Planning Advisory Group recommends revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan, the most recent of which were based on the MSA Steering Committee’s recommendations. Planning occurs in all divisions of the College, and each has bodies and structures in place for successful planning.

11. **Financial resources sufficient to assure the quality and continuity of the institution’s programs and services**

The sharp decline in direct state aid over the last ten years has challenged the College to seek additional sources of funding, stabilize and enhance its enrollment, and use its resources efficiently and effectively. Through careful planning and strategic budget decisions, the College has been able to develop some budgetary reserves in all areas while maintaining and enhancing programs and services.

12. **Organization, administration, and governance which facilitate teaching, research, and learning and which foster their improvement within a framework of academic freedom**

The College’s organization and administration have fostered general improvements in the campus over the past ten years and specifically noteworthy improvements in the campus infrastructure, academic programs, and enrollment management areas. The College Senate—a representative body of faculty, support staff and administrators--allows for the free discussion of academic program initiatives and changes directly through its deliberations and indirectly through a network of standing committees that address different aspects of the institution. Faculty have many opportunities for development, and a College-funded student-faculty research grant program encourages students and faculty to work together on research.

13. **A governing board actively fulfilling its responsibilities of policy and resource development**

The SUNY Board of Trustees formulates policy for all campuses of the State University of New
I. Overview

York. Each unit of SUNY has a local College Council, which advises the president and provides local oversight of some College functions. The College has worked effectively with both bodies in developing campus policies and resources in the past ten years.

14. **Physical facilities that meet the needs of the institution’s programs and functions**

In recent years, the College has developed some of the finest facilities among the SUNY colleges, and they have enhanced the institution’s programs and functions. Several recent additions to the campus and infrastructure are noteworthy. The new Alumni Field House has enhanced the College’s athletic program, supported admissions and other services, and provided a central focal point for community activities in the College’s rural environment. Renovations have recently been completed on all of the campus dining and residential facilities. A new residence hall is planned for 2004 to address the changing residential demands of college students. A recent Academic Infrastructure Initiative has enhanced academic facilities, which have facilitated the development of innovative programs such as Computer Art and Music Industry. The Universal Computer Access for Students program has supported the use of technology from the development of electronic classrooms to the installation of computer labs in each residence hall and academic building.

15. **Honesty and accuracy in published materials and in public and media relations**

The College has substantially upgraded its publications in recent years. Both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs are reviewed, revised, and published on an annual basis. Admissions publications have won several national and regional awards. The College maintains a commitment to public service and has made sustained efforts to share faculty and student achievements with the media. In surveys of students and alumni, the College’s publications and communications have been favorably received.

16. **Responsiveness to the need for institutional change and renewal appropriate to**
institutional mission, goals and resources

The College has structures in place to review and revise its Comprehensive College Plan, which has been revised three times in the past five years. The addition of technology as a goal area is an excellent indication of the institution’s response to societal change. The College’s commitment to technology has helped to improve its academic programs and student services. The College’s pursuit of accreditation for many of its academic programs is further evidence of its continuing quest to advance its programs and improve the educational experience for students. The College’s choice to begin its MSA self-study process a year earlier and to implement recommendations from the process are further evidence of its responsiveness to the need for appropriate change.

F. Design of the Self-Study

The College at Oneonta chose to undertake a comprehensive self-study as described in the seventh edition of the MSA Designs for Excellence--Handbook for Institutional Self-Study. Recognizing that the College is well positioned for the future and among the last group of institutions to be reviewed under these guidelines, the Steering Committee believed that a comprehensive review provided an opportunity for a thorough and broad institutional examination of the College.

This self-study report presents an overview of the College, its structures, and its processes in the first four chapters. Descriptions and analyses of the College’s efforts to meet the seven goals of the Comprehensive College Plan are included as chapters V through XI. Chapters XII and XIII offer recommendations and conclusions derived from the self-study process. Illustrations of the College’s efforts to meet the expectations of the 16 Characteristics of Excellence are noted throughout this report. Appendices are included to support the self-study report, and additional documentation is available in the MSA Document Room. In most cases,
I. Overview

the data included in this report begins with the 1996-97 academic year to give a perspective of the College from the time at which it was preparing the previous Middle States Periodic Review Report. The data continues through the most current available, generally from 2001-02, the last complete academic year preceding this report. In instances where a longer-term perspective is necessary, such as enrollment trends, the data goes back to 1993.

G. Organization and Structure of the Self-Study

The College chose to initiate the MSA self-study process in the fall of 2000, well ahead of the customary time to begin a self-study when the campus visit is scheduled for March 2003. The additional time was designed to allow the College community to identify areas of institutional operation that could be strengthened, to recommend improvements, and to begin implementing those improvements, as described in Chapter XII of this report.

In late fall of 2000, 16 individuals, representing the broad constituencies of the College community, were selected to serve as members of the Middle States Steering Committee. The President’s charge to the group was as follows:

The Steering Committee will coordinate the preparation of the College’s MSA self-study for 2003. Its work will consist of organizing the self-study process, constructing the self-study report, and compiling information needed for the MSA visitation team.

The Steering Committee met initially on January 24, 2001, and with few exceptions, has continued to meet approximately every two weeks since that time. Dr. Armand La Potin, Professor of History, and Dr. Carolyn Haessig, Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics and Director of Graduate Studies, were named co-chairs. Additional members of the Committee (See “Acknowledgments” in this report) were selected to reflect the College’s four administrative divisions, the student body, and the extended College community.

The College’s four administrative divisions provided an over-arching organization for the
I. Overview

Steering Committee’s work. To facilitate a comprehensive self-study of all aspects of the College’s programs and initiatives in relation to the mission and goals, the Steering Committee established sub-groups to conduct research and analysis of particular areas. Two of the sub-groups, Academic Affairs and Finance and Administration, were further divided, resulting in the following six sub-groups:

- Intellectual Growth, Curriculum and Programs (Academic Affairs Division)
- Faculty Leadership and Governance (Academic Affairs Division)
- Student Development (Student Development Division)
- Institutional Resources (Finance and Administration Division)
- Human Resources (Finance and Administration Division)
- College Advancement (College Advancement Division)

A member of the Steering Committee chaired each sub-group. Chairs selected additional members, including students, for the sub-groups from the broader campus community for their expertise in particular areas.

Early in the self-study process, Nancy Wolters, Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support, organized the MSA Document Room as a repository for pertinent documents. Materials were added as committee members identified additional documents or reports that should be included in the analysis of College programs and initiatives. Additionally, many documents were made available to the Steering Committee members through a password-secured network drive on the College’s server. Many of the important surveys and campus reports used in the self-study are described in Section H of this chapter.

After the sub-groups were constituted, they began to identify individuals and groups from the broad campus constituency that could provide information about specific areas and functions of the College. The sub-groups elicited responses to a structured series of seven broad questions:

1. What major activities and initiatives have occurred in your CCP topic area in the last 5 years?

2. What evidence (data and other information) would demonstrate the effectiveness of these initiatives in contributing to the College’s mission and to the improvement in the (e.g., quality of
I. Overview

instruction offered to our students)?
   a. State the activity or initiative and the intended outcome
   b. What evidence would demonstrate that the intended outcome has been met?
   c. Specify
      i. Time period(s) of the activity or initiative you wish to analyze
      ii. Population selection (e.g., students enrolled in “X” course; students in “X” major; # of advisees by faculty/department)

3. Based upon your evidence in question #2, assess the effectiveness of current initiatives relative to (e.g., improving the quality of instruction).

4. What specific actions/initiatives are planned in this area for the next five years and, based upon what you have learned, why?

5. What additional questions should be asked and answered with regard to (e.g., the improvement in the quality of instruction)?

6. What additional questions should be asked and answered with regard to the MSA Characteristic(s) noted above?

7. List your recommendations in order of priority. These may include, for example, a change in evidence to determine effectiveness of initiatives; change in initiatives; change in the CCP and/or mission statement.

    Sub-group chairs contacted individuals and groups--such as program directors, faculty, support staff, and students--for information related to the seven questions. Many respondents provided valuable information, analysis, and documentation. To collect more responses, notably from those potential respondents who felt overwhelmed by multiple requests, the Steering Committee refined the information-gathering process by condensing the seven questions into four:

1. From your perspective what major activities and initiatives have occurred in the last five years related to the CCP topic area or MSA characteristic?

2. In your judgment, how well is each of these activities or initiatives accomplishing its goals?

3. What evidence would you utilize to demonstrate the effectiveness of these initiatives? (If no evidence exists, what is needed?)

4. What specific actions/initiatives are planned in this area for the next five years and why?

   Throughout the spring, summer and well into the fall of 2001, sub-groups worked
I. Overview

diligently to collect, summarize, and share with the Steering Committee qualitative and quantitative data, recommendations, and other information gathered from the broader College community. The recommendations from the broader campus community were particularly important to the sub-groups as they would form the basis of the recommendations made by the Steering Committee to the President’s Cabinet. Following the sub-group reports, a master list of several hundred unedited recommendations was culled from the Steering Committee minutes.

Next, Steering Committee members reviewed the unedited recommendations in teams. The teams evaluated and refined the recommendations based on the following set of questions:

1. What is the evidence that supports this recommendation?

2. Should this recommendation result in an addition to or change in the CCP -- or is it related to improving our processes of planning, budgeting, evaluation, and administration?
   a. If a change in the CCP is suggested, identify the section(s) where this might be considered?
   b. If it is process oriented, what processes should be targeted and why?

3. What is the rationale for the suggested recommendation and what benefits are anticipated?

4. How might the recommendation be worded so that it is focused and assignable for implementation rather than a vague generalization?

5. If the individual recommendation is part of a larger issue that could be used as a central theme with various sub-parts or examples to amplify and support the recommendation, identify these.

Following the work of the teams and discussion in the MSA Steering Committee, the list of several hundred potential recommendations was ultimately reduced to 16, which were submitted to the President and his Cabinet in December 2001 as recommended action items (See Appendix I I). In January 2002, the President and Cabinet met with the Steering Committee to discuss the recommendations. The President and Cabinet divided the recommendations into two groups: procedural recommendations that could be addressed through administrative actions and
I. Overview

CCP-related recommendations that would require changes to the Comprehensive College Plan. The recommendations were referred to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, which recommended revisions to the CCP based on the CCP-related recommendations. The recommendations were implemented, as discussed in Chapter XII of this report.

In the spring semester of 2002, the Steering Committee returned to its work in sub-groups to develop the self-study report. Sub-groups collected additional information and documentation related to their assigned areas. They developed lists of key points to be included in the chapters of the self-study report, and the key points were shared through the network drive and discussed by the Steering Committee as a whole.

The key points were revised following the discussion, and the revised key points were developed into annotated outlines that formed the basis of chapters V through XI of this self-study report. The annotated outlines were formulated based on the following structure:

1. On the first page, list the CCP goal and objective being addressed. Also list and number for ease of reference the key points—positive or negative—that should be made relative to each of the subgroup’s assigned CCP objectives.

2. On the next page, list the first key point and:
   a. List the major activities (on-going or new) and initiatives related to the discussion of each key point.
   b. Note the quantitative or qualitative data/existing documentation that provides evidence for the analysis of each key point.
   c. Note the analyses that provide evidence for effectiveness or need for improvement in each key point.
   d. Identify any information, data, and/or analysis (and the VP or upper-level administrator who could provide it) still needed in order to provide a full discussion of each key point.
   e. Identify any MSA characteristics addressed by each key point.
   f. What specific planned actions/initiatives (if any) are directly related to each key point (or, if not directly related to a key point, relate primarily to this CCP area)?

3. Identify by number and the first few words which of the 16 recommendations formulated on December 12 are related to the discussion of each key point (or, if not directly related to a key point, relate primarily to this CCP area).

4. Identify any additional key points (not covered in CCP objectives)—positive or negative—that
need to be made in relation to this CCP goal.

The outlines were shared on the network drive and reviewed by the Steering Committee. In the summer of 2002, the self-study report was drafted by the writing sub-group of the Steering Committee, which consisted of Mr. Mayer and Drs. La Potin, Haessig, and Freeman, with the assistance of other Steering Committee members. The self-study report was reviewed by Steering Committee members, and drafts were presented to the President in the late summer. Following extensive review, which included public hearings for the broader campus community, final revisions were made in the fall semester of 2002 to incorporate suggestions solicited during the review and to provide the most up-to-date data.

H. Significant Surveys and Reports

Some of the significant surveys and campus reports used in the self-study and housed in the MSA Document Room are briefly described here. [CE9]

The Student Opinion Survey, or SOS, (See Appendix VII F) is a SUNY-wide instrument modified from a design by the American College Testing Service (ACT) and administered to a random sample of students as identified by individual campuses. The SOS allows campuses to include a number of questions on issues unique or important to the particular campus. The survey measures students’ perceptions of college environment, climate, services, facilities, and other items. In regard to academics, it measures perceptions of such items as quality of instruction, accessibility of instructors, quality and availability of course offerings, contribution to intellectual growth, quality of academic advising, and quality of tutorial and library services. In regard to the quality of student life, the survey measures opinions of residential living, personal safety, health and food services, counseling and drug-abatement programs, social and cultural activities, financial aid services, and the physical environment of the campus.

The Student Opinion Survey is routinely administered every three years, but campuses
I. Overview

may conduct special administrations of the survey during other years. Following administrations of the survey in three-year intervals from 1994 to 2000, the College chose to administer the SOS in 2001 to determine student responses to a number of campus initiatives undertaken in the previous year. Results on the SOS are reported on a five-point Likert scale on which numerically small changes in the mean can be statistically significant. Because most questions on the SOS are standardized, campuses can benchmark themselves over time.

The College’s locally developed SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey (See Appendix VII G) provides data from the perspective of graduates who have entered the workforce or graduate school. The SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey was initiated in 1985 and initially administered every two years. Since 1993, the College has administered it annually to graduates in the fall semester approximately one year after their graduation. The survey collects data on demographic items, ratings of the College, graduate school and employment status, and personal development outcomes. The data is valuable to the College in measuring its progress over time.

The Division of College Advancement developed and administered a special 2001 Survey of Alumni for College Advancement (See Appendix III F) to help the division identify needs impacting programs, publications, budgeting, and staffing, and to provide evaluative information from alumni relative to the College’s image, services, programs, and events. The new survey was administered to a random sample of alumni stratified by decades. The survey results provided valuable information for the division’s assessment and planning processes.

The Division of Student Development initiated an annual six-week Freshman Satisfaction Survey (See Appendix VII D) in 1998. The survey provides valuable data about the adjustment of freshmen early in their first semester. Specifically, the survey generates data on students’ transitions to the College, their initial academic experiences, and their initial experiences with campus life.
I. Overview

Other surveys of students are administered by divisions, departments, and offices of the College for specific information relative to their functions. These surveys, and surveys of other groups such as faculty and staff, are discussed in appropriate places within the context of this self-study report.

Significant annual administrative reports range from those generated by faculty to note professional and institutional accomplishments (the Faculty Activities Report--See Appendix I J) to those submitted by chairs, program directors, divisional deans, associate vice presidents, and divisional vice presidents. The report of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs generally incorporates material from the reports of faculty, chairs, deans, and program directors. The reports of other divisional vice presidents generally incorporate material from the reports of support staff, program directors, and associate vice presidents.

As described in Chapter XII of this report, the College has adopted a revised format for administrative annual reports from all offices, units, and departments (See Appendix XII A). The format provides a consistent structure for the establishment and discussion of annual and long-term planning and emphasizes the relationship of goals of the office, unit, or department to the goals of the College.

Other reports articulate data on budgetary analysis from the Division of Finance and Administration, on admissions and retention from the Division of Student Development, and on enrollment trends by major in the Division of Academic Affairs.
II. State of the College

[Characteristics of Excellence #2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 14 are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

A. Profile of Faculty and Students

As teachers and scholars, the faculty of the College is dedicated to excellence in teaching and to guiding the growth of the individual student’s intellect and character. Through sound academic advisement, committed and responsive support services, many forums for student-faculty interaction and research, and experiential learning opportunities including internships and community service, the faculty and staff of the College help to provide the means and the guidance for each student to become a successful, productive member of society.

The College attracts students interested in both academic excellence and personal growth and development. To nurture the development of intellectual skills, leadership, social commitment, and sensitivity to other cultures, the College provides students with challenging academic programs, a strong student leadership program, experiential learning opportunities, and well-organized residential life, athletic, and extracurricular programs.

Among its 1,040 employees, the College employs 245 full-time faculty and 160 part-time faculty and currently maintains a student-faculty ratio of approximately 19 to 1. Over 70% of the full-time faculty hold terminal degrees. As a result of historical factors and strategic decisions, the College now has a blend of veteran and young faculty, having hired over 80 new faculty in the past three years. The veteran faculty includes 44 members who have been recognized by SUNY for their outstanding work: two SUNY Distinguished Service Professors, nine SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professors, 32 recipients of the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, and one recipient of the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Research and Creative Activities.
II. State of the College

The College’s 2002 student population of 5,728 includes 5,281 full-time and 197 part-time undergraduate students (including 73 international students currently enrolled in classes or practical training), as well as 61 full-time and 189 part-time graduate students. In geographical background, the largest percentage (20.6%) of the College’s students come from the surrounding eastern southern tier of New York State. Over 83% of the students come from the triangular region formed by Binghamton to the southwest, Albany to the northeast, and New York City/Long Island to the southeast. Approximately 60% of the enrollment is female, 11.6% minority, and 1.3% international. The fall 2002 profile of entering freshmen shows a mean SAT score of 1098 and a high-school GPA of 86.2. The entering class in the fall of 2002 included 1,087 freshmen and 576 transfer students. Among the undergraduate academic majors at the College (Appendix II A), the largest are Education (30% of 2002 graduates), Human Ecology (12%), and Business (11%).

B. Enrollment Trends

Enrollment at the College has fluctuated somewhat in the past ten years, but the College has consistently met its undergraduate enrollment targets. Total head-count enrollment of full and part-time undergraduate and graduate students has ranged from a low of 5,380 in fall 1998 to a high of 5,742 in fall 2001. Year-to-year variations in enrollment have been influenced by external factors, such as state budgets, and internal factors, such as number and quality of applications and retention rates. Appendix II B summarizes the College’s enrollment trends since 1993 with projections through 2006.

In the past ten years, full-time undergraduate enrollment has ranged from a low of 4,627 in 1993 to a high of 5,281 in 2002. Part-time undergraduate enrollment has ranged from a low of 196 in 2002 to a high of 488 in 1994. Full-time graduate enrollment has ranged from a low of 50 in 2000 to a high of 120 in 1993. Part-time graduate enrollment has ranged from a low of 190 in
II. State of the College


Headcount Enrollment by Student Level: Fall 1993-2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>All Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5281</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>5477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5254</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>5462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5126</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>5341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>4930</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>5148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>4755</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>5038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>4717</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>5036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>4756</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>5136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>4696</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>5108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>4831</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>5319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4627</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>5110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The College reached a low point in the cycle of recruiting first-year, first-time students in the fall 1993 semester when it enrolled 867 new freshmen. Stronger recruitment efforts increased the number of incoming freshmen in the following two years, but the academic profile of the freshman class and the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate continued to decline.
II. State of the College

In 1996, following extensive discussion among the involved constituencies and an evaluation of its admissions processes by an external evaluator, the College made the strategic decision to adopt an enrollment management model with the objectives of:

- generating more applications from potential freshmen,
- increasing selectivity in admission,
- improving the academic profile of the freshman class, and
- increasing the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate and ultimately the rate of retention to graduation.

The enrollment management model has been extremely successful for the College. Freshman applications for admission have increased from 6,413 for fall 1996 to 10,304 for fall 2002. Admissions selectivity also increased dramatically. In 1996, the College accepted 76.5% of freshman applicants. By 2002, the acceptance rate had dropped to 47.7%. Freshman applications and acceptance rates are illustrated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Fall)</th>
<th>Freshman Applications</th>
<th>Freshman Acceptance Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>10,304</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>9,278</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>8,340</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>8,491</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>7,247</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6,711</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>6,413</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean combined SAT score for enrolled freshmen increased from 997 in fall 1996 to
II. State of the College

1098 in fall 2002, while the mean high school average rose from 81.99 to 86.20 in the same span.

The table below illustrates the gains in the academic profile of freshman classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Fall)</th>
<th>Mean Combined SAT Score</th>
<th>Mean High School Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1098</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1060</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1046</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1018</td>
<td>83.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1015</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout this period, the yield rate for freshman, despite the dramatic increase in the academic profile of accepted students, has remained fairly constant, ranging from 20.4% to 23.6%.

It is noteworthy that the College chose, in its 2000 Memo of Understanding with SUNY (See Appendix II C), to set an objective of reaching SUNY’s category of “highly selective” in admissions. The state university defines “highly selective” through a selectivity matrix in which 60% of an institution’s incoming freshmen have a high school average of 85 or higher and combined SAT scores of 1100 or higher (See Appendix VI A). Specific initiatives and methods used to achieve the improvements in freshman admissions are discussed in greater detail in Chapter VI of this report.

Through a concurrent campus-wide focus on improving the quality of student life and
II. State of the College

learning, the College has also made substantial gains in its freshman-to-sophomore retention rate, a trend that will ultimately have a positive impact on the six-year graduation rate. The freshman-to-sophomore retention rate has increased from 60.6% in 1996 to 73.6% in 2002. Specific initiatives and methods used to achieve the improvements in retention are discussed in greater detail in Chapter VII of this report.

The College at Oneonta confers the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, Master of Science, and Master of Science in Education degree, as well as the Certificate of Advanced Study. Annually, the College awards degrees to approximately 1,150 graduates. In the past decade, the numbers of degrees awarded has ranged from a low of 1,119 in 2000 to a high of 1,237 in 1994.

Graduate students account for approximately 4.8% of the College’s total student population. Approximately 80% of the College’s graduate students are part-time students, largely teachers in local schools. More stringent graduate admissions requirements resulting from the College’s recent efforts to receive NCATE accreditation, program revisions necessitated by re-registration procedures for the State Education Department, changes in teacher certification requirements, and staffing shortages have combined to reduce graduate enrollment at the College in recent years.

To address this challenge, the College is engaged in the early stages of an effort to review the enrollment objectives for graduate education. A new Provost’s Task Force on Graduate Studies began work in fall 2002. Consistent with its Memo of Understanding with SUNY, the College is developing a plan for graduate studies, which includes identifying graduate programs with a potential to grow, analyzing and addressing staffing needs to support growing programs, evaluating graduate survey data to get more and better information for program development, and devising strategies to support graduate student persistence and retention. Perhaps most
II. State of the College

significantly, the College has incorporated the area of graduate studies into its Comprehensive College Plan in the 2002 revision.

C. Curricular Accomplishments

Decisions to create new academic programs or to eliminate or revise existing ones are predicated on analyses of market conditions and community needs; consistency with institutional mission and the Comprehensive College Plan, College staffing, and facilities resources; and professional accreditation guidelines, including assessment. Plans for curricular changes, additions, and deletions are typically formulated by faculty in academic departments in consultation with the academic deans. Once approved by the sponsoring academic department(s), changes are considered by the Curriculum Committee, a standing committee of the College Senate. The action recommended by the Curriculum Committee is considered and ultimately voted upon by the College Senate. The curricular changes acted upon by the College Senate since 1996 are summarized in Appendix II D.

In the past ten years, the College has introduced several new programs through this process. An analysis of market conditions led to a collaborative effort by the natural, physical, and social science faculties to introduce an Environmental Science interdisciplinary major in 1994. The major now has 60 matriculated students. The Music faculty, after conducting a needs assessment among prospective employers, introduced a unique and innovative Music Industry major in 1995, which now has 382 matriculated students. A major in Accounting and interdisciplinary majors in Adulthood and Aging and in Child and Family Studies were introduced in 1994 on the basis of evaluation of external market conditions, as was the Mass Communications major, which was introduced in 1998. Application for a major in Criminal Justice is pending.

Some programs were established or broadened to address the needs of regional
community college students. For example, the Adulthood and Aging and the Child and Family Studies majors are now offered in conjunction with Herkimer County Community College to allow a seamless entry of qualified students into the College at Oneonta.

The Comprehensive College Plan guides the College’s evaluation of all programs, which must be consistent with the goals and objectives of the plan [CE2]. For example, consistent with the College’s goal for technology, the Art Department created a Computer Art major in 2000 to foster creativity in the medium while preparing students for careers in high-demand fields such as computer animation, digital video, web design, and 3-D modeling.

In its recent hiring of faculty, the College has exercised flexibility in assigning positions to the areas of greatest need rather than to programs from which faculty had retired. Computer Art and Music Industry, for example, benefitted from the re-allocation. [CE5]

Recently, in an effort to attract and retain even more students with strong academic qualifications, the College redesigned its honors program. Several attempts have been made over the last ten years to create a meaningful and effective honors program. While the intent of the honors program has always been consistent with the College’s mission, honest differences developed over the design and implementation of the program. Resource allocation issues--such as release time for faculty, allocation of FTE’s, and coordination of faculty and staff roles and functions--often prevented the program from reaching its full potential.

After a careful review of the honors program in 2001, instructional and administrative staff in the Division of Academic Affairs formulated a proposal for a revised honors program. The proposal, which profited from broad faculty input and discussion in both the Committee on Instruction and the College Senate, was approved in spring 2002 and implemented in fall 2002 (See Appendix II E for a description of the honors program) [CE12]. The student-centered
II. State of the College

honors program seeks to provide “superior intellectual opportunities...not otherwise available for undergraduate students and usually grounded ‘in the arts and sciences/liberal studies’--often the ‘humanities’” [CE7]. The first class to enter the new honors program has an average high school GPA of 93.4 and an average combined SAT score of 1217. Two “honors only” sections of History and Philosophy courses were offered in fall 2002. With clear conceptual guidelines, broad-based faculty support, and thorough on-going administration, the new honors program supports the institutional mission and the Comprehensive College Plan’s goals for academic quality and retention.

Examination of market conditions, congruency with the Comprehensive College Plan, and institutional resource allocation analyses have also led to the elimination of some undergraduate academic majors within the past ten years, which has resulted in the more efficient use of faculty resources. Because of low enrollments, changes in state regulations, and/or identification of academic needs that could be met with companion programs, Bachelor of Arts degrees were eliminated in Chemistry Education 7-12, General Science Education N-9, German Education 9-12, Business Education, Biology (major continued to be offered as BS), Computer Science (major continued as BS), German, History (major continued as BS), and Meteorology (major continued as BS). Bachelor of Science degrees were eliminated in General Science Education N-9, German Education 7-12, and German. It should be noted here that the College allows students matriculated in any eliminated academic program six years to complete their major requirements.

Professional accrediting initiatives have influenced the development of curricular programs as well. To enhance and assure quality standards in programs, the College has applied for several external professional accreditations in specific disciplines. For example, following their extensive review in 1997, the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences
II. State of the College

(AAFCS) awarded continuing recognition to the College’s relevant programs in Human Ecology. Most significantly, after meeting its rigorous standards, the College received accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 2000. This accreditation will enhance the professional qualifications of the approximately 640 students who matriculate annually in the College’s Education programs by making them more competitive in the national market and addressing the increasingly important issues of quality in teacher training. In addition, the Division of Economics and Business is in candidacy for accreditation of its business and economics majors by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business--International (AACSB). These credentialing initiatives follow previously successful efforts of the foods and nutrition faculty of the Human Ecology Department to pursue American Dietetics Association (ADA) sanction of their major. Currently, approximately 47% of the College’s undergraduates are majoring in programs that have or are seeking professional accreditation. Other faculty, such as those in the Music Industry program, are exploring disciplinary professional accreditation as well.

The standards of these professional accreditations have been used as criteria to measure quality in all academic programs. Collectively, they require that instructors attain and demonstrate a high level of professional competence in their disciplines; that coursework be integrated, conceptual, incremental and rigorous; and that teaching faculty articulate clear and measurable learning outcomes and goals. In mandating these outcomes and goals, the accrediting agencies also provide criteria for assessing student learning and program accomplishments that are applicable to all academic majors and that address the requirements of Middle States, SUNY System Administration, and the New York State Education Department. [CE5]

In the area of graduate studies, program development has been most heavily influenced by professional accrediting initiatives. NCATE accreditation in particular, as well as requirements
II. State of the College

by the New York State Department of Education, led to the revision of all the College’s graduate Education programs. The College now offers graduate Education programs in Childhood Education (1-6), Literacy Education (Birth-6), Literacy Education (5-12), Literacy Education (Birth-12), School Counselor (K-12), and Adolescence Education (7-12), which replaced subject-specific programs such as Secondary English, Mathematics, and Science. A new master’s in Education--Family and Consumer Sciences Education has been approved by SUNY System Administration and the State Education Department. The first students enrolled in fall 2002.

The Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies, a unique and internationally recognized program, continues to attract well qualified, motivated students from all over the United States. Since 1964, more than 700 students have attended the program, many attaining national prominence in museum-related fields as directors, educators, curators, or programming specialists.

Several graduate programs have been withdrawn in the past ten years as a result of market conditions. These include Master of Arts degrees in Chemistry, English and History. College officials reallocated resources from these programs and funded new lines in graduate Education programs, consistent with NCATE regulations and the Comprehensive College Plan.

Three centers on campus have become increasingly important in enhancing the College’s academic programs in the past several years: the Center for Social Responsibility and Community, the Center for Multicultural Experiences, and the Center for Economic and Community Development.

In 1994, the College used a $1 million Kellogg Foundation grant to establish the Center for Social Responsibility and Community (CSRC). The Center uses a community-based model to develop a strong sense of social responsibility in students by coordinating opportunities for students to volunteer in the community and by working to establish service-learning as a part of
II. State of the College

the college curriculum. Service-learning is integrated into coursework in many different ways, such as through semester-long team projects with local non-profit agencies or through service in the residence life area. The CSRC also coordinates the College’s participation in the American Humanics program, through which students can earn a certificate in non-profit management. More than 20 students have enrolled in the American Humanics program in the past two years. Since 1995, the CSRC has also administered the College’s AmeriCorps program. [CE6]

In 1993, the College established the Center for Multicultural Experiences to provide social and academic support to students of color and international students. The Center promotes interaction among all members of the campus community, enhancing the appreciation of the heritage and traditions of many cultures. Through collaboration with faculty and student organizations, the Center has increased its variety of programs and enhanced programming for all ethnic groups. [CE6]

The Center for Economic and Community Development, established in 1990, serves as a community resource to link local businesses, agencies, and governments with the academic, research, and community-service facilities of the College. Many students earn internship or classroom credit through participation in the activities of the Center. The Center has conducted research and published reports such as “An Analysis and Assessment of the Planning Process of Delaware County,” “Economic Impact of the College at Oneonta and Its Affiliated Operations,” “Strategic Plan for Downtown Oneonta,” and “The Community-wide Dialogues on Poverty in Otsego County.”

Significantly, all three centers complement the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive College Plan, enhancing academic quality through experiential learning. The Center for Multicultural Experiences addresses pluralism in presenting programs that promote
II. State of the College

cross-cultural understanding. The Center for Social Responsibility and Community advances the goal of community, as its volunteer programs help to build collaboration in the best interests of the College. The Center for Economic and Community Development addresses the goal of image and tradition by building mutually beneficial relationships between the College and local communities, non-profit organizations, and businesses.

D. Fiscal Resources

The College’s financial state in the past ten years, which is summarized in Appendix II F, has been heavily influenced by three related factors. First, during much of the past decade, the SUNY system has been subject to declining levels of state support, having experienced over a dozen budget reductions in annual appropriations and mid-year reductions. Second, the College experienced a significant enrollment decline from 1992 to 1995. Following a relatively flat three-year period, enrollment has increased significantly since 1998, and the increase has been a major factor in the College’s current financial health. (Appendix II G illustrates the College’s AAFTE enrollment from 1992-93 through 2001-02 with estimates for 2002-03 and 2003-2004.) Third, the College’s annual appropriations for general operating expenses are highly enrollment dependent, based on the SUNY funding formula and in terms of the tuition revenue that is retained by the campus.

As a result of all these factors, the College’s core operating budget (consisting of state support, tuition revenue, and interest income) has been relatively flat during the past decade when adjusted for inflation. Inflation from 1992 to 2002, as measured by the Higher Education Price Index, has increased by an estimated 42%. During the same period, the College’s core budget has increased by only 28%. If the College’s budget had kept pace with inflation during the past decade, it would have reached $38.7 million by 2002-03 compared to the $35.2 million actual budget. The shortfall is $3.5 million or ten percent.
II. State of the College

While growth in the general operating budget, or core budget, has been modest, the College has increased its reliance on non-state revenues and managed in an all-funds budgeting strategy. While the core budget grew by $8 million during the past decade, tuition income accounted for $6.1 million of the increase, while state tax dollar support accounted for only $1.7 million of the increase. In contrast, income from residence hall operations, student fees and other income funds, as well as auxiliary activities, doubled during the decade and now represents nearly one-half of the College’s $65 million all-funds operating budget. From an all-funds perspective, the College’s current state tax dollar support of $14.7 million represents only 23% of its all-funds budget, as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Funds Budget: 2002-03 (in millions)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Tax Support</td>
<td>$14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Funds</td>
<td>$18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary Enterprises</td>
<td>$10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$64.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: Excludes fringe benefits and debt service budgeted separately)

A key element the College’s financial viability was the remarkable turnaround in enrollment management. Over the past five years, the College’s enrollment grew by 600 AAFTE students, or 12.6%, from 4,800 AAFTE in 1997-98 to 5,395 AAFTE in 2002-03. This enrollment performance has moved the College from a negative funding condition (or budget reductions) on the SUNY funding formula to one of modest, incremental growth.

Over the past five years, significant resources have been re-deployed to support institutional priorities, including student recruitment and retention initiatives, national accreditation of selected academic programs (e.g., Education and Business), instructional technology, enhancing the quality of student life, and facilities renewal and campus beautification. Over $60 million in new construction and capital improvements has been completed during the past five years. In addition, the College has invested over $1 million in
II. State of the College

operating funds for academic infrastructure improvements in the form of instructional and lab equipment, departmental computing, and minor renovations in support of the academic programs. [CE11]

In financial planning, the College relies on a relatively centralized but highly effective planning and budgeting system. In the late 1990s, the College updated its mission statement, and articulated a Comprehensive College Plan, which is reviewed and updated periodically. Each administrative division within the College maintains its respective goals and objectives, consistent with the plan. Resource priorities are reviewed and established by the President’s Cabinet. All faculty and professional vacancies are reviewed for potential reallocation. For the past several years, the College has generated salary savings from early retirement programs, which have enhanced financial flexibility and enabled it to meet changing academic and institutional demands. Over one-third of the College’s full-time faculty positions have turned over during the past three years, largely through retirements.

The College maintains multi-year projections of revenue and expenses and prospective balances for all income categories, the Core Operating Budget, IFRs, Auxiliary Enterprises and the College Foundation. Planning for facilities enhancements and capital improvements, campus technology, and academic program development is ongoing.

The College has also become more entrepreneurial. For example, a unique partnership with Cooperstown Baseball World, a national sports organization, completed its third season, with enhanced visibility and recruitment opportunities and a significant economic impact for the campus and the community. This five-year agreement will generate over $400,000 annually in facility rentals and dormitory and food service revenue. The agreement will fund $500,000 in athletic fields and grounds improvements. Further, the College recently negotiated a beverage agreement with $1.2 million in guaranteed commissions over five years, a significant return for a
II. State of the College

campus of this size. The Organization of Ancillary Services’ multi-year food-service contract with Sodexho Services guarantees a minimum of $1.6 million in annual net revenue for the College, as well as a capital investment in dining facilities.

Private support for the College has also grown in recent years. Since 1988, total assets of the College at Oneonta Foundation have increased ten-fold. The College now has over $17 million in endowed and unrestricted funds in the College Foundation, the SUNY Restricted Current Fund held at SUNY-Buffalo, and other trust funds. Income from these endowments, as well as direct support, now represents $1 million annually in scholarships, library support, academic enhancements, and related program support for the College.

External grants and contracts have also contributed to the College’s financial health. The College ranks second in the university colleges sector of SUNY in total Research Foundation gifts and grant expenditures. Total expenditures reached $4 million for 2001-02.

E. Improved Facilities

In the past ten years, the College has made enormous strides in improving facilities to support its goals in the Comprehensive College Plan. The most visible projects have been the construction of the Alumni Field House and the complete renovation of the Human Ecology Building. However, improvements in technological and campus infrastructure, academic facilities, and campus beautification have made substantial contributions to the College’s progress in achieving its goals. [CE14]

To identify and prioritize College-wide needs based on the input of many constituencies, the College established facilities planning focus groups in the areas of academic infrastructure, residence halls, technology, food and retail services, facilities and utilities, and athletics. With leadership from the Division of Finance and Administration and input from the broader campus community, the College developed a comprehensive five-year capital facilities plan in the 1990s
II. State of the College

that was updated annually. [CE10]

In 1998, when the governor announced a five-year capital budget proposal for SUNY, the College was well positioned to put forth an updated five-year campus capital plan (See Appendix II H) to fit within the governor’s proposal. By supplementing state funding with campus matching funds, the College has now been able to accomplish most of the facilities items detailed in the 1998 plan. [CE11]

The successful facilities planning process, whose student involvement helped to strengthen the sense of community on campus, has continued. Facilities planning groups annually review, assess, and modify the College’s long-term and short-term facilities plans. The College’s current five-year capital plan is attached as Appendix II I. [CE11]

Analyses of student survey results by the Divisions of Student Development and Finance and Administration have helped guide the College’s facilities planning in the area of student services. For example, because of students’ growing interest in on-campus housing, the College added a new residence hall to its capital facilities plans in 2000. The hall, scheduled to open in 2004, will offer apartment-style living quarters for students. In response to students’ desire for improved food-service facilities, dining facilities at the College have also been upgraded significantly with the support and cooperation of the Organization of Ancillary Services and Sodexho Campus Services, the College’s food-service provider. In the past five years, every dining facility on campus has been renovated, and several new ones have been added. [CE14]

Several recent facilities enhancements are worthy of note because of their impact upon multiple areas of the College and their advancement of several goals of the Comprehensive College Plan.

The Alumni Field House, for example, strengthens the College’s athletics program and
II. State of the College

provides opportunities for personal fitness and recreation. It also attracts students to the College as a result of their being on campus to participate in or attend sporting, entertainment, or cultural events. The presence of the field house supports the CCP goals of image and tradition as well as recruitment. Since its opening with a community benefit concert in 1999, the field house has grown increasingly important in the College’s public service efforts, hosting entertainment, athletic, and educational events for the community and the campus. Within a year of its dedication, the field house’s impact on the campus-community partnership was exemplified by a pledge of $300,000 from the Oneonta-based Dewar Foundation to provide endowment funding for community programs, special events, and activities.

The Alumni Field House further supports the goal of recruitment by contributing to the College’s success in admissions programs. In addition to being an attraction to students in itself, the field house now hosts the College’s admissions open houses. The availability of so large a venue has enabled the expansion of departmental presentations and the addition of several new student services fairs. [CE14]

Academic facilities at the College have undergone significant improvements in the past several years. The largest and most visible project, a complete renovation of the Human Ecology Building now underway, will offer students new labs for computer-assisted design, chemistry, and food preparation as well as a new gallery and textile-design spaces. In response to the popularity of the Music Industry program, the College recently opened a unique music recording studio with tunable walls, the only teaching facility of its kind in the world to offer this state-of-the-art technology to students in the performing arts. [CE14]

Many of the enhancements to academic facilities are evidence of the College’s commitment to educational technology, as discussed in Chapter IX of this report. One example
is notable because it facilitated the development of a new major. The Computer Art Lab in the Fine Arts Building, which began as a small lab in the 1980s, has been developed into a state-of-the-art facility. In 1999, the lab was expanded to 33 stations equipped with cutting-edge technology, including Power Macintosh computers with flat-screen monitors and read-write DVD drives. Other equipment includes a 3-D scanner, 3-D milling device for printing, and a large-format 36" color printer. As interest and course offerings expanded, the College introduced a minor in Computer Art in 1991 and continued to offer Computer Art as a concentration in the Art major. In 2002, the College received approval to begin offering Computer Art as its newest undergraduate major. The major prepares students for careers in high-demand fields such as computer animation, digital video, web design, and 3-D modeling. The College is one of only two SUNY colleges to offer a major in Computer Art. [CE14]

**F. Foundation Enhancements**

The College is fortunate to have an active alumni, community, and institutional constituency committed to advancing its mission. The Division of College Advancement helps to strengthen the College’s bonds with the community, alumni, faculty, staff, and students.

The volunteer College Foundation Board of Directors raises, manages, and administers charitable gifts and grants to the College. The Board manages the College’s endowment of over $17 million, the second highest in the SUNY university colleges sector. Appendix II J illustrates the growth of the College’s endowment in recent years. The endowment generates funds for scholarships, faculty/student research, campus improvements, and other programs that enhance and strengthen the College. Funds are also allocated for College events that celebrate academic excellence and lectureships that bring prominent speakers to campus. [CE11]
III. Outcomes Assessment

[Characteristics of Excellence #6 and 9 are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

A. Context of Outcomes Assessment

The College has used the goals of its Comprehensive College Plan (CCP) (included as Appendix I E) as a basis for translating its mission into action in seven fundamental areas--Academic Quality, Admissions Selectivity, Retention, Pluralism, Technology, Community, and Image and Tradition. Additionally, the eight areas noted in the College's Institutional Assessment Plan (Appendix I F)--Academic Majors, General Education, Student Development, Information Literacy, Basic Skills, Student Services, Human Resources, and Facilities--have served as focal points for organizing the College's assessment activities.

The College considers outcomes assessment as a cyclical process that includes using instruments to measure attainment of goals. Data derived from the use of these instruments forms the basis for further enhancing efforts or validating the attainment of goals.

Personnel in each of the College's four administrative divisions--Academic Affairs, Student Development, Finance and Administration, and College Advancement--have used outcomes assessment to document compliance with various SUNY System Administration directives and other regulatory requirements, such as those put forth by Middle States; to determine progress toward mission statement goals and CCP objectives; to enhance student learning; and to determine the effectiveness of services for students. College personnel in all administrative units have made progress in attaining goals and identifying the need to revise or add goals through the use of outcomes assessment.
Some of these broad applications of outcomes assessment to meet SUNY requirements and determine progress toward attainment of College and/or divisional goals are described in this chapter. The applications of outcomes assessment by faculty specifically for the improvement of teaching and learning are discussed in Chapter V of this report.

**B. Outcomes Assessment in Academic Affairs**

The Division of Academic Affairs is responsible for planning, coordinating, staffing, delivering, and evaluating the College’s undergraduate and graduate programs and supporting courses. In order to accomplish this important and complex responsibility, the deans of the two over-arching academic divisions--Science and Social Science and Behavioral and Applied Sciences--in concert with the chairs of the academic departments recruit, orient, and support a diverse faculty; provide for on-going faculty development; and secure and disseminate library and learning resources and services. The division also provides and/or contributes to the College’s comprehensive services that support the educational, career, and personal needs of students.

Some of the assessment requirements for this division include those related to the SUNY-wide General Education established in the fall of 2000 and the more recent SUNY assessment of academic programs begun in summer of 2001. Other assessment activities and reports are specifically formulated as a result of multiple external requirements from various other accrediting agencies, such as the Middle States Association, the New York State Education Department, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. Additional assessment activities and reports have been developed to assess the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive
III. Outcomes Assessment

College Plan and to meet internal requirements of the various support units in the division--Milne Library, the Registrar’s Office, Academic Information Technology Services, Academic Support Services, the Center for Social Responsibility and Community, and the International Education Office. Faculty and staff have undertaken outcomes assessment and begun to use the results effectively for improvement, though progress has, at times, been slow or uneven.

The assessment expectations related to SUNY’s requirements for assessment of the General Education requirements and academic programs will be discussed in this chapter. Two examples of outcomes assessment in the student services areas of Academic Affairs--one from the Registrar’s Office and the other from Academic Information Technology Services--will be discussed also. An overview of how assessment is integrated into planning and budgeting can be found in Chapter IV of this report, and information regarding Milne Library and outcomes assessment in that area can be found in Chapter V, Section C.

1. SUNY’s Requirements for Assessment--General Education

As noted on the “Timeline of SUNY and SED Assessment Initiatives/Requirements and College Responses” (See Appendix III G), SUNY System Administration has issued a series of assessment requirements over the past several years. In December 1998, the State University Board of Trustees adopted specific General Education requirements applicable to all state-operated institutions of the State University. The new General Education requirements became effective for students entering any of SUNY’s 64 campuses in or after fall of 2000. In 1999, the SUNY Provost established SUNY’s General Education Requirements (SUNY GER) and two Provost’s Advisory Task Forces to oversee the implementation and approval of courses for SUNY GER on individual campuses and to oversee the subsequent assessment of the SUNY
III. Outcomes Assessment

student learning outcomes (SLOs) and majors and programs. The new centralized requirements impacted curricula and many campus academic operations. The SUNY GER includes

> 30 credit hours including three credit hours of SUNY System approved course work in each of the following ten subjects areas—mathematics, natural science, social science, American history, Western civilization, other world civilizations, humanities and the arts, foreign languages, and basic communication
> 10 specific student learning outcomes
> two learning competencies--information management and critical thinking (reasoning), and
> that all current and planned courses utilized to fulfill SUNY GER be sent to Albany and approved by a central committee—the Provost’s Advisory Committee on General Education (PACGE). [CE6]

The two SUNY System Administration task forces—the Provost’s Advisory Council on General Education (PACGE) and General Education Assessment Review (GEAR) group—appear to be permanent oversight bodies. The PACGE, or the Advisory Council on General Education (ACGE) as it is called currently, reviews campus requests for changes to the listing of courses that students may take to fulfill the SUNY GER. The GEAR group’s initial goal was to work with campuses as they developed their campus-based plans for assessing the SUNY SLOs, following the guidelines prepared by PACGE.

As required, in the early spring of 2000, the College submitted 286 course syllabi from 24 departments for review by PACGE, and 268 courses (93.7%) were approved for what is known on campus as the College’s initial “Gen Ed 2000.” Seven additional courses were approved in February of 2002. Future changes that the College wishes to make to the list of courses must first be approved by PACGE.

On an on-going basis, GEAR receives and critiques all campus General Education assessment plans for assessing the SUNY General Education Requirement. GEAR approves those that it determines meet the criteria that it has established. [CE9]
III. Outcomes Assessment

After considerable discussion with academic department chairs during 2000-01, the College’s two academic deans determined that the assessment of student learning with regard to Gen Ed 2000 would best be accomplished and documented by faculty for their individual courses using the “SUNY General Education 2000 Course Assessment” form that the College had devised. This plan used the framework originally developed by the College’s Institutional Assessment Plan. In order to meet the SUNY System Administration expectations available at that time, faculty teaching Gen Ed 2000 courses were asked, beginning with the spring 2001 semester, to respond to the following four questions:

1. How does your course address the SUNY Learning Outcome? (A syllabus is to be attached as supporting material)
2. How do you assess the extent to which students have attained this SUNY Learning Outcome?
3. What were the assessment results?
4. Based on your assessment of student learning, describe any changes you may have made or expect to make in your course design and/or teaching methods and indicate the reason(s). [CE9]

Because the provost and divisional deans believe that maintaining the traditional academic leadership role of department chairs was important to the campus, chairs were asked to provide the initial review of course syllabi for department faculty teaching Gen Ed 2000 courses. In addition, each year a randomly generated list of 20% of all general education sections taught for each subject category would be used as an “assessment sampling” for a review by the deans. The College’s first assessment of Gen Ed 2000 occurred at the end of the spring 2001 semester, and the deans noted the following patterns prevalent among the course assessments that they reviewed:

> Course expectations for learning generally reflected multiple SLOs.
> Faculty used assessment instruments that were general in nature, making it difficult to determine what learning occurred related to specific SLOs.
> Course syllabi indicated that the intent of each SLO was being addressed, although
III. Outcomes Assessment

assessment of the SLO was often only indirectly stated and evaluated.
> Faculty used, as assessment instruments, tests/exams with multiple imbedded SLOs, making it difficult to document knowledge acquired relative to each specific SLO.
> Instructional processes were appropriate to the teaching and learning of designated SLOs; however, the performance indicators had not been used.
> Assessment processes often lacked specificity.
> Assessment processes often were not comprehensive enough to address the SLO thoroughly.
> Some faculty relied too much on the final grade as an outcomes assessment measure.

Grades typically reflect overall performance rather than the evaluation of specific SLOs.

[CE9]

Having begun assessing the Gen Ed 2000 in the spring of 2001 as a matter of common institutional practice, the College had planned to continue to follow indefinitely its own process. However, in March of 2002 while reviewing the College’s plan for assessing the Gen Ed 2000, GEAR determined that additional, more specific information about the College’s assessment of SUNY GER would need to be submitted. Accordingly, the College submitted a revised plan for the assessment of SUNY GER/Gen Ed 2000 that combined some of the features of the College’s original plan with far greater specificity of the assessment instruments to be used--a GEAR expectation. On May 7, 2002, GEAR approved the College’s new plan, with its different focus and far more detailed chart for reportage (See Appendix III A) [CE9]. Subsequently, for the fall 2002 semester, the College took the steps necessary to report the assessment of student learning with regard to Gen Ed 2000.

The College’s faculty who are teaching Gen Ed 2000 course sections during the fall of 2002 have been instructed to use the format approved by GEAR in May of this year. The 20% sample has been drawn and those instructors notified that the divisional deans also will be reviewing their reports. [CE9]

2. SUNY’s Requirements for Assessment--Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes in the Major--Summary Report
III. Outcomes Assessment

Concurrent with the requirements for assessment of Gen Ed 2000, SUNY System Administration began requiring that all SUNY campuses establish a schedule for the assessment of student learning outcomes in their undergraduate academic majors over a seven-year period extending from 2001-02 to 2007-08. [CE9]

The College submitted its first SUNY System Administration required summary reports in June 2002 according to the established “SUNY Implementation Guidelines”:

> Programs should include measures of student learning outcomes in their plans;
> Programs should seek review of their final assessment report by an external review team, including a campus visit and report to the chief academic officer; and,
> Programs should include in their plans some strategy for measuring change in students' knowledge and skill.

The College’s assessment schedule, showing which seven of 49 programs are to be evaluated each year, has been submitted to SUNY System Administration (See Appendix III B). The programs reviewed during 2001-02 were Accounting, Business Economics, Economics, Early Childhood Education, Childhood Education (K-6), Early Childhood/Childhood Education, and Adolescence Education-Biology. External reviewers submitted their reports in a timely fashion, and all summary program reports (See Appendix III C) were submitted to SUNY System Administration on schedule. As of this writing, the College awaits a response from SUNY System Administration. [CE9]

Some of the major findings of this assessment as reported by the external reviewers are as follows:

**Accounting**
Seven of 21 repeat candidates with advanced degrees passed the entire uniform CPA exam in May 1999. (33.3% compared with the NY average of 33.4%) Eight of 21 repeat candidates without advanced degrees passed the entire uniform CPS exam in November 1998 (38.1% compared with the NY average of 33.5%) Poorer perceptions on the EBI/AACSB survey are a concern that accounting faculty must address in the coming academic year and compare the results of the pending 2001 EBI/AACSB survey.
III. Outcomes Assessment

**Economics**
The 2000 EBI/AACSB Survey indicated that the opinion of the quality of teaching of Business Economics in the required coursework was first among seven benchmark institutions...This is a continuation of an extraordinarily strong performance on this component of assessment.

Students were required to make weekly analytical oral presentations in ECON 390 Senior Seminar. Qualitative assessment by faculty indicates improvement in skills. However, skills are not at a desirable level upon entry to the Seminar. Presentation skills were weaker than expected this year.

**Business Economics**
On 2000 AACSB/EBI Survey revealed: continued possible weak foundations courses in Business; high satisfaction with Finance instruction; much improvement in satisfaction with quality of teaching in Human Resources Management. Educational Testing Service Field Examination in Business was administered to Fall 2000 MGMT 345 Strategic Management. When benchmarked against the previous year’s data...scores were on par with the nationwide averages.

**Childhood Education (Grade 1-6)**
The learning outcomes for the Childhood Education Program (Grades 1-6) are consistent and aligned with the unit's Conceptual Framework (CF). These outcomes reflect the major themes or goals in the CF and are designed to insure that education candidates have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be effective teachers in elementary school settings. Major assessment instruments such as portfolios and student teaching evaluation forms are not currently aligned with the CF and the major learning outcomes. Aligning these assessments with major objectives and rubrics will provide good tools for the program to determine if candidates are meeting program goals.

**Early Childhood Education (Birth-Grade 2)**
Adequate measures are used to assess candidate performance as an effective communicator through writing, speaking, listening, and technology. In the areas of integration of technology and students utilizing a variety of assessment techniques, some suggestions were made to assure that evidence was documented systematically in order to demonstrate how they are measuring students’ understanding of these two critical teaching components.

**Early Childhood Education/Childhood Education (Birth-Grade 6)**
Adequate measures are used to assess candidate’s ability to demonstrate knowledge of and respect for diversity. Adequate measures are used to assess candidate’s ability to demonstrate the role of transformation leader.

3. State Education Department’s Quality Assurance Initiative

In addition to the SUNY System Administration requirements, in 2001 the New York State Education Department’s Office of Higher Education (SED) amended Part 52 of the
III. Outcomes Assessment

Regulations of the Commissioner of Education to effect the implementation of its own “Quality Assurance Initiative” (See Appendix III D). At this time, it is uncertain whether SED will accept the assessment guidelines promulgated by SUNY System Administration, those of professional specialized accreditors, and/or Middle States. [CE9]

4. Examples of Outcomes Assessment in Attainment of Academic Affairs
Divisional Planning, Staffing, and Budgeting Goals

In the past decade, faculty have engaged in diverse planning and assessment processes related to the development of new majors, new minors, or significant revisions to existing majors or minors. Every department has been charged with identifying student learning outcomes, assessing those outcomes, and using the results constructively to improve its programs. (A discussion of the impact of assessment on student learning is provided in Chapter V of this report). The examples that follow illustrate assessment efforts undertaken in the broader context of planning and resource allocation, which ultimately impacts teaching and learning. Since the three large programs in the Division of Behavioral and Applied Sciences--Education, Economics and Business, and Human Ecology--either have or are in the final stages of applying for specialized professional accreditation that requires comprehensive assessment of all aspects of the program--including teaching and learning--and the uses of those results for continuous program improvement, the examples below are from the Division of Science and Social Science.

Anthropology

In planning its curricular offerings during the last decade the Anthropology Department has considered graduate school and job market trends for its majors and consequently shifted available faculty expertise through retirements or resignations and replacements. Originally, in addition to covering the usual subfields of Anthropology, the Department provided two tracks
III. Outcomes Assessment

within its major program of study: a traditional preparation and a preparation incorporating practical experiences through an applied track. Anticipating retirements/resignations of two key faculty during the late 1990s—a cultural anthropologist and an archeologist—the Department planned to drop its applied track while maintaining its strength in cultural anthropology and reinvigorating its offerings in archeology. The latter was planned through the addition of a cultural anthropologist albeit with different focus than the predecessor and an archeologist with relevant projects. This provides the opportunity for development of an archeology summer field school and currently is under investigation for implementation by a new archeologist hired during the Spring 2002 Semester.

The Anthropology Department determined that more attention was needed to theoretical issues in cultural anthropology. Cultural anthropology faculty discussed course goals and organization and made changes to increase commonality in the courses. The department also determined that more attention was needed to the history of anthropology in upper-division courses. Faculty incorporated components of the history of anthropology into several courses, notably the department’s capstone course. The assessment also determined that students were interested in having more upper-division courses offered in a seminar format. In response to the student interest, the department began offering more seminar-format courses.

Biology

During the last ten years, the Biology Department has engaged in a systematic assessment process of its course offerings ranging from the General Education to its major. At the General Education level the Department systematically planned and then successfully re sequenced and coordinated the topics in its introductory courses to connect better with needs of some of the Education Department’s majors as well as its own majors while maintaining comprehensive coverage for students taking the courses as electives or for General Education. A key component
III. Outcomes Assessment

of this is inclusion of human biological characteristics for Biology and Education majors.

Another planned strategy was transition of selected courses from three semester hours to four semester hours. Additionally, during this period the Department planned and instituted specific course offerings in Human Anatomy and Physiology in support of its own major and the Human Biology major for students specifically wishing to pursue medical related careers. The Human Biology program is a strategically designed initiative planned in cooperation with the Department of Anthropology.

Chemistry

In assessing trends in chemistry departments’ curricula, patterns in local numbers of chemistry majors, and local student interests, during the 2000-2001 Academic Year the Oneonta Chemistry faculty chose to design a new track under the aegis of the Chemistry major. This is a biochemistry track complementing the existing Chemistry major with adjustments in the upper level physical chemistry and organic chemistry requirements. The plan is to attract students who otherwise might not opt for a major within the Chemistry Department and to provide an alternative for existing majors who might wish to switch from the existing program to the new alternative. This increases the options for graduates’ entries into the job market and into graduate school. The biochemistry track has been approved by the College, SUNY Systems Administration, and the State Education Department.

English

In recent years, curricular assessment and planning within the English Department primarily has focused on being able to meet the student demands for Composition sections created by the SUNY Board of Trustees-established General Education. This has dictated a substantial increase of total sections and influx of adjunct faculty with attendant challenges of outcomes and quality control across these sections. Through internal discussions, the Department
III. Outcomes Assessment

has established curricular standards/outcomes for Composition and has put in place a consultative faculty process to monitor this across sections. Additionally, during the most recent five years, two planning processes in English have addressed the major. The first deals with the need for more curricular breadth and multiculturalism in the offerings. Consequently, the Department sought a new tenure track hire which was approved by the campus administration and resulted in a new hire and the introduction of two new WLIT courses to the curriculum. For personal reasons this hire did not choose to remain at the institution but a tenure track replacement was hired seeking to maintain this curricular breadth. The second dealt with a plan to increase emphasis on environmental literature which already existed as a faculty focus within the Department. This too resulted in a request for a new tenure track hire which also was approved by the campus administration and resulted in a successful search. Planning discussions at the faculty-chair/director-dean level are ongoing concerning that new individual’s potential roles connected to environmentalist literature not only within the English program but also within the Environmental Sciences major.

Based on its 2000-01 assessment, the English Department implemented pre- and post-testing of basic editing skills in several Composition 100 sections in order to determine student needs. The department now reviews all Composition 100 syllabi each term to ensure that they address the student needs. The department is also developing an instrument to obtain data on student perceptions of their educational experiences in Composition 100. Data will be used to effect changes as needed.

Environmental Sciences

In the early 1990s the Science Departments’ Chairs and the Geography Chair worked with the divisional dean to assess the possibility of introducing a new science major unlike any other then in existence on the campus. Recognizing the increasing societal and economic need
III. Outcomes Assessment

for environmentally trained individuals who understand the relevant science and have broad preparation, the group developed an interdisciplinary Environmental Sciences major. Existing pertinent science courses were drawn together and two new team-taught introductory courses were added. In addition, a capstone experience, in the form of a senior thesis or an off-campus internship, was included. This program specifically arose through an assessment of off and on-campus needs including a recognition that students attracted to such an interdisciplinary experience might not otherwise choose to major in science. The curriculum was designed via a track approach during the middle undergraduate years. One track was housed in Biology, another was housed in Earth Sciences, and the third (Environmental Planning) was housed in Geography. These tracks not only were designed to include department courses but also relevant courses in other areas such as technical writing and statistics. Once instituted, the curriculum repeatedly was assessed resulting in a clear recognition that the team-taught courses are proving problematic for faculty and students. As a result, recently the Environmental Sciences Director, the Dean, and the Environmental Sciences Chairs have been in wide ranging discussions about curricular modifications--including adjustments to the early courses and enhancement of the interdisciplinary flavor of the program.

When originally introduced nearly ten years ago, the Environmental Sciences major had three interdisciplinary tracks housed within two science departments and one social sciences department. As the program matured and as post graduation opportunities evolved, the Chemistry Department assessed the logic and local demand for a Chemistry track under this major. Consultation took place with the Dean’s Office, the Director of Environmental Sciences, and the Environmental Science Chairs (from the ENVS-participating departments). The resulting plan for a new track drew upon existing courses--primarily chemistry offerings--to minimize resource demands and was locally approved during the 2000-2001 academic year. SUNY Systems
III. Outcomes Assessment

Administration and SED approval was secured early in the 2001-2002 academic year and the new track now has been implemented.

Foreign Languages and Literatures

Through its assessment processes, the department significantly revised and realigned its course offerings to address even better the national standards and expectations of the discipline’s governing body--the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and meet the SUNY requirement for a foreign language requirement in the Gen Ed 2000. Particularly noteworthy in this process were the reinvigoration of the SILP (Self-Instructional Language Program) permitting increased breadth of available languages beyond the department’s traditional strengths in Spanish, French, German, Hebrew, and American Sign Language and the creation of a modern Languages Laboratory facility on campus. The latter replaced a facility utilizing 1960s instructional technology with one using digitally-based state of the art technology paralleling capabilities at key colleges known for their language programs such as Middlebury College. This facility now has been aggressively incorporated into the curriculum--particularly into the French program. The assessment process also has identified the desirability of including another language (Italian) more systematically into the curriculum if future resources permit. Related planning is underway at the departmental and divisional levels.

5. Examples of Outcomes Assessment in Student Services Units of Academic Affairs

Six years ago, the Registrar’s Office surveyed students, faculty, and staff as part of the Academic Affairs assessment process. Student concerns included availability of courses at convenient times, notification of holds (outstanding financial obligations that prevent registration), and registration and add/drop procedures.

Although course availability will not likely disappear from students’ agendas, the College
III. Outcomes Assessment

has taken positive steps to mitigate these concerns. Class time patterns were changed to more conventional MWF/TTh schedules. Each academic department has been directed to schedule classes utilizing all time patterns. With the introduction of web services, students may check the availability of courses prior to their registration appointment times. Notifications of holds are distributed by mail three weeks prior to registration and again three days prior to registration. In addition, students are able to view existing holds via the web at any time. With web registration, there are no waiting lines. Students may register from anywhere with Internet access. Students no longer need to obtain instructors’ signatures to add open courses or to drop courses within prescribed deadlines. Additional improvements based on survey results have included a comprehensive Registrar’s web page containing academic policies, deadlines, instructions for registration, transcript requests and graduation information. There are also links to the Writing Center and to Study Skills web sites. Web services also provide students with access to their interim progress reports, final grades, academic standing, and degree audit.

In survey responses, faculty dissatisfaction focused primarily on the lack of technology to accomplish administrative tasks. The College has progressed from sending class rosters electronically on request to offering a new faculty web services product through which all faculty may assign interim progress and final grades via the web. In addition to web grading, faculty may access student addresses and phone numbers, download e-mail addresses of their students, check enrollments, and access the academic records of student advisees.

A follow-up survey is in development to ascertain how the Registrar’s Office might be even more effective in service delivery.

In preparation for implementing its Universal Computer Access for Students program (UnCAS, as described in Chapter IX of this report), the College contracted with the Coopers and Lybrand consulting firm to study the College’s technology services in the spring of 1998.
III. Outcomes Assessment

their report, Coopers and Lybrand interviewed faculty, students, and staff; benchmarked five comparable institutions with similar computing programs; and researched best practices for technology support at a variety of campuses.

The consultant recommended that all computer services supporting faculty and students be consolidated under Academic Affairs and that technology infrastructure and the level of service to both students and faculty be improved. To accomplish the level of student and faculty support necessary to implement the UnCAS initiative, the College integrated the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center, computing services for students and faculty, and classroom support services into a new organization called Academic Information Technology Services, which reported to the Provost through the newly appointed Associate Provost for Library and Information Services.

Based on staffing levels at similar institutions and recommendations by the consultant, the College implemented a staffing plan to provide sufficient support personnel. As suggested by Coopers and Lybrand, the College encourages faculty to apply for updated computer equipment regularly, and the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center provides faculty support and training.

Desktop support for both faculty and students now is channeled through a College-wide Information Technology Help Desk, assisted by a professional software application, as recommended in the consultant’s report. Help Desk hours have recently been expanded to provide professional support during evening hours.

Progress has also been made on the consultant’s other recommendations to improve support for student computing. Every residence hall has now been wired, and each contains a computer lab open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Each residence hall now has a live-in technical support person to assist in troubleshooting, equipment configuration and connection to
III. Outcomes Assessment

the campus network; to provide training in the use of technology; and to manage the residence
hall computer labs.

Improving the technology infrastructure has been a high priority for the College, as
recommended by the consultant, and the College now offers the greatest bandwidth to the
Internet of any of the university colleges. The campus network, other components of the
enhanced infrastructure, and on-going efforts to assess technology are discussed in greater detail
in Chapter IX of this report. Because of its significant commitment to educational technology,
the College has elevated the continuing assessment of educational technology to the level of an
objective in the Comprehensive College Plan.

C. Outcomes Assessment in Student Development

The Division of Student Development serves current students through offices and
programs including Academic Advisement and Orientation, Admissions, Athletics, Career
Development, Center for Multicultural Experiences, Counseling Center, Educational Opportunity
Program, Financial Aid, First Year Experiences, Health and Wellness Center, Hunt College
Union (which includes Greek Life and Student Activities), Judicial Affairs, Office of
Multicultural Student Affairs, Residential and Community Life, Student Disability Services,
Student Employment, and University Police.

One focus of assessment in the division is assessing the effectiveness of and student
satisfaction with the services that are provided within the division. This is achieved through
program-specific instruments such as the Residence Life Quality of Life Survey, the Health
Center Satisfaction Survey, Financial Aid Customer Service Survey, Counseling Center Quality
of Service Survey, and the EOP Student Perception Survey.

In addition, the division oversees the administration and analysis of several campus-wide
surveys. These include the Student Opinion Survey, which is used throughout the SUNY system;
the College Student Experience Questionnaire (first administered at the College in spring 1999); the Withdrawal/Non-returning Student Survey; the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey; the CORE; the National College Health Assessment, which is generated through the American College Health Association; and the College Student Needs Assessment Survey (first administered in summer 2002). Copies of the instruments are available in the MSA Document Room.

In 1997, the division engaged in a process to identify additional personal development outcomes that reflect its mission and that are consistent with the College mission. Many of these outcomes are addressed in the division’s assessment instruments.

The division has an established planning and assessment process, revised in 1998, that begins with each unit’s developing plans and goals related to the division’s annual report, which includes the most recent outcomes assessment results. All unit managers then consider these plans and goals during a planning retreat each June. Additionally, division-wide issues that were identified the previous June are reviewed during the retreat, and a consensus-building process is used to identify issues for the next year.

To link its planning more closely to the College’s planning process, the division has adopted a revised planning model that includes consideration of the CCP and that continues to focus unit goals on quality improvement. Consequently, assessment efforts related to student outcomes are especially important in addressing College goals. For example, the Counseling Center plans to review and upgrade clinical protocols to assure high standards of care and student safety, which addresses the CCP goal of retention. In support of the CCP goal of image and tradition, the Career Development Center plans to organize, implement, and evaluate “Partners,” a customer-service training program for work-study students.

Three examples illustrate the typical program assessment process in the Division of Student Development. The cycle includes assessment of outcomes and/or satisfaction, planning,
III. Outcomes Assessment

implementation of initiatives, and follow-up assessment of divisional goals.

1. Hunt College Union

In the 1994 and 1997 administrations of the Student Opinion Survey, seven items that addressed issues including college social activities, cultural programs, student union/campus center, and student government had relatively low ratings and showed little or no improvement in scores from one test administration to the next. In fact, some of the mean scores had declined. Student Development staff identified this as a significant cluster of issues to be addressed and focused on the Hunt College Union as a physical facility and as a center of student organizations. The Future of the Hunt Union Task Force, composed of representatives from the student government, staff, and faculty, was created in the fall of 1999. The task force was charged to examine current uses of the Hunt Union with respect to student needs and facility development across the campus; identify and study regional college unions on campuses with similar demographics and locations; and make recommendations for changes including, but not limited to, relocating campus services, developing new facilities, and identifying needed renovations.

The task force’s report in fall 1999 included preliminary recommendations with regard to improving food services, adding retail and specialty services, expanding late-night programming, scheduling classes in the Union, and relocating student service offices to the Union.

One response to the task force report was to act on some of the programming recommendations that were not related to physical changes within the Hunt Union. For example, in spring 2000, a full-time staff member was hired to develop late-night programming and to oversee the Greek social organizations. Classes were also scheduled into Hunt Union space.

Another response by the division was to seek more detailed data by engaging a consultant to conduct a program and facilities study of the Hunt Union and to make recommendations for renovations. The consultant collected data through interviews and focus
III. Outcomes Assessment

groups with students, members of the student government, staff, and faculty. The preliminary report from this company was submitted in August 2000. It recommended adding retail services to form a food service and retail zone on the main floor, locating the student government and other student organizations into a single service zone on the lower floor, and developing an administrative and meeting room zone on the top floor. The recommendations by the consultant were endorsed by the Future of the Hunt Union Task Force.

Follow-up assessment was conducted by the division in the form of a telephone survey that sampled residential and off-campus students and asked questions regarding their reasons for visiting the Hunt Union and their preferences for services and retail outlets that could be added. Findings included the importance of attractive food services, especially for off-campus students, as a reason to visit the Union, as well as specific preferences for new retail outlets and services.

Since then, the division has used all of the collected data for immediate changes and for planning. With the involvement of the Division of Finance and Administration and the Organization of Ancillary Services (OAS), the College contracted with Sbarro’s to develop a new food service in the area that is planned to be a retail zone. The new Sbarro’s opened in fall 2002. The OAS offices and some of their services to students, including check-cashing services and the ID card studio, were relocated to the Hunt Union. Two new conference rooms have been developed and furnished to be used for meeting space and for classes. In summer 2002, the College hired an architect who has begun the development of plans for renovations to the Hunt Union that will begin in spring 2003 as part of the College’s next capital construction cycle.

While it is too soon to assess the effects of the recent physical changes to the Hunt Union, the results of the 2000 administration of the SOS showed a significant increase in student satisfaction with college social activities, cultural programs, and student government. These campus environmental initiatives, as well as those noted below, support the CCP goal of
III. Outcomes Assessment

retention.

2. Residential and Community Life

A similar outcomes assessment, planning, improvement, and reassessment process occurred in the College’s residence halls. The scores on the Student Opinion Survey for two of the four “Residence Life” items--condition of residence hall facilities and residence hall services and programs--had declined from 1994 to 1997. At a planning retreat, Student Development staff addressed these issues by developing a three-year rehabilitation project in 1997. The following are among the residence hall improvements planned and later implemented by the College:

- Corridor and lounge upgrades in all 14 buildings
- Telephone, Internet and Cable package added to each room
- $3.5 million in furniture replacement
- Fire alarms and lighting systems upgraded
- Computer labs located in every residence hall
- Landscaping and walkways improved
- Card access implemented
- Academic Team Members (students who provide academic support and referral) with offices in every residence hall
- Special interest housing and supporting resources expanded
- The HOUSE programming model utilized
- Freshman interest groups added

The SOS results, which had shown significant declines between 1994 and 1997, showed significant increases in student satisfaction with the condition of residence hall facilities, residence hall services and programs, and access to computing services/facilities.

3. Financial Aid

The Financial Aid office provides another example of the process and use of outcomes assessment in Student Development. In 1994, this area’s three Student Opinion Survey items received some of the lowest scores that students gave. A new director was brought to the office in 1996 as the first step in a series of initiatives and changes. These included creating a stronger
information flow for students, use of a case-load approach to provide continuity for students in need of aid, greater access to counselors, added staff, enhanced computerized processing, and the achievement of greater consistency of service through use of written procedures. These changes have resulted in greater student satisfaction and higher SOS scores. All SOS indicators showed significant improvement between 1994 and 1997 and again between 1997 and 2000.

The division continues to use data and analyses from relevant surveys as the basis for undertaking initiatives or enhancing on-going initiatives tied to CCP goals.

D. Outcomes Assessment in Finance and Administration

The Division of Finance and Administration is integrally involved in planning and analysis and is subject to review and periodic audits by SUNY, the State Office of Audit and Control, the SUNY Research Foundation, the State Civil Service Department, and other external agencies. These reviews focus increasingly on performance and program effectiveness as well as financial accountability and compliance. Furthermore, in order to sustain the fiscal integrity of the College, the division engages in regular routine analysis and evaluation of expenditures relative to revenue. Additional assessment is provided in the form of feedback and assessment by students, faculty, and other campus constituencies through surveys and focus groups. The following three examples illustrate the accomplishment of outcomes assessment in the Division of Finance and Administration and support the goals of the CCP.

1. Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises

The State University is required to establish an Agency Goal Plan that outlines a program to encourage and increase the participation of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) in state contracting and procurement.

SUNY System Administration collects campus M/WBE data annually and submits it to the state Department of Economic Development. This information is also shared with campuses
III. Outcomes Assessment

and provides the College the opportunity to compare its utilization rate with campuses of similar size. In addition, monthly and year-to-date reports of M/WBE activity are electronically available to individual campuses. These reports allow the College to monitor its M/WBE activity level relative to the SUNY-wide established goal and to assess the effectiveness of its program in promoting the use of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises. The success of the College’s program can also be measured by its internal customer satisfaction.

In 1999, the College reviewed the M/WBE program with a goal of increasing the utilization rate. However, campus administration did not require individual departments to use M/WBE vendors if the vendors were not providing competitive prices, high-quality products, and good service. As a result, campus departments have been willing to try new M/WBE vendors and provide feedback. The feedback, which has been primarily anecdotal, has been used by the College’s Purchasing Department to develop and maintain a list of certified M/WBE vendors.

The College was recognized by SUNY Vice Chancellor Miller for its M/WBE procurement rate during the 1999-2000 year. Also, in a memorandum in October 2000, SUNY System Administration cited the campus as “particularly successful in procuring a significant dollar level of discretionary goods and services from M/WBE vendors.” The M/WBE Utilization chart (See Appendix III E) depicts the success of the College’s initiatives.

The M/WBE initiative supports the CCP goals of pluralism and image and tradition by enhancing the image of the College as an institution dedicated to supporting the aspirations of all peoples. The College remains committed to promoting the utilization of Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises as part of the Purchasing Office’s objective of providing internal customers with high-quality products and service.

2. Food Services

The Organization of Ancillary Services (OAS) is a not-for-profit corporation under
III. Outcomes Assessment

contract with the College at Oneonta to provide a variety of auxiliary functions such as dining services, bookstore operations, vending, residence hall laundry machines, ID/dining card services, program accounts, and operation of the College Camp—a 205-acre educational and recreational facility. All of these services have an impact on the College’s environment for living and learning and, as such, support the CCP goal of retention.

Based on student concerns with food-quality issues in fall 1997, a 12-member campus-wide Food Service Committee was appointed to study the Organization of Ancillary Services’ self-operated dining service. The Committee, whose membership was 75% undergraduate students, was charged with reviewing current food service operations—including management, budget, facilities, customer satisfaction, food quality, and related policies—and reporting findings and recommendations to the OAS Board of Directors. The board is composed of four students appointed by the Student Association, two members of the faculty elected by the College Senate, two members of the administration appointed by the President, one at-large member appointed by the President, and the College’s chief financial officer.

The OAS Board engaged a professional food service consultant from the fall of 1997 through the fall of 1998 to work with and guide the committee. A comprehensive survey was developed to identify food preferences, levels of customer satisfaction with the quantity and frequency of offerings, opinions on existing facilities, and preferred hours of operation. Of the 4,800 surveys distributed, 1,600 (33%) were returned. The committee recommended that OAS issue a Request For Proposals (RFP) for contract dining services. With the assistance of the consultant, the committee incorporated the preferences identified via the survey into a comprehensive RFP, which was sent out in June 1998.

Responses to the RFP were evaluated in August, and final presentations were made to the committee late in September. In October 1998, the committee recommended Sodexho Campus
Services as the vendor of choice, and Sodexho began a three-and-a-half-year contract. In spring 1999, on-going assessment of dining services became the responsibility of the OAS Executive Director, who spends 50% of his time in direct contact with dining services. As evidenced by day-to-day feedback from students as well as survey data collected regularly, the partnership among OAS, Sodexho, and the College has been enormously successful, both in terms of customer satisfaction and financial stability. With the reopening of Wilsbach Hall, a $2.5 million renovation that enabled Sodexho to operate its “Campus Crossroads Ultimate Dining” program with restaurant quality food prepared fresh and in front of the customers, the approval rate of the College’s food services has increased significantly. The latest survey results show the following changes relative to the operation in Wilsbach Hall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Customer Satisfaction</th>
<th>Spring 2001 (Pre-renovation)</th>
<th>Fall 2001 (Temporary Dining Hall)</th>
<th>Spring 2002 (Post-renovation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The contractual arrangement with Sodexho ensures that OAS completes each year with a substantial positive dining service balance. Based on investment in equipment for new facilities provided by OAS and some initial investment through the Sodexho contract, the College was able to obtain capital funding (on a 85% - 15% basis of state funds to non-state funds) to put together a facilities program in excess of $5 million. Through this program and some OAS projects previously undertaken, all seven College dining venues have been significantly renovated within the last four years, including major renovations of the two largest dining halls and the addition of a large convenience store/cyber-cafe.

3. Life Safety

In 1988, life safety was identified as a major concern on campus following the annual
III. Outcomes Assessment

inspection by a Department of State inspector. The inspector’s report, based on a four-week inspection, identified serious concerns and violations. The College’s administration took a variety of immediate actions to address the violations. Also, College administrators determined that a wide-ranging, long-term change in philosophy was needed in order to correct the remaining concerns and prevent future problems. The College set out to create a “culture of safety.”

To accomplish its objectives, the College scheduled specific actions in the area of facilities safety. Over the ensuing decade, actions were taken systematically to improve life safety on campus and to empower employees in ways designed to foster the desired change in culture. Some of the specific activities that made it possible for the College to address the concerns were as follows:

- Installation of fire alarm pull box protectors to reduce “prank” false alarms
- Installation of a new state-of-the-art fire alarm system
- Replacement of emergency lighting in a number of buildings
- Conducting regular fire safety inspections during the year
- Encouraging the use of dumpsters versus storerooms for unwanted material
- Aggressive prosecution of vandals, pranksters, and arsonists
- Improved sprinkler inspection protocols
- Establishing Maintenance and Property Management protocols to emphasize safety
- Upgrading fire hydrants
- Improving EXIT light, walkway and door procedures
- Installing a “card-key” system that limits access to residence halls to residents only.

Some of the changes went hand-in-hand with an on-going training campaign and the creation of channels for communication and responsibility designed to encourage and support the College community’s sharing the accountability for life safety and to discourage the view that any one person could accomplish the goal alone. For example, in the area of fire safety, campus administrators acted systematically to provide training and oversight, instill “ownership” of the results of inspections, and provide support of campus departments routinely using “high hazard” materials.

Over the past 14 years, dramatic improvements have ensued. The College is now
regarded as a model for life safety. Evidence of improvement includes fewer violations during inspections, fewer false alarms, less vandalism of life-safety equipment, and highly positive reports from Department of State inspectors. Accolades from external inspectors are passed on to employees so they are keenly aware of the high priority placed on life safety by the College, reminded of the importance of their role, and cognizant of the success of their on-going efforts. Most faculty, staff, and students now regard life safety as a shared responsibility and as part of the campus culture, an important environmental issue related to the CCP goal of retention. The improvements in life safety are another illustration of divisional efforts, enhanced by data analyses, addressing broader College goals.

E. Outcomes Assessment in College Advancement

The Division of College Advancement is composed of four major areas--Development and Fund-Raising, Alumni Affairs, the Center for Economic and Community Development, and the Grants Development Office. Staff in the division--with the assistance of faculty, staff, and students from the other divisions--build long-term relationships between the College and alumni, friends, foundations, corporations, and other organizations through programs, events, and both print and electronic communications.

During 2000-01, key developments in this division included continued progress toward the $1 million goal for the Alumni Field House Endowment; initiation of the Faculty Research Show; implementation of an on-line community for alumni; closure of the Thayer Estate resulting in a planned gift of $1.5 million; the development and administration of the College’s first survey of alumni for advancement purposes; and the establishment of 18 new scholarships, most of them endowed. Although the division has few external mandates for assessment, planning and assessment are integral parts of its activities. The following three examples illustrate outcomes assessment in the Division of College Advancement.
III. Outcomes Assessment

1. 2001 Survey of Alumni for College Advancement

For a number of years, the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Development have routinely used various surveys to help judge the effectiveness of academic programs and to assess satisfaction with a host of other personal development and campus-life programs and services. However, though College Advancement staff had been instrumental in assisting a variety of community groups in conducting and analyzing data, little of the information collected was directly relevant to the College’s own advancement efforts.

Several years ago, the College’s Vice President for College Advancement realized that it would be helpful to have, in addition to the anecdotal information regularly shared with staff, data that was systematically and purposefully collected and analyzed for specific use in planning advancement activities.

Thus, in the fall of 2000, work was begun on the development of the 2001 Survey of Alumni for College Advancement (See Appendix III F) that would provide the division with information that would help it identify high-priority needs impacting programs, publications, budgeting, and staffing, as well as evaluative information relative to the College’s image, services, programs, and events. Through this effort, the College also re-established contact with a much wider and more representative group of alumni. Additionally, as a result of participating in the survey, many alumni gained information about the College, its publications, alumni events, needs, and opportunities for charitable giving. Using professional surveying techniques, College Advancement staff mailed the new survey to a random sample of 15,144 alumni stratified by decades (1940-49 through 1990-2000).

The survey results provided the Division of College Advancement with a wealth of objective, unbiased information for current assessment and future planning. By analyzing results, staff have been able to refine existing programs and services or develop new ones in a manner
that enables staff to allocate financial and physical resources more efficiently. Staff have also used the information to implement short-term improvements in operations. For example, survey results suggested the need for creating different programs for different groups of alumni. Staff created programs for young alumni (i.e., students who had graduated from the College during the past ten years) with an emphasis on social events that are inexpensive for participants.

Another survey finding resulted in alterations to the format and content of Advancement publications. Alumni indicated that few read the President’s Report and Annual Report of Giving, which was sent to all alumni. Therefore, the information about giving by alumni classes that was of interest to many alumni was added to Reflections, the College’s regular alumni publication, and deleted from the President’s Report. That report was reduced to half its previous length and is now sent only to donors, reducing printing and mailing costs significantly.

A third change made on the basis of the survey is that the script for the phonathon appeal has been changed to accentuate that annual funds support scholarships and the library--causes important to alumni. The survey has given staff a better understanding of the differences between donors and non-donors and helped them identify the best strategies to cultivate each. The survey revealed that donors will respond to mailed appeals while non-donors are more likely to become donors if approached via a phone contact from a student. The survey has also provided insight on how it may be possible to “re-connect” non-donors with the College in the future. Additionally, obtaining the profiles of the attitudes and perceptions of donors and non-donors has emphasized the need for all members of the College Advancement staff to work collaboratively.

The survey has served as a vehicle to enhance the relationship between the College and its alumni, thereby furthering the CCP goal of image and tradition. The survey also provides a
III. Outcomes Assessment

baseline by which a future survey can be used to assess the impact of actions taken to address the findings of the 2001 survey. The College anticipates administering the survey again in approximately five years.

2. Faculty Research Show

College Advancement staff who work in the Grants Development Office (GDO) are available to assist faculty and staff in identifying and securing funding for research projects. To enhance faculty applications for external funding and to increase the visibility both on and off campus of current research ventures, College Advancement staff, with the full support and cooperation of the Division of Academic Affairs, implemented a Faculty Research Show on campus in spring 2001.

The Provost, deans, department chairs, and GDO staff encouraged faculty to showcase their research and publications in order to provide broader recognition for faculty, positive role models for students, and opportunities for donors to view first hand some of the scholarly work being done at the College. The divisions worked together to publicize the event to both the campus and the community.

Thirty-four faculty representing 17 departments presented their work at the first show in one of three formats: poster session, live presentation, or video presentation. Five additional faculty provided books and publications for display. Participants indicated their enthusiastic support for a subsequent event in a post-event survey. Thus, the second annual Faculty Research Show was held in March 2002, featuring 36 faculty from 22 different departments and research from many disciplines. Once again, participants indicated their strong support for continuing this activity. Future plans also call for surveying those who attend the show.

Participating in the show seems to encourage faculty to participate in the grants-seeking process. Consequently, the show contributes to the CCP goals of academic quality and image
III. Outcomes Assessment

and tradition. Of the faculty who participated in the 2001 show, 15 subsequently submitted proposals to external sponsors to fund research, and 16 submitted proposals to on-campus grant programs to help defray research project expenses. Following the 2002 show, 17 submitted proposals to external sponsors, and 15 submitted to on-campus programs. Fifteen of the faculty who participated each year had been hired by the College in the previous five years.

Current plans are to continue the Faculty Research Show as one means of enhancing external support for faculty research, promoting faculty development, and strengthening the relationship between faculty and the Grants Development Office.

3. Scholarships

In 1991-92, the College at Oneonta awarded $41,692 to students in the form of annual and endowed scholarships from private gifts and grants. In the mid-1990s, the Division of College Advancement set a divisional goal of establishing more such scholarships in order to address CCP goals related to academic quality, admissions selectivity, retention, and image and tradition, as well as divisional goals of engaging alumni, friends, foundations and others for the purpose of making substantial gifts and grants. As a result of the ensuing Campaign for Oneonta (1996-99), an intense effort to increase the number of endowed and annual scholarships that the College could offer, and the on-going efforts of the College, scholarship awards for 2002-03 will total at least $830,000. This amount is anticipated to reach $1 million soon.

In 2000, the College surveyed a random sample of scholarship recipients and their parents to learn more about the impact of scholarships at the College. The survey confirmed that scholarships reduce the financial stress on students and their families and generate feelings of good will toward the institution. Many of those surveyed expressed a desire to give to the College now or in the future. Survey results also suggested that the College needed to publicize
III. Outcomes Assessment

more the availability of scholarships and better use the availability of scholarships as a recruiting tool. As a result, more information about scholarships is now included in the College’s admissions publications, financial aid brochures, and College Advancement publications.

In analyzing survey results, staff learned that, while all awards are appreciated, the College needed to offer larger scholarships--$1,000 or more--to recruit academically talented students. Larger scholarships would also increase the impact of the awards for students needing financial aid. Consequently, the College Foundation Board of Directors established a new policy in 2001 requiring a minimum gift of $20,000 to establish a new endowed scholarship. The previous policy of requiring a minimum $10,000 commitment had been in place since 1982.
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

[Characteristics of Excellence #10 is illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, i.e., CE10, in the text.]

The College at Oneonta follows a classic approach to planning, evaluation, and budgeting. The campus regularly assesses both the current and the future external environment, as well as the internal environment with regard to its strengths, weaknesses, and challenges. The College specifies goals and objectives that help guide day-to-day implementation processes. On-going and annual evaluations help adjust goals and objectives as needed. Often, the College adjusts how the campus works toward these goals and objectives by revising resource allocations (budgeting) and by revising administrative structures and processes. [CE10]

The College’s Mission Statement and Comprehensive College Plan provide the basic institutional goals that each division uses to develop its individual goals and objectives. These, in turn, help establish the implementation of plans. Evaluation is on-going with adjustments made to processes as faculty and staff recognize needed changes based on feedback in various forms, such as suggestions from students, faculty, and staff; analyses of current data; special analyses of particular situations; and regular faculty and staff meetings that discuss the status of the campus. A more formal evaluation comes in the form of departmental and divisional annual reports that outline the relative success of the past year’s efforts compared to goals and objectives. The resources for the College’s day-to-day operations in support of its goals and objectives come through the College’s fiscal planning. [CE10]

Because of good planning generally and good fiscal planning specifically, the College has been able to sustain and enhance most of its programs and facilities. The College’s approach to resource allocation has been based on realistic budgeting and careful planning. [CE10]

Overall, the College is in sound fiscal condition because it has been realistic in its
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

planning. It has allocated its available resources to maximize movement toward its goals and objectives and to enhance quality in programs, students, faculty, and staff. The College has not planned on significant new state funding. It has not over-committed its resources to initiatives that the campus could not sustain. It has moved aggressively to increase revenues from sources such as gifts and grants, research funds, fees and contractual income, and endowments. It has positioned itself through its enrollment and its increased student quality to sustain and at times to increase its tuition funds and its share of state funds. It has sought and received the maximum allocation of SUNY capital matching funds in the university college sector to enhance the physical plant.

A. Context of Planning, Evaluation, and Budgeting

Planning, evaluation, and budgeting efforts at the College are governed or influenced by several factors, including the administrative structures with associated tasks and responsibilities; campus and divisional communications; relationships with state, federal, and accrediting agencies; the use of analysis and data; the actual planning and evaluation approaches; and the decision-making process. Planning, evaluation, and budgeting at the College must, of course, be viewed in the context of external forces that continue to shape the funding and evaluation of public institutions of higher education.

Much of the College’s success in the past ten years has been the result of leadership and planning by the President and his Cabinet. This leadership has allowed the College to deal effectively and efficiently with the need to balance enrollment demands, which are critical to funding, with expectations for improved student preparation. It has enabled the College to operate in the uncertain budget climate of New York with persistently late state budgets, state allocations that often do not meet mandated increases in operating costs, and the complicated formulae used by SUNY System Administration for allocating funds among the campuses.
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

B. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Structures

Planning, analysis, and decision-making at the College take place within each division at the level appropriate to the issue, task, or requirements for action. The administrative structure and philosophy of the College combine decentralization of actions and decisions for all day-to-day tasks with appropriate centralization of decision-making for institutional issues, which are dealt with by the President’s Cabinet, the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, and, in some cases, the College Senate.

The President’s Cabinet has the final authority and responsibility for the planning, assessment, and evaluation processes of the College. The Strategic Planning Advisory Group reviews and recommends revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan and advises the President and his Cabinet. In general, the President’s Cabinet deals with decisions affecting all institutional policies and procedures, including budgeting, resource allocation, staffing, enrollment goals, and facilities, as well as relations with community, state, and federal agencies.

The College Senate--which includes representatives of the faculty, staff, administration, and students--has the authority and responsibility for the review of curriculum and faculty governance matters and to make recommendations to the College administration.

Each of the four major administrative divisions of the College has the primary responsibility and authority for completing a number of tasks during an academic or calendar year. Some are heavily focused in one area or division, but most require inter-divisional cooperation.

The Division of Academic Affairs’ responsibilities include but are not limited to registration; program and course reviews; considering enrollment trends in academic programs; coordinating external course and program review; revising and updating programs and course
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

offerings; evaluating faculty and academic staff for promotion, retention, and salary increases; evaluation of student progress for retention or academic dismissal; linking faculty resources to course and section offerings; student assessment and placement; forecasting staff and faculty needs and associated recruitment; meeting accreditation requirements; revising and updating policies, catalogs, and materials; and operating and evaluating a planning and assessment process, including determining how data and analyses are used for improvements. In addition, the division assists in setting institutional enrollment goals; marketing programs; admitting and enrolling new students; advising and counseling students with regard to course selection, majors, career, jobs, and personal needs; determining library and computing needs; and planning the design or rehabilitation of facilities.

Academic Affairs’ external responsibilities are focused on meeting the requirements for adding or deleting degree programs; receiving and sustaining program accreditation; and the assessment of departments, programs, and general education. In these tasks, the division interacts frequently with SUNY System Administration and the State Education Department and occasionally with the State Division of the Budget and external accrediting agencies.

The Division of Student Development has primary authority and responsibility for an array of student-related activities. These include Academic Advisement and Orientation, Admissions, Athletics, Career Development, Center for Multicultural Experiences, Counseling Center, Educational Opportunity Program, Financial Aid, First Year Experiences, Health and Wellness Center, Hunt College Union (which includes Greek Life and Student Activities), Judicial Affairs, Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, Residential and Community Life, Student Disability Services, Student Employment, and University Police. Externally, the division interacts frequently with SUNY System Administration, notably though not exclusively through the university’s centralized Application Processing Center.
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

The Division of Finance and Administration has primary authority and responsibility for general planning and management of the financial, human resources, payroll, business, facilities, administrative technology, and institutional research and reporting functions of the College. These responsibilities reflect external and complex links to the planning, budgeting, and financial operations of SUNY System Administration, including the Construction Fund, the Research Foundation, the Office of Finance and Business, the Office of Institutional Research, and the Counsel’s Office. In addition, the division interacts frequently with the State Comptroller’s Office and the State Division of Budget.

The Division of College Advancement has responsibility for strengthening the College’s bonds with the community, alumni, faculty, staff, and students; managing gifts, grants, and bequests to the College; communicating the College’s need for external support; enhancing the College’s image; developing and coordinating opportunities for grants; and expanding scholarship opportunities. Externally, the division interacts frequently with all of the College’s off-campus constituencies, SUNY System Administration, and the SUNY Research Foundation.

C. Enhanced Divisional Planning, Evaluation, and Budgeting

Each of the College’s major administrative divisions has a long history of planning and assessment activities, but a more structured and formal planning process has been developed in the past five years. A number of factors have influenced the College’s efforts to emphasize the importance of institutional and divisional planning:

> Guidance provided by the Mission Statement and Comprehensive College Plan
> A highly competitive environment within SUNY and higher education
> Complex funding formulae used by System Administration
> Increased attention to planning, assessment, and evaluation by external agencies.

The complexity of planning and assessment varies among the College’s four administrative divisions, partly because of variations in the complexity of their goals and the
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

availability of reliable and relevant data. The complexity is also affected by the relative independence of faculty and staff, the cohesiveness and centrality of each division, and the extent to which measurements and/or outcomes are assignable to individuals. The range of complexity goes from the most easily measurable parts of planning and assessment found in the data-oriented operations of Finance and Administration to the more difficult behavioral or human interactions, such as teaching and learning in Academic Affairs.

The Division of Academic Affairs has been involved in planning as a normal part of operations in a variety of ways, such as new program development, program review, accreditation initiatives for NCATE and AACSB--International, course scheduling, faculty recruitment, and evaluation and assessment initiatives in instruction. The division deals with many demands from System Administration, the State Education Department, and program accreditors for planning, assessment, and evaluation information.

In recent years, the division has moved towards making its planning and assessment processes more formal and comprehensive. (See Appendix IV A for a report describing the processes.) The Provost, working with the Council of Deans, integrated plans from the academic divisions and units. The division developed the following four goals:

> Continue to improve efforts to serve the needs of increasingly better prepared students.

> Manage growth and increased demands with existing resources.

> Provide increased support of faculty in a changing environment.

> Develop and sustain an on-going planning and evaluation process that helps focus and prioritize the resources of the division in support of instruction, research, and service obligations and opportunities. [CE10]

The Provost and Council of Deans are now focused on implementing the goals and objectives and continuing the on-going effort. The group has developed a standardized outline for each member to use in reporting on the status of goals and objectives in his or her area of
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

responsibility (Included in Appendix IV A). The format provides for both a detailed overview and a summary of the accomplishments, issues, and challenges of each unit; an assessment and evaluation of each goal or objective; and a description of initiatives and actions planned for the next academic year. A separate section outlines how the next planning cycle will be handled in format and presentation. The intent of the outline is to give a more structured, common format for presenting plans so that the Division of Academic Affairs can clearly provide links between the Comprehensive College Plan and divisional goals; understand proposed initiatives; focus efforts on similar, overlapping objectives; agree on data and analyses needed to evaluate progress toward goals; and identify personnel who need to be involved and informed. [CE10]

The Division of Student Development places a significant emphasis on outcomes assessment and planning. Some of the division’s goals and objectives, such as meeting enrollment and retention goals, lend themselves to relatively easy measurement. Others, particularly achieving the behavioral aspects noted in the residence life goals, are somewhat more complicated to evaluate.

The division relies heavily on students’ ratings in the Student Opinion Survey and other surveys to give a sense of students’ satisfaction with their experiences at the College. To supplement survey data, the division also uses feedback from focus groups and staff experiences with students. The data is brought together for discussion and action at regular staff meetings and at an annual planning retreat that reshapes and defines major goals for the next year. [CE10]

The Division of Student Development has taken the initiative to share survey data with other campus divisions and units and to explore possible actions to improve future student perceptions of their experience at the College.

In the Division of Finance and Administration, many activities lend themselves to
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

measurement and analysis as an on-going part of daily operations. The resulting evaluation materials are used for planning and assessment. The division has also set performance goals and objectives, notably in responsiveness and quality of service, for its services to students, faculty, and staff. The performance goals are evaluated through length of time to process and complete a transaction, questionnaires, focus groups, and institutional surveys such as the Student Opinion Survey. Although all divisions of the College rely on performance programs and goals to aid in planning, Finance and Administration has also used its annual reports to give detailed status of activities and programs and plans for the future. [CE10]

One of the most important planning initiatives is the campus capital facilities plan. The College’s facilities planning activities have been critical to the dramatic improvement in campus facilities. In 1992 the College initiated a multi-year residential facilities renovation plan, which resulted in over $10 million in renovations and upgrades to all 14 residence halls.

Facilities planning efforts were given greater direction and clarity in the early 1990s with the development of a campus facilities master plan, conducted with the assistance of planning staff from the SUNY Construction Fund. While the master plan was never formally published, the concepts of campus design and traffic patterns formed the template for later plans. Program and facilities planning studies for food service and retail operations and the future of the Hunt College Union resulted in significant improvements to those facilities. The College’s current $21 million Five-Year Capital Plan (See Appendix II H) was implemented in 1998, and its next Five-Year Capital Plan for 2003-08 (See Appendix II I) has been submitted to SUNY for consideration in the SUNY Capital Budget.

The College maintains ongoing facilities planning and consultation for all areas: academic, athletic, and residential facilities; food service and retail services; office and instructional space; and development and maintenance of property owned by the College.
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

Foundation for the Biological Field Station in Cooperstown. This requires ongoing coordination and communication with all the stakeholders [CE10]. The planning process for all of these areas is similar. It generally involves the formation of a planning committee, and it often involves the use of consultants, visits to comparable facilities at other campuses, other formal and informal needs assessments, the prioritization of planned projects by the President and senior staff, and advocacy for external funding. This entire effort is also guided by the programmatic directions and goals of the Comprehensive College Plan.

The Division of College Advancement uses extensive comparative data to determine the relative success of fund-raising programs and efforts to engage alumni, faculty, staff, and the community in support of the College. The division’s planning efforts have taken on a greater emphasis in recent years. Personnel are using more clearly defined goals and objectives in fund-raising, and they are developing goals for their efforts to engage students, faculty, and staff, community, and especially alumni. The annual SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey and the 2001 Survey of Alumni for College Advancement have provided the division a wealth of information from alumni representing each decade since the 1930s. The division has used the data to help shape programs and activities geared to the specific alumni’s view of the College as determined by their years of attendance. Measures of fund-raising success are reflected in the trends and comparisons to institutional peers, to the institution’s past, and to its goals and objectives.

D. Enhanced Institutional Planning, Evaluation, and Budgeting

To enhance institutional planning and to ensure campus-wide input into the institutional planning process, the College relies upon the Strategic Planning Advisory Group (SPAG), which advises the President’s Cabinet. SPAG consists of representatives of the faculty, students, and staff; officers of the College Senate; four faculty members from the Outcomes Assessment Task Force; one staff member each from the Divisions of Student Development and Finance and
IV. Planning, Evaluation, and Budgetary Processes

Administration; the Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support; and the members of the President’s Cabinet. The group is chaired by the President. [CE10]

SPAG’s role is to consider and provide advice on implementation of long-term plans and processes which assessment and evaluation results indicate are necessary to improve teaching, learning, and institutional effectiveness; advise the President’s Cabinet regarding the various budgets and resources of the College as they relate to implementing the College’s mission and accomplishing its goals; review the assessment strategies and measures at all levels and for all programs to see if they are appropriately and consistently linked with institutional mission and goals, and if the links are not evident, to recommend actions to make improvements; review, revise, and/or reconcile, as appropriate, institutional mission and goals; and promote College awareness of the need for institutional effectiveness. [CE10]

SPAG meets four times a year, but it is subject to call by the President to discuss, evaluate, and advise him and his Cabinet on any number of issues. Any item may be taken to SPAG, but most often the agenda includes review and advice concerning the budget, assessment, planning, enrollment goals, facilities, and revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan and Mission Statement.

In April 2002, the Institutional Research Council was established as a result of recommendations made by the MSA Steering Committee. The Council’s charge includes providing leadership and support for planning and institutional research; coordinating and disseminating institutional data, which many departments use in their program reviews; providing a clearinghouse for institutional data; offering recommendations for broadening and coordinating institutional research activities; and advising the President and Cabinet on priorities for institutional information, research, and assessment activities. The College anticipates that the
Council will assist in responding to growing demands for information and analysis by various national, regional, and professional agencies, including SUNY System Administration. [CE10]

The College has developed an extensive set of data collection activities, evident in all the administrative divisions, and the Council’s membership includes one representative from each division. The Senior Staff Associate for Institutional Research—who reports administratively to the Associate Vice President for Finance—and the Manager for Administrative Computing Services provide staff support to the Institutional Research Council. The Council is chaired by the College’s Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support.

The College collects and uses all of the standard institutional data elements about facilities, students, personnel, finances, and curriculum, and it has worked hard to improve the accessibility and comprehensiveness of its data. The Budget Office, Registrar, and Institutional Research also provide valuable institutional data. In addition to data collected by the four administrative divisions specific to their responsibilities, the Division of Student Development provides data from the Student Opinion Survey, Decliner Survey, Quality of Life Survey, SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey, College Student Experience Questionnaire, and other sources.
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

[Characteristics of Excellence #4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12, are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

Please note: The data-gathering and analyses in chapters V-XI and elsewhere in this report were undertaken by the College’s Middle States Steering Committee working in subgroups and based on a matrix incorporating the Comprehensive College Plan and the 16 MSA Characteristics of Excellence. The process is described in greater detail in Chapter I, Section G, of this report.

The College’s goal in the area of academic quality, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to continue to strengthen the quality of academic programs and the overall educational experience for our students.” Specific objectives include improving the quality of instruction as demonstrated through assessment of student learning outcomes; sustaining a student-oriented advisement program; continuing to improve academic support services for students; providing faculty the opportunity to articulate and assess discipline-oriented learning outcomes; maintaining an academically rigorous general education experience; supporting faculty development activities; and encouraging and celebrating accomplishments of students, faculty, and staff.

After discussion in the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, the College revised several objectives in the Academic Quality section of the Comprehensive College Plan and introduced two objectives in 2002. They address implementing a plan to support and enhance graduate studies and remaining a competitive college by maintaining program quality and by pursuing new or revised programs.

A. Instructional Quality

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to improve the quality of instruction offered to our students.” In recognition of the significant role of assessment in that process, the Comprehensive College Plan states that “the College will quantifiably demonstrate enhanced
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

Instructional quality through assessment of student learning outcomes in the context of its on-going Middle States Association and specialized departmental accreditation processes.” The College’s efforts to achieve and sustain academic quality are reflected in several on-going initiatives. The College is committed to seeking professional accreditation where appropriate and consistent with the Institutional Assessment Plan. Additionally, the College has developed and implemented its own assessment initiatives, based upon the guidelines provided by Middle States, for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning in academic programs.

1. Professional Accreditation

As a consequence of obtaining and maintaining professional accreditation, the College has enhanced and continues to improve the quality of its academic programs. Currently, approximately 47% of the College’s undergraduates are majoring in programs that have or are seeking professional accreditation. [CE9]

Following their extensive review in 1997, the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) awarded continuing recognition to the College’s relevant programs in Human Ecology. Most significantly, after meeting its rigorous standards, the College received accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 2000. This accreditation has enhanced the professional qualifications of the approximately 640 students who matriculate annually in the College’s Education programs by making them more competitive in the national market and addressing the increasingly important issues of quality in teacher training. In addition, the Division of Economics and Business is in candidacy for accreditation of its majors by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business--International (AACSB). These credentialing initiatives follow previously successful efforts of the foods and nutrition faculty of the Human Ecology Department to pursue American Dietetics Association (ADA) sanction of their major. Other faculty, such as those in the Music
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

Industry program, are exploring disciplinary professional accreditation as well. [CE9]

The standards of these professional accreditations can be used as criteria to measure quality in all academic programs. Collectively, they require that instructors attain and demonstrate a high level of professional competence in their disciplines; that coursework be integrated, conceptual, incremental and rigorous; and that teaching faculty articulate clear and measurable learning outcomes and goals. In mandating these outcomes and goals, the accrediting agencies also provide criteria for assessing program effectiveness that are applicable to all academic majors and that address the requirements of Middle States, SUNY System Administration, and the New York State Education Department. [CE9]

Each specialized accreditor has broad as well as specific expectations for curriculum, faculty expertise, program management, assessment and, in some cases, resources. For example, one of NCATE’s six standards specifies that assessment “uses formative and summative approaches; provides candidates with on going feedback; uses multiple indicators, multiple decision points, and multiple assessments; uses external sources of data, such as New York State Certification Teacher Exams (NYSCTE); and uses results to make improvements.” AACSB requires that the campus complete a Self-Evaluation Report that describes the effectiveness of the curriculum in achieving the school’s mission and educational objectives and demonstrates consistency with curriculum standards. The ADA requires program assessment with regard to specific goals and objectives as well as assessment and continuous improvement of student learning. [CE9]

In the area of graduate studies, program development has been most heavily influenced by professional accrediting initiatives. NCATE accreditation in particular, as well as requirements established by the New York State Department of Education, led to the revision of all the
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

College’s graduate Education programs. The College now offers graduate Education programs in Childhood Education (1-6), Literacy Education (Birth-6), Literacy Education (5-12), Literacy Education (Birth-12), School Counselor (K-12), and Adolescence Education (7-12), which replaced subject-specific programs such as Secondary English, Mathematics, and Science. A new master’s in Education--Family and Consumer Sciences Education has just been approved by SUNY System Administration and the State Education Department. The first students enrolled in fall 2002.

2. Middle States

The assessment requirements of Middle States were implemented by the College beginning in 1997, concurrent with the adoption of the College’s Institutional Assessment Plan. Middle States directed that assessment be on-going and not episodic; that faculty take ownership of the assessment process in relation to the articulation of student learning outcomes and the instruments to measure student learning; and that the findings gleaned from assessment be used to enhance student learning. These expectations are being addressed by the College through the construction and on-going use of the annual report forms for programmatic assessment; the formation of a faculty group (the Outcomes Assessment Task Force, or OATF) to coordinate programmatic assessment; and the use of assessment results to modify curricula.

Initially in 1997-98, faculty were apprised of Middle States’ increasing focus on outcomes assessment. The College administration sent some faculty leaders to assessment conferences sponsored by the Middle States Association (MSA) and the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), while other faculty attended seminars at Alverno College. These faculty encouraged their colleagues to have more extensive conversations about what it was that they wanted graduates of their majors and/or programs to know, understand, and be able to do. Faculty were also encouraged to ask “How do we know that our students are learning what we
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

“think they are learning?” [CE9]

Not long after the Commission on Higher Education published *Outcomes Assessment Plans--Guidelines for Developing Outcomes Assessment Plans at Colleges and Universities* in 1998, faculty were expected to use two campus-developed forms, Form 1 and Form 2 (See Appendix V A), to document several important components of assessment. On Form 1, department faculty note connections between the College’s Mission Statement and Comprehensive College Plan (CCP) and programmatic goals, as well as student learning outcomes to be assessed in each of the next five years. The expectation is that all student learning outcomes will be assessed at least once during each five-year cycle. [CE9]

On Form 2, department faculty identify the student learning outcomes assessed during the most recent academic year, provide a summary of assessment results for that year (using narrative, tables, graphs, etc.), and discuss how assessment findings have been (or will be) used to improve curriculum and/or learning experiences. The use of multiple assessment measures is encouraged. Following the model provided by several AAHE speakers, faculty were told that assessment results might provide the documentation to validate that excellent teaching and learning were already occurring. That is, faculty were told that not all assessment efforts must result in changes in the teaching and learning that occurs in their classrooms. [CE9]

Since 1998, each academic department has been expected to complete and submit annually to the divisional dean Form 1 and Form 2 for each of its majors or programs. Originally, these forms were submitted in May for the academic year just completed. To allow departments more time to receive, analyze, and report assessment information, which is often collected near the end of the spring semester, the due date was recently changed to August. Thus by August 2002, most programs had submitted a Form 1 indicating the Student Learning
Outcomes (SLOs) for the major that will be assessed each year between 2001-02 and 2006 and a Form 2 indicating the assessment results obtained for the SLOs assessed in 2001-02. [CE9]

Middle States’ directives concerning the assessment of student learning outcomes not only encouraged the College to formulate an Institutional Assessment Plan (IAP) in 1997; they also led to the creation of OATF within the Division of Academic Affairs to facilitate the implementation of certain outcomes assessment processes, underscoring the importance of the faculty-oriented assessment initiatives encouraged by Middle States. OATF was formed in 1998. Its membership included some of the faculty who were members of the College-wide task force that developed the College’s IAP, along with other representatives of divisional faculty. [CE9]

3. Outcomes Assessment Task Force

Today, the Outcomes Assessment Task Force remains a faculty group with both junior and senior faculty members representing various disciplines in Academic Affairs. The chair generally convenes the group twice each month, and members spend additional time reviewing assessment reports submitted by departments, meeting with department chairs to review OATF’s suggestions regarding the assessment process, and considering the many issues and requirements associated with assessment. The academic deans are responsible for providing programs and departments with an annual critique of each department’s substantive findings and its use of the results of assessment for affirmation and/or improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. [CE9]

During the fall 2002 semester, members of OATF have been reviewing the Program Assessment Reports submitted by departments for the 2001-02 academic year. Each report is evaluated independently according to an established checklist (see Appendix V B) by at least two members. Following completion of review by individual members, OATF meets as a group to
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

discuss the reports and sort them into three categories that have been tentatively titled “fully adequate,” “potentially adequate with revision,” and “inadequate” or “missing.” Once the categorization has been completed, OATF meets with the chairs of departments falling into either of the latter two categories. The purpose of this meeting is to provide guidance and encouragement for chairs, some of whom may have recently assumed the role. Letters are sent to departments that have submitted a report that is “fully adequate.” At this time, OATF anticipates being able to complete its work regarding the most recent round of reports prior to the end of the fall 2002 semester.

The results of OATF’s reviews are provided to the divisional deans, who then review the submitted Form 1 and Form 2, develop their own assessment of the materials provided, and communicate with department chairs and program directors regarding their assessment processes.

[CE9]

4. Outcomes Assessment 1997-98 to Present in Division of Science and Social Science [CE9]

Despite the breadth of academic majors across the Division of Science and Social Science, several clear trends can be identified in the progress of outcomes assessment since 1997-98. These include natural early challenges and originally unforeseeable later challenges.

Initially, the institution and faculty needed to develop a thorough understanding of “student learning outcomes (SLOs),” “assessment,” and “assessment measures” as they were to be defined and implemented. Faculty ownership of the assessment process was and continues to be impeded somewhat by the imposition of external requirements. The varying assessment requirements among agencies further complicated the implementation process and continue to do so.

In implementing outcomes assessment for its majors, the College also adopted
standardized forms--Form 1 and Form 2--which generated some confusion among faculty regarding the content and implementation of the forms. Some departments therefore got a later substantive start than did others. Debate also arose over the practicality of using course grades as assessment measures although these eventually fell largely out of favor as faculty recognized that with few exceptions such grades did not constitute simple measures of individual outcomes.

Typically, most departments eventually opted for course-embedded measures of their student learning outcomes although a few sought to use surveys of alumni or program participants (most notably the Biological Field Station and the Cooperstown Graduate Program in History Museum Studies). Some (especially English in the case of assessing its introductory composition sections and Biology assessing its introductory sections) even sought to apply a formal pre-test versus post-test model.

Assessment processes within the Division of Science and Social Science led to two positive results. First, outcomes assessment promoted significant curricular modifications in several academic departments, including

- Anthropology--introduction of a senior capstone seminar and implementation of four other SLOs tied to topical areas within anthropology
- Biology--adjustments to introductory sections to better accommodate majors and non-majors and use of pre-test/post-test models
- Cooperstown Graduate Program--development of a fundamentally new curriculum
- English--movement toward standardization of syllabi for Composition 100 (particularly for adjunct faculty) and attempts to implement a pre-test/post-test assessment model for composition
- Mathematics, Computer Science and Statistics--several adjustments to required courses in these majors due to SLO assessments and revised requirements for math and computer science majors
- Physics and Astronomy--new courses and lab development including introduction of students to external environments such as industry and government labs and seminars
- Political Science--redefined distribution requirements collapsing six categories to four and establishing a capstone requirement.

Second, as a result of the outcomes assessment process, explicit connections arose between departmental-defined outcomes and national standards in at least one case within the Division:
The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures adopted ACTFL proficiency guidelines plus F-CAPE & S-CAPE proficiency tests.

In the assessment implementation process, several challenges also arose for Science and Social Science faculty undertaking assessments of student learning outcomes. These can be categorized across department boundaries into five key groups. Examples of departments that were particularly impacted are included.

1. Logistical and planning problems related to assessment over multiple years due to turnover in faculty through retirements and/or significant use of adjuncts due to institutional fiscal constraints or external mandates (notably the SUNY General Education program and SUNY assessment of departmental majors):
   - Africana and Latino Studies--Need for use of adjuncts
   - Biology--Faculty retirements
   - English--Introduction of SUNY Gen Ed and significant use of adjuncts
   - Environmental Sciences--Interdisciplinary nature of program complicating data collection and methodology standardization
   - Geography--Faculty retirements
   - History--Introduction of SUNY Gen Ed and significant use of adjuncts
   - Philosophy--SUNY assessment requirements
   - Physics and Astronomy--Various assessment tools utilized by changing faculty

2. Deciphering the terminology, changing interpretations, and/or expectations of assessment including understanding the precise definition of “learning outcomes” and the need for two measures per student learning outcome rather than one measure:
   - Africana and Latino Studies; Geography; Earth Sciences; Mathematics, Computer Science and Statistics; Foreign Languages and Literatures; and Philosophy.

3. Need for greater emphasis upon objective rather than just subjective measures:
   - Biological Field Station (Outreach program supporting K-12 visits).

4. Insufficient sample sizes for statistical validity:
   - Many departments but especially Earth Sciences and Geography.

5. Insufficient progress to date:
   - Chemistry--Limited faculty ownership of process
   - Environmental Sciences--Interdisciplinary program complications
   - History--Except for emphasis upon student learning outcome for literature searching
and primary vs. secondary sources.

The transition to an outcomes assessment-based environment has been and continues to be complex; however, all departments are now at some meaningful stage in the process. Faculty ownership of the process in the face of competing external assessment requirements continues to be one of the greatest challenges faced by the campus.

5. Outcomes Assessment--Current Status in Division of Science and Social Science [CE9]

The summaries below detail the current assessment status for a majority of majors across the Division of Science and Social Science.

Africana and Latino Studies (ALS)

The Department continues to make progress in its assessment although its heavy reliance on adjuncts complicates matters. Most recently, a problem was encountered in summarizing the data used to measure SLOs as Oneonta’s OATF committee sought two techniques and conclusions for each SLO and ALS had to redo this part of the evaluation.

Anthropology

Based upon Anthropology’s preliminary analysis of results from 2001-2002, the Department has identified several areas for further attention to be accomplished by curricular revision for several courses. Specifically, they will incorporate more theoretical discussion and historical overviews of anthropological theory in the senior seminar. Ongoing assessment has also revealed the need for revision of the essay component for addressing the learning outcome focused on the holistic approach in anthropology. These changes will be addressed in the next assessment cycle.

Biology

For the 2001-2002 cycle, the Biology Department assessed its students’ analytical skills.
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

This was done using pre- and post-testing in core courses of the biology major and an alumni survey. Both the quantitative results derived from the testing and the free-responses of alumni suggested that greater analytical experience in the curriculum would be beneficial. In response, the Department expanded the analytical/computational/mathematical skills activities starting with BIOL 100 - General Biology I and continuing through many of the 200- and 300-level course offerings. As of this time the Department faces a challenge in securing the proper number of reliable, up-to-date computers to cover adequately the demand involved with these particular courses.

Biological Field Station (BFS)

BFS continues to attempt to find a better way of administering assessment surveys as related to their outreach program for K-12 area schools. They are considering mailing surveys to teachers, for their students, immediately after each trip. Simply providing surveys for them to return has not worked. BFS now solicits recommendations from teachers regarding field trip offerings completely outside of the assessment process.

Chemistry

The Department’s progress has been and remains disappointing, in the dean’s opinion, with limited faculty buy-in to the process. An influx of new faculty into the Department appears to be improving the situation, and a new biochemistry track recently has been designed and approved, in part based upon the Department’s assessment of its stakeholders’ needs.

Cooperstown Graduate Program

During the mid-1990s, CGP instituted a systematic, multi-faceted assessment of its curriculum followed by a successful plan to restructure its curriculum and the individual courses therein. The assessment examined the Program internally through alumni outcomes and through key informants in museum profession. The assessment revealed that a residual problem persisted
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

concerning the completion of the students’ masters theses by the time of course-work completion. This was addressed collaboratively with CGP staff and the Academic Affairs administration. Adjustments were made to the existing courses including earlier introduction of research methods and stricter periodic performance indicators. In August 2002, there were 40 outstanding theses, compared to 54 in August 2001. In August 2001, only one member of the class of 2001 had finished a thesis. By August 2002, nine members of the class of 2002 had finished. Most recently, CGP has begun to reassess its field trip program, an important aspect of the curriculum. The CGP outcomes assessment resulted in the development of a new curriculum. The curriculum took into consideration the needs identified by students, alumni, and the museum profession. The assessment identified the requisite changes required within courses and the overall requirements to meet the new learning goals. The new curriculum was implemented in September 2002.

Earth Sciences

After further revisions in 2000-2001, the Department began to implement a modified student learning outcomes-based assessment plan in 2001-2002. Unfortunately, the plan generated a very small data set that lacked scientific and statistical validity. Therefore, the chair submitted a narrative report at the end of AY 2002 on the long-standing process whereby the Department assessed its programs and the most recent examples of curricular modifications based on this process.

English

Last year, the Department again assessed its Composition program, this time focusing on SLOs via pre-tests and post-tests. The results were disappointing. Administration of the pre-and post-tests was not regulated; some instructors limited the time allotted for the tests in inconsistent ways, which invalidated the results. The Department also asked COMP 100 instructors to submit
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

copies of the Student Perception of Instruction Evaluation forms their students completed at the end of the term but with limited actual success. The resulting data was insufficient for meaningful analysis. The Department Assessment Committee feels that pre- and post-testing is still the most promising instrument for assessing Student Learning Outcomes in Composition. The Department currently is developing plans for repeating this effort in Spring 2003.

Environmental Sciences

The Program now has what it believes to be a more workable plan than it previously had. As part of this evolution, a series of exit interviews with graduating students yielded a great deal of good feedback and is leading to plans for curricular revisions. The fact that chairs from four departments who have developed SLOs and assessment techniques appropriate to the four ENVS concentrations is a significant accomplishment alone. Data has been obtained from several courses that forms the basis of the assessment for the Program.

Foreign Languages and Literatures

After the 2000-2001 assessment cycle and prior to the 2001-2002 cycle, the chair met with the dean and chair of the Middle States Self-Study Group on Intellectual Growth. In the course of those meetings, advice was provided to present qualitative measurements not only as discrete indices but also in terms of how each measurement reflects the student learning outcome(s) specified in the Form I statement. Accordingly, the Department has developed three basic criteria for qualitative measurement of student outcomes in foreign language discursive subject matters: a) term papers, book reports, class presentations, and explications de texte as a first category; b) examinations as a second category; and c) the final course grade assigned by the instructor as an overall evaluation of student outcomes. However, the dean remains concerned about the validity of this final criterion and its ability to track anything more than summative results.
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

Geography

Although the Department has struggled with faculty turnover due to retirements and with the small size of key statistical samples, it has made progress in establishing a routine assessment process. Due to the continuity of two of its instructors offering the same courses for several years, one major learning activity can now be adequately measured and changes made where appropriate. The other learning activities are under active review. With the influx of new faculty, time management and balancing the needs of scholarship with SLO assessment is increasingly proving a challenge to the Department.

History

Limited documented progress appears to have been made to date concerning outcomes assessment, except for noteworthy accomplishments concerning students’ research abilities, including the distinction between primary sources versus secondary sources. With faculty retirements and new faculty hires, the Department is poised to make further progress in the near future.

Mathematics, Computer Science and Statistics

Breaking its domain into subdisciplinary fields, the Department instituted a multi-year cycle of curricular reviews, which already have impacted the students’ outcomes. For example, a recent review of the “analysis” subdiscipline has resulted in a much more systematic collection, review, grading, and explicit critique upon return of all students’ homework assignments in the Real Analysis course. Assessment also revealed student weakness relative to proofs. In order to improve student work with proofs, particularly in the proof-intensive courses, department instructors assigned additional homework involving proofs. The Department’s successful plan to develop and enhance its Computer Science major through faculty hires and the creation of a...
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

dedicated computer laboratory for the Department has resulted in a full curricular re-design.

Where a decade ago that major primarily consisted of courses in different computer languages, the curriculum now incorporates the discipline’s much broader scope, including computer architecture, software design, database systems, artificial intelligence, and the Internet.

Similarly, in Statistics the curriculum now incorporates more advanced coursework and a greater breadth of faculty expertise with a stronger focus on assessment. In the area of Mathematics itself, the department has introduced the use of symbolic computation softwares (particularly Maple) in linear algebra, calculus, and differential equations through its planning process. This has arisen as part of the College’s participation in a multi-campus National Science Foundation consortium and has rendered the Mathematics curriculum more diverse and competitive than before the planning process. To build further on this momentum, the Department presently is utilizing the national guidelines and expectations of the Mathematical Association of America to assess and redesign the curricula. The outcome assessed in 2001-2002 in the Mathematics major involved students’ understanding of the use of technology in the Mathematics curriculum. The Department assessed this outcome in its courses in calculus and linear algebra, as these courses make extensive use of symbolic computing software. As a result of this assessment, the Department plans to incorporate the use of technology in more Mathematics courses. The outcome assessed in 2001-2002 in the Computer Science major involved the students’ understanding of the principles of computer organization through programming and laboratory hardware projects. The Department assessed this outcome in courses in computer architecture, computer fundamentals, and assembly language programming. A direct result of this assessment is that the Department now plans to require the assembly language programming course for all Computer Science majors. The outcome assessed in 2001-2002 in the Statistics major involved the adequacy of students’ preparation for graduate study in Statistics. The Department assessed
this outcome by measuring the similarity of its major program requirements to recommended guidelines for Statistics programs issued by the American Statistical Society. It also used the results of a survey of alumni for this assessment, and this indicated that the program is indeed preparing students well for graduate study.

**Philosophy**

The assessment report for 2001-2002, which normally would have been submitted to the dean in June, is still in the process of preparation. The reasons for this delay are threefold: 1. The report includes statistical data from an alumni survey that is pertinent to all of the programmatic goals, making this report longer and more challenging than reports that focused on only one or two goals; 2. A professor who gathered data from a Spring 2002 course originally reported that data in a format that failed to match the pre-formed standards required for the Middle States reports; and 3. Because the SUNY Assessment Initiative, announced in December 2001, differs in fundamental ways from Middle States, the Department has had to re-direct--and will be forced to re-do--a substantial portion of its outcomes assessment. Because the Philosophy Department has been selected to complete the SUNY Assessment Review by Spring 2004, time represents a serious challenge. This is an example of external mandates complicating the assessment process as originally planned and implemented.

**Physics and Astronomy**

Three different knowledge outcomes and three different skills outcomes were assessed and reported in table format. These included the relevant experiences and measurement techniques. Assessment narratives accompanied the tables to support the data and/or clarify points not as obvious in the tables. Indeed, an additional effort was made in 2001-2002 to clarify the relevance of the narratives to the tables. As part of the assessment process, the Department has strengthened its curriculum with more student emphasis upon research and laboratory
experiences, including exposure to external opportunities involving industrial and government laboratories. Through its ongoing curricular assessment and planning process during the last decade, the Department of Physics and Astronomy instituted several coordinated course modifications within its curricula, both in terms of numbers of hours and course redesign, as well as the introduction of new courses to strengthen the students’ experiences and outcomes. In particular, PHYS 287 (Intermediate Physics Laboratory) and PHYS 382 (Advanced Physics Laboratory) now provide even stronger opportunities for practical laboratory work than previously had existed within the Department. A new course also has been instituted, PHYS 301 (Computational Physics), to enhance the majors’ outcomes in using computers as a problem solver; this is a critical skill for entrance into graduate programs elsewhere or the job market. Moreover, a capstone experience in Physics is being instituted as a result of the assessment process, and PHYS 397 (Internship in Physics) is now in place. The latter provides an opportunity for conventional physics, engineering-interested, or astronomy-interested students to undertake work in a practical field in which physics is used. These curricular modifications are the result of a coordinated plan on the part of the Department to reinforce the practical aspects of the program to improve students’ exit options upon graduation.

Political Science

The Department completed one five-year assessment cycle and now again is examining its curriculum in light of the results and faculty turnover due to retirements. Based in part on assessment of its 2000-2001 learning outcome--mastery of oral communication and writing skills appropriate to the discipline--the Department is in the process of developing a course intended to emphasize writing on and analyzing political science topics. This course, tentatively titled “Critical Analysis in Political Science,” is anticipated to be a required course for majors (sophomores) in preparation for other upper-division offerings. Similarly, the Department is
using its assessments in earlier years of mastery of fundamental terminology and theories within the discipline (1997-98) and of mastery of a substantive base in the sub-fields of the discipline (1998-99) to reexamine its introductory courses and create one or possibly two more required introductory courses within the major.

6. Outcomes Assessment--Progress to Date and Current Status in Division of Behavioral and Applied Sciences [CE9]

As might be expected in a Division with a wide range of programs, there is a wide variation in the assessment patterns of the programs. The programs with national and/or state accreditation requirements are aware of the need for assessment and have done an excellent job of meeting the requirements of the accrediting agencies. Other programs are less advanced in their assessment processes. The Division of Economics and Business, Division of Education, and Department of Human Ecology are most closely scrutinized by accrediting bodies. The Departments of Music and Art, and perhaps the Theater program to a limited extent, have embraced assessment less, primarily because of the nature of the classes taught, the background of the instructors, and the often presumed lack of measurability of the products which students produce. The Mass Communications Program has embraced the concept of ongoing assessment while Sociology and Psychology are cooperating on creating and implementing assessments.

Several trends have emerged from the assessment cycles of the recent past in the Division of Behavioral and Applied Sciences:

1. The desire for national accreditation has encouraged programs to create assessment tools and use them in the decision-making process.
2. Some programs resist implementing assessment.
3. Assessment is expensive in terms of time and productivity.
4. The quality of new and transfer students varies widely and affects programs.

The progress of specific departments is as follows.
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

Economics and Business

The faculty of the Division of Economics and Business (DEB) along with the Provost and President have made the commitment to become accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business—International (AACSB). Since 1998 the DEB has used a variety of assessment tools to track longitudinal improvements of programs. These tools include an alumni survey, annual acquisition and evaluation of CPA examination results, Educational Testing Service (ETS) field examinations, AACSB/Educational Benchmarking, Inc. (EBI) Undergraduate Student Satisfaction Survey, and faculty teams evaluating student case presentations in capstone courses. As the results of these assessments have been computed, programs and services have changed. A new curriculum in Business Economics began in fall 1999; 2002-2003 is the first graduating class under this curriculum. Some problems arose when students didn’t graduate on time under the old curriculum. Other students, who transferred in and were ill-prepared by having taken “gateway courses” at their previous institutions or via correspondence-like Internet courses, created problems with the assessment process and generalizing assessment results.

The DEB assesses learning outcomes and program goals each year. A summary matrix has been created to address skills, objectives and learning outcomes in each program: Accounting, Business, and Economics. Revisions have been made by curriculum subcommittees of each department based on assessment data and outside consultation. Full-scale strategic reviews are planned for a four- to six-year cycle.

The AACSB accreditation process has changed the culture of the DEB, not in the least because of the hiring of new faculty with Ph.D. credentials and the perceived need for ongoing assessment and program review.

Gathering and analyzing assessment data requires time, commitment from faculty, and
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

significant costs. In spite of these concerns, the DEB is confident about the positive educational
effect of the curricular changes taking place.

Education

The Division of Education went through major revisions prior to a visit by the National
Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 1998. The Division was
NCATE accredited in 2000. The three separate departments--Elementary and Reading
Education, Secondary Education, and Educational Psychology and Counseling--established a
four-theme Conceptual Framework that organized the various programs and informed assessment
processes. In the fall of 2000, the undergraduate programs were revised again to meet the new
New York State Education Department’s revised regulations. The Elementary and Reading
Education Department and the Secondary Education Department submitted separate outcomes
reports, and the assessment system was begun with surveys in the EDUC 106 courses and a
universal student-teaching evaluation. For continuing NCATE accreditation (with the next visit
scheduled in 2005) and because of the changes in NCATE 2000 regulations, the Division is in
the process of revising programs once again. They have devised an initial assessment plan, which
will be finalized once the outcomes from the new Conceptual Framework have been adopted.

The new NCATE regulations require a much more detailed outcomes assessment plan,
identifying multiple assessment points within the various programs. Portfolio assessment is
being used in the Counselor Education program and may be adopted in the other programs.
Because the assessments and expected outcomes have changed since the last NCATE visit, it is
not feasible to assess outcomes of students who have not completed a majority of the program.
The first completers from the revised 2000 curriculum will graduate in May 2004. The
Education programs have spent a great deal of time generating assessment data. They have
analyzed the data by comparing relevant experiences/assessments, course by course, for each
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

program. This data and the results on the New York State teacher tests were submitted to reviewers as part of the SUNY program assessment in the spring 2002. This reporting of the assessment and external program reviews generated discussion among faculty, who initiated changes to some programs. The programs are working on Specialty Program Area (SPA) reviews as part of the new NCATE review. These are due to NCATE by the fall of 2003.

High standards seem to have helped increase the quality of the teacher candidates, although there are continued concerns about transfer students. A formal review should be developed to identify the particular issues of concern regarding those students. An additional concern is the need to hire new faculty and to inculcate them into the various programs and the NCATE review and Conceptual Framework.

Human Ecology

Since 1997, all areas have revised their curricula based on changes in the particular professions to reflect changes in the profession or the content, adjusting prerequisites and adding or changing projects or assignments. Child Development and Family Studies (CDFS) revised its program so that graduates can apply for Family Life Educator Certification. One challenge is creating one CDFS program and eliminating the Life Course Studies: Child and Family Studies program.

Technology has been added to every course possible. The two accrediting agencies which apply in this division are American Association of Family and Consumer Science (AAFCS) and American Dietetic Association (ADA). The division is working with the assessment and accreditation requirements from these two bodies. One assessment tool the programs are using is a survey of alumni for the last five years. The Family and Consumer Science Secondary Education program is accredited by NCATE. Additionally, all programs meet the AAFCS accreditation requirements. Curriculum is determined by these accrediting bodies.
Dietetics (Human Ecology Department)

The Food and Nutrition faculty assess annually one of two of the student learning outcomes they have established for Dietetics majors. In 2001-02, faculty assessed two outcomes including “Students will demonstrate the ability to translate nutrient needs into food and/or enteral and parenteral formulas as needed by individuals and groups.” With regard to one of several sub-components of this learning outcome--“socio-cultural and ethnic food consumption issues and trends for various consumers”—during spring 2002, students (n=12) achieved a combined score of 94% on pertinent questions on the first exam in Food 133. In NUTR 140, student performance on an exam question addressing risk factors for nutritional deficiency indicated that 76% of the students (n=95) correctly identified important factors including age, race, income and pregnancy. With regard to exploring the availability of food and nutrition programs and services offered in the local community, 11 Food 133 students achieved 80.3% accuracy on pertinent questions on exam 2 and 87.9% on exam 3.

Other areas assessed indicated that students met some student learning outcomes only 70% of the time. As a result of these findings, faculty concluded that knowledge of food, food composition, and principles of menu planning remain as concerns for the program. To address these concerns, a new course--Food 130 (Introductory Foods)--was developed and added as a requirement for the major. At the same time, Food 330 (Advanced Food Science) will be phased out. Introductory Foods has been designed to provide students with the necessary background in food characteristics and preparation methods and to enable students to achieve the outcomes in menu planning included in Food 232 and 235. Additionally, beginning with spring 2003, the instructor for Nutr 341 will use BlackBoard courseware to support student learning of the substantial amount of material in this course related to enteral and parenteral feedings. The instructor of Food 336 will build a more complete food-item database for Food 336.
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

enhanced database is expected to provide a more “real-world” menu-planning experience for students. Also, to the extent possible, Dietetics students and Food Service and Restaurant Administration students will be paired for assignments in which menu planning and nutritional analysis of menus is expected. This will encourage collaboration in order to take advantage of complementary strengths.

Communication Arts

The Communication Arts Department has three majors, so three individuals must write assessment reports, as no one person is sufficiently expert in all three areas. This makes it difficult to maintain consistency of form and content among the reports. Also, the Mass Communications major has both BA and BS tracks, which further complicates preparation. Whoever prepares a report must obtain data and insights from others who teach the relevant courses, and there is often inconsistency in the type and format of material submitted. This variation makes preparing the report difficult because of the need to align material from various courses, to blend it coherently, and to draw overall conclusions. Often only a portion of a course and/or assessment method is devoted to a given outcome, which makes precise reporting of results difficult. The natural tendency is to look back at the academic year and its records to obtain the data needed, even though the final effort would be easier if the need for data had been anticipated, and the data set aside regularly throughout the year. A particular challenge is the section of the report asking how assessment results have “been used to improve curriculum and/or learning experiences,” partly because the academic year has just ended and the results have only just been identified.

Program faculty have expressed concerns in regard to whether assessment content was of the sort desired, how it could be improved, and whether more material than necessary had been provided. For example, if final course grades are sufficient data, then preparation time need not
be expended on including grades for separate tests. Similarly, if multiple sections of a course can be combined in reporting results, there is no need to list each section separately.

**Art**

To date, Art has completed Forms 1 and Forms 2 for each year for the Art Studio area from 1998 to the present. In the spring of 2002, the Department began work on Form 1 for its new major, Computer Art, and a draft of form 2 for several student learning outcomes for both majors. Once faculty developed an understanding of assessment terms and took more ownership of the process, a successful collaboration to work on assessment occurred. The Chair has helped faculty realize the potential of how the Department could look at the strengths and weaknesses of its programs and work towards improvement and growth for the majors.

The Department has produced a list called “Points of Assessment,” which reflects a means to redefine the focus of its programs. The Department has also developed a “Student Learning Outcomes Chart,” which outlines five levels that students should acquire and experience during the four-year program in either Art Studio or Computer Art. Currently, several Department members and the Chair are working to design a bubble sheet that they can use to evaluate drawing portfolios. The bubble sheet will accommodate the evaluation of any level of drawing class. Starting in fall 2002, the Department will focus on one Drawing I class as a pilot sample. All first-day drawings from this class will be compared to drawings done at the end of the semester. Universally established standards will be used to evaluate and compare the two sets of drawings. The other drawing classes will gather data on a continuing basis, and the data will be compiled for future reports.

**Music**

Program assessment from 1997-98 to present has involved several emphases. One is the attempt by the Department to create students who have a better understanding of music as a
symbolic system. A keyboard lab was added as a requirement, and the assessment of that class has indicated a noticeable improvement in the understanding of these concepts. Second, several performance groups were added to accommodate the growing number of majors. Criteria were established to determine whether two goals were met: musicality and professionalism. Musicality has improved; professionalism has not. Computer technology and music theory software have been added to help students achieve the goals of the digital keyboard lab. The number of complaints about lack of time for assignments has decreased. Presentations by music industry professionals to classes are important for establishing discussions about current practice and real-world reflection. Assessment will be conducted as to whether these experiences lead to jobs.

**Sociology**

The Sociology Department has developed measures addressing the six outcomes the faculty identified. Data has been collected for four of the outcomes, analyzed, and reported. The final two outcomes are to be embedded into course assessments. These have been developed and will be completed at the end of the semester.

**Psychology**

In 1997-1998, the Psychology Department articulated two broad Programmatic Goals and six more specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). One instrument was quickly adapted for measuring all six SLOs—an Exit Questionnaire that the Department already gave to graduating seniors. In the revised questionnaire, the Department explicitly described each of its SLOs and asked students to evaluate the Department’s success in producing those outcomes. This instrument has proved useful is still in use today. The second instrument for assessing the six SLOs is a 120-question adaptation of a 250-question comprehensive examination developed by Dr. E. Thomas Moran at SUNY-Plattsburgh in 1993. The Department abandoned the test two
years later due to concerns about its reliability and validity in light of the small and unrepresentative samples of students who took the test under conditions that likely failed to encourage their best efforts. An alternative approach was adopted in 2000. Eight, 15-question multiple-choice tests were prepared by individual faculty in their areas of expertise. The appropriate tests are embedded into the final examinations of the six required courses and two additional courses taken by most students to meet other departmental requirements. Scores on these tests better reflect what students actually are learning in their courses. This approach has yielded reliable and valid data, and the Department continues to use it at present as the second instrument for measuring SLOs. The only significant problem currently is being addressed: The second instrument for measuring SLOs—the 15-question tests embedded into final examinations in eight courses—does not adequately measure all of the Department’s SLOs. For example, the embedded tests do not adequately measure students’ information-gathering skills (SLO 3) or written and oral expression (SLO 5). To remedy this deficiency, the department is constructing several PTA (Primary Trait Assessment) scales to measure student success in these areas. These scales will be used in the Research Methods classes and applied to the major research papers that students must write in these classes. With the exception of this problem, the procedures that the Psychology Department has developed for program assessment appear to be working well and yielding useful information.

7. Other Indicators of Academic Quality

One important indicator in the area of instructional quality is students’ rating of “quality of instruction” on the ACT Student Opinion Survey (See Appendix VII F), which the College administers every three years. Between the 1994 and 2000 surveys, students’ mean rating of instructional quality increased from 3.61 to 3.74, a statistically significant gain (p < .05) on the survey’s five-point Likert scale on which numerically small changes in the mean can be
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

statistically significant.

A variety of factors have contributed to the College’s advances in instructional quality and the overall quality of academic programs. In the recent hiring of over 80 tenure-track faculty, the College has re-allocated positions to the maximum benefit of its academic programs, and strong recruitment efforts have resulted in the College’s attracting very well qualified candidates, who made immediate contributions to their respective departments. Expanded faculty development efforts, formal and informal opportunities to discuss teaching, the infusion of educational technology and support for its use, curricular revisions, and improved assessment efforts have all contributed to improvements in instructional quality.

For a number of years, the College has held a monthly “teaching breakfast” at which faculty discuss informally the challenges of teaching and the strategies to enhance effective teaching and learning. With the hiring of a substantial number of new faculty in recent years and the College’s recognition that effective teaching is critical to its goals in recruitment and retention, the forum has become more formal and comprehensive. At the teaching breakfasts, which are open to all faculty and professional staff, presentations are made by members of the College community as well as external consultants on topics such as teaching large class sections, addressing plagiarism, using PowerPoint and Blackboard in the classroom, and helping students who struggle.

The College or its departments and divisions have undergone successful review for continuing accreditation by the American Association of Family and Consumer Science (AAFCS), American Dietetic Association (ADA), and the American Chemical Society (ACS). In the late 1990s, the College reviewed and revised its Education programs, which account for over 30% of the College’s graduates annually, with the objective of meeting the standards for national accreditation. Following rigorous review by the National Council for Accreditation of
Teacher Education (NCATE), the College received NCATE accreditation for its Division of Education in 2000. The Division of Economics and Business is currently in the fourth year of the five-year review cycle for potential accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business--International (AACSB).

As part of the SUNY system, the College at Oneonta participates in the multiple academic assessment processes administered through the state university system. SUNY Program Assessment is currently in progress, and the College’s plan for assessment of the new SUNY General Education requirement (described in Chapter III, Section B, of this report) was recently approved as submitted.

The College uses a number of College-wide and department-specific instruments and processes to assess student learning outcomes, such as surveys, portfolios, analytical papers, projects, and focus groups. Results are shared with faculty and staff, as appropriate, and they often generate recommendations for program improvements. The Student Opinion Survey provides College-wide data, and the Student Perception of Instruction provides data on individual courses and departments.

Students in the Education Division take the New York State Certification Teacher Examinations, and results are filed by the College with the New York State Education Department. The most recent available data indicates a 98% pass rate for the College’s 1999-2000 students. The Chemistry Department utilizes the American Chemical Society Test with the addition of local questions to assess outcomes of its majors.

The SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey (See Appendix VII G) provides additional data on instructional quality from the perspective of graduates who have entered the workforce or graduate school. The percentage of alumni respondents who rated the overall quality of instruction as “good,” “good to excellent” or “excellent” has increased from 74.8% for 1996
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

graduates to 88.6% for 2000 graduates. For instruction in the major, the ratings have increased from 87.9% (1996) to 89.7% (2000).

B. Advisement

The College’s objective in this area is to “sustain a reliable, student-oriented advisement program.” The College has dramatically improved student advisement throughout the 1990s, as evidenced by students’ ratings of advisement on the Student Opinion Survey and the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey. Students’ mean ratings of academic advisement increased from 2.78 on the 1994 Student Opinion Survey to 3.27 on the 2000 survey. On the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey of 1996 graduates, 47% rated academic advisement as “good” to “excellent,” while on the survey of 2000 graduates, 60% rated it as “good” to “excellent.” The College achieved these gains by introducing a more comprehensive orientation program and supplemental activities, providing specialized program advisement, and upgrading technology to assist students and advisors in understanding degree requirements. [CE4]

The College initiated a summer orientation program in 1993, which is described in greater detail in Chapter VII of this report. This program continues to be developed and enhanced to serve the needs of traditional incoming freshmen and transfer students. Also significant is an orientation program in August for international students.

The College recently created an additional academic advisor position to help meet student demand for advisement through the Office of Academic Advisement and Orientation, which now averages 3200 appointments per year [CE4]. The office also conducts advisor training workshops for new and returning faculty, an increasingly popular service with the recent hiring of a significant number of new faculty.

The Student Opinion Survey has shown gains in “availability of your advisor” (up from
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

3.29 in 1994 to 3.47 in 2000) and in “value of information provided by your advisor” (up from 3.19 to 3.34 in the same period) [CE4]. The College now recognizes faculty for exceptional efforts in advising through its annual Outstanding Advisor Award.

The general advisement program is assessed and revised based on a number of instruments, including the Student Opinion Survey, SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey, and Freshman Satisfaction Survey. Information is also collected through the Withdrawal or Non-attendance Survey, which is sent to every student who withdraws from the College or elects to attend another college. Surveys are administered to students and families who participate in orientation. Current students are surveyed for their impressions of academic advisement, and faculty are surveyed in the advisor training workshops. Results of the assessments have been used to improve advisement programs and services.

The College provides specialized program advisement in several majors, including its largest major, Education. The Division of Education created the Office of Education Advisement and Field Experience in 1999. In addition to an informational web site and monthly newsletter for Education majors, the office conducts approximately eight group advisement sessions annually. In 2001, the office implemented e-mail distribution lists to provide students relevant information regarding advisement issues and matters related to their majors and concentrations. During the 2000-2001 academic year, the office held formal advisement appointments with approximately 600 students. Advisement sessions are also offered prior to pre-enrollment by the Division of Economics and Business and the Departments of Communication Arts and Psychology. In addition to the interim progress reports that all students receive, the Division of Economics and Business provides students with formal warning notices if they are in academic difficulty.

In recent years, the College has enhanced its use of technology to assist students and
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

advisors in understanding degree requirements. Computerized advisement documents have been
developed and have been made available to students and advisors since 1996. In addition, the
College now offers web access to individualized advisement documents.

Since 1999, the College has allowed students to register for classes via the World Wide
Web from any computer with Internet access. The service includes on-line class schedules,
which are searchable by key terms, including the course attributes that are an integral component
of the General Education requirements. In addition, the system now prevents students from
registering for courses for which they do not meet the prerequisites. Many departmental web
sites also provide valuable information on degree requirements and career opportunities. Results
of the College’s Web Registration Survey and the Student Opinion Survey indicate that students
are extremely pleased with web registration. On the Student Opinion Survey, mean ratings of
registration procedures increased dramatically from 2.77 in 1994 to 3.46 in 2000.

C. Academic Support Services and Milne Library

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to improve academic support services
for students.” The Milne Library serves vital functions at the College, both as a library and as a
center of academic technology. The College’s academic support services include Learning
Support Services, the Office of Disabled Student Services, and the Educational Opportunity
Program.

The Milne Library has the second-largest collection of the SUNY colleges of arts and
science and the highest number of volumes per FTE student. Its services have been augmented
significantly since the mid-1990s, notably through the use of technology, the enhancement of its
collections, and the improvement of its facilities.

In the 1990s, Milne Library’s integral role on campus dramatically increased with the
rapid advances in computer technologies that have radically transformed students’ educational
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

experiences. Partly in recognition of the library’s successes in implementing technology, the College redefined the position of Director of Libraries to include campus-wide responsibility for academic technology, renaming the position Associate Provost for Library and Information Services. The College also located its new Teaching, Learning and Technology Center in Milne Library to support faculty efforts to enhance teaching through technology.

The library has made many improvements in services and facilities in response to data obtained through assessment processes, including analyses of the Student Opinion Survey. The library uses a wide range of other assessments to develop data for planning and revising its services. A Library Outcomes Assessment Committee has been created to oversee assessment of the facility, collections, and services. A user satisfaction form is available at all public service points, and librarians recently conducted a special campaign for one week in which all users were personally handed cards and asked to evaluate the library. [CE8]

Several surveys and reports provide evidence of effectiveness in all or most of Milne Library’s initiatives. These include an external consultant’s evaluation of Milne Library in 1995, focus groups conducted by South Central Regional Library Council in 1999, a Marketing Club Survey of Milne Library in 1995 and 2002, comparisons with peer institutions through ACRL’s Academic Libraries Peer Comparison Tool and annual reports, and the AACSB/EBI 1999 Student Satisfaction Survey.

During the 1990s, the library created a web site to improve access to information and to extend services, such as interlibrary loan and access to reference materials, beyond the physical walls of the library. The web site extended access to those off campus through a gateway, making information resources available to library users at any time. The web site has become a rich resource offering a broad array of educational materials through an easily accessible route. [CE8]
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

Milne Library has further expanded resources and increased access by adding electronic databases, e-books, electronic journals, electronic reserves, and on-line delivery of selected interlibrary loan materials. Computers are now available throughout the library, thanks in part to two legislative grants, which also facilitated the development of a CD-ROM resource network. These efforts to improve services continue with the migration during the 2002-2003 academic year to ALEPH, the new library management system. When fully implemented, the new system will facilitate access to the collections of Milne Library and other SUNY libraries. The library continues to enhance access to resources for those with special needs and for those studying in off-campus programs. A recently added service provides faculty with copies of non-circulating library materials. [CE8]

The library has expanded its instructional program, both to meet the demands created by the addition of an information management competency to the SUNY General Education requirement and to further national efforts in promoting information literacy. Increased collaboration between teaching and library faculty has strengthened the effectiveness of the library instructional program, which consists of single classes, credit courses, and informal workshops. One indication of that increased collaboration is the doubling over the last eight years of the number of classes taught by librarians working with faculty members to tailor presentations to specific course assignments. To meet new needs arising from the rapid increase in the variety and availability of information resources made possible through advances in computer technology, the library replaced its long-standing one-credit course, “Library Research Methods,” with “Library and Internet Research.” The library’s instructional program was expanded recently with the approval of a new three-credit course, “Research Sources in the Information Age.” Librarians also teach two classes for students enrolled in “Issues in Education,” a required course for all Education majors; one class for students in “Composition,”
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

which is required of all students; and a five-class component for those in “Orientation to Higher Education,” which is required of students in the Educational Opportunity Program. [CE8]

In recent years, the College has also made a number of improvements to Milne Library’s physical environment, making it more conducive to study and research. A new electronic classroom affords students opportunities for hands-on learning of information concepts and skills. Vital service points in the library, such as the circulation desk and reference desk, have been renovated or relocated for the convenience of users. Other improvements include extended hours, better signage, equipment replacement, and new furnishings and carpeting. With the help of a legislative grant, the library expanded the collections, upgraded computers, and renovated the space in the Dewey Room, which houses materials selected to meet the needs of students in the elementary, secondary, and graduate teacher education programs. The computer lab, where students can also borrow laptop computers to use in the library’s wireless environment, has proven to be an immensely popular addition to the library. [CE8]

To accommodate students who are working together in groups, the library added two small group-study rooms adjacent to the Reference Room and a larger study space equipped with a computer and projection equipment. To make the library more conducive to study, one area of the library was designated as an absolute quiet study space, and supervision was increased in high-traffic areas of the library.

Milne Library has continued to increase the quality, diversity, and size of its collections through collaboration with teaching faculty. Library funding has increased in recent years through on-going donations from the College’s Alumni Annual Fund, legislative and state discretionary grants, Student Technology Initiative funds, and individual donations. The selection of library materials and the allocation of acquisition funds to academic departments are
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

coordinated by the College Library Committee, which consists of representatives of each academic department. To increase equity in funding, the committee revised the Acquisitions Allocation Formula in 1996-1997. [CE8, 11]

On College-wide assessment instruments, Milne Library and its services continue to receive very positive ratings. On the Student Opinion Survey, students rank the library at the top of the list of services and facilities, and the scores for satisfaction have increased in each of the last three administrations of the survey. Mean ratings of library facilities increased from 3.68 in 1994 to 4.13 in 2000; ratings of services increased from 3.61 to 4.06. On the Student Perception of Instruction, the “Library and Internet Research” course scores consistently high.

Through its Learning Support Services program, the College provides academic support services for students who need to develop specific skills or master material in specific classes. A number of improvements have taken place in Learning Support Services in the past several years. [CE4]

The format and evaluation procedures for freshman placement tests, which are administered during orientation, have been revised to increase objectivity, upgrade testing conditions, and decrease the need for retesting. The format and evaluation procedures of the College Writing Exam, which is a graduation requirement, have also been revised.

In addition to tutorial services and traditional course offerings in basic writing, reading, and math, Learning Support Services has added a “Reading and Study Skills Improvement” course, based on theories of developmental learning and the scaffolding pedagogy of applied learning. The support services program has also developed a web presence to provide information and materials to students. [CE4, 9]

Assessment of Learning Support Services courses and services have been increasingly
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

positive in recent years. Methods of data collection include feedback via an electronic bulletin board for the courses; a longitudinal study of cross sections of students who have passed the courses; and the tracking of grade point averages, add/drops, and graduation rates of students who have participated in Learning Support Services programs. Mean ratings of tutorial services on the Student Opinion Survey increased from 3.10 in 1994 to 3.24 in 2000. [CE4, 9]

The College provides services for students with a disability through its Student Disability Services office. In recent years, the office has created an adaptive technology center with hardware and software support for speech to text, screen readers, portable screen enhancers, learning disability software, portable scanning pens, screen magnifiers, and telephone service for the deaf modules. Evaluations by participating students indicate that they are satisfied with the office’s services. [CE4, 9]

The Office of Special Programs, which coordinates the College’s Educational Opportunity Program, has implemented a number of improvements in programs and services. In the late 1990s, the Educational Opportunity Program initiated its Summer Academy, a tuition-free, four-week program that provides an opportunity for students entering in the fall semester to prepare academically for the rigors of college study. The Educational Opportunity Program has also developed a Laptop Loan Program, which provides personal computers to students who cannot afford to purchase their own.

The Summer Academy Survey provides data for review and revision of the academy. Recent results indicate that 92% of Summer Academy participants found the academy helpful and informative. A comparison of grade point averages of students in the Laptop Loan Program showed that 46% of participants increased their average while participating.

Efforts to recruit and serve EOP students have been effective, as indicated by the
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

following data:

> EOP applications increased from 1195 in 2001 to 1344 in 2002.
> EOP yield increased from 40.0% in 2001 to 43.6% in 2002.
> EOP mean high school average for new freshmen increased from 78 in 2001 to 81 in 2002.
> EOP mean combined SAT for new freshmen increased from 870 in 2001 to 900 in 2002. [CE9]

D. Assessing Learning Outcomes to Enhance Learning

The College’s objective in this area is to “provide faculty the opportunity to articulate and assess discipline-oriented learning outcomes on an on-going basis to enhance the learning experience for students.” Reviews begin with academic departments using the questions on the College’s Form 1 and Form 2. Their reports are then reviewed by a faculty committee (OATF) and the appropriate academic dean. Additionally, the SUNY System Administration requirement provides for external reviewers to assess each major every seven years. On the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey, mean ratings of “overall educational experience” have increased from 77.8% in the “good” to “excellent” range for 1996 graduates to 88.6% in the range for 2000 graduates. [CE9]

The College’s efforts in outcomes assessment are described in greater detail in Chapter III of this report and Section A of this chapter.

E. General Education

[Note that a more complete discussion of General Education can be found in Section C of Chapter III.]

The College’s objective in this area is to “maintain an academically rigorous, stimulating, and satisfying general education experience for all students.” As a result of the College’s previous self-assessment of General Education, the requirements were revised extensively in 1996. Based on student learning outcomes required by SUNY System Administration, the College’s requirements were revised subsequently in 2000. The College has initiated activities to
monitor the implementation and instructional assessment of General Education for all students. [CE9]

Following a directive from SUNY, the College implemented the system-wide General Education program, SUNY General Education 2000, for all incoming freshmen in the fall of 2000 and for transfer students in fall 2002. Additional faculty were hired to support the implementation of General Education 2000. The SUNY Learning Outcomes upon which the requirements are based address ten knowledge and skill areas: mathematics, sciences, social sciences, American history, western civilization, other world civilizations, humanities, the arts, foreign language, and basic communication [CE7]. The Learning Outcomes also address several competency areas: writing skills, oral communication skills, critical thinking (reasoning), and information management. [CE6]

The Division of Academic Affairs has developed an assessment plan (See Appendix III A) for all Learning Outcomes in general education courses. The College’s plan, which superseded the College’s original plan and preliminary efforts, was approved by SUNY as submitted, will be implemented in fall 2002, and will form the basis for the planned review of student learning relative to the SUNY General Education requirement.

F. Faculty Development

The College’s objective in this area is to “increase the opportunity for faculty development in a wide range of areas, including teaching effectiveness, technology, and disciplinary research.” In recent years, the College has significantly increased opportunities for faculty development through such actions as implementing a Grants Development Office; expanding the available internal grants programs; establishing the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center; and initiating orientation sessions for new faculty. [CE5, 12]
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

The Grants Development Office, established in 1994, assists faculty and staff in conceptualizing, planning, drafting, and submitting proposals for grants and other sources of funding. The College has shown substantial gains in external funding since the office was established. The office offers faculty opportunities such as funding searches and proposal reviews. The office also administers several grant programs for College at Oneonta faculty and staff, including the Faculty/Staff Research Grant Program, Creative Activity Grant Program, and Summer Fellowships Program (which was implemented in 2000). In the 2001-2002 SUNY Sponsored Program Activity Report, the College ranked fifth in its sector in the number of grants awarded.

The College’s Walter B. Ford Fund, established in 1977, provides income generated by the College’s endowment to fund faculty development activities. The most substantial internal grants program, the Ford Grants are administered by the College’s Walter B. Ford Faculty and Staff Grants Committee.  [CE5, 12]

Additional internal grant opportunities are offered through Faculty Development Grants by the Provost’s Office, Faculty/Student Research Grants by the College Senate Committee on Research, and Technology Fellowships by the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center. In each academic year since 2000, the Provost’s Faculty Development Initiative has offered $50,000 in faculty development funding, which is available by application to faculty of any rank.

To help faculty prepare for the implementation of the College’s Universal Computer Access Program in 1998, the College created the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center in Milne Library. The Center provides support for faculty in integrating technology into their teaching in order to improve student learning.

In addition to direct individual technical assistance to faculty members, the Center offers workshops, instructor-led training, conferences, and access to specialized hardware and software.
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

The Center offers faculty fellowships, travel grants, and a “Fast-tec” program through which student assistants are assigned to work individually with faculty on technology projects. Through the Center, the College offered its first annual award for innovative uses of technology in 2001.

To assist in retaining new faculty and to ease their transition to the campus community, the College initiated a faculty orientation program in 2000. Six sessions cover a variety of topics such as the library, campus technology, academic and administrative procedures, faculty governance, advisement, faculty development opportunities, assessment, and support services. Based on a survey of participants, the program was modified in 2001 to incorporate topics suggested by participants. The orientation program is now offered in both the fall and spring semesters, and faculty are encouraged to attend the program for both semesters.

G. Celebrating Academic Accomplishments

The College’s objective in this area is to “encourage and celebrate student, staff, and faculty accomplishments.” A number of external and internal programs have contributed to the College’s successes in encouraging and celebrating academic accomplishments. Through the Public Relations Office, academic accomplishments are publicized in the local media as well as in hometown newspapers. Award winners and honorees are recognized at many College events.

Within the state university, the SUNY Trustees confer the rank of Distinguished Teaching Professor in recognition of “consistently superb teaching” and Distinguished Service Professor in recognition of “extraordinary service.” Since the initiation of the program in the early 1970s, the College has been honored with 11 Distinguished Teaching Professorships, including six in the past six years. Two faculty members have been named Distinguished Service Professors, the most recent in 2002. Candidates for the Distinguished Professorship are nominated by the students and faculty of their local campus, evaluated by a SUNY advisory committee, and recommended to the SUNY Chancellor, who presents the finalists to the Board of Trustees for
V. Comprehensive College Plan Goal I - Academic Quality

approval. [CE12]

The SUNY Chancellor’s Awards Programs recognize outstanding faculty and staff for Excellence in Teaching, Librarianship, or Professional Service. The College has been honored with 52 Excellence in Teaching Awards, including ten in the past five years; four Excellence in Librarianship Awards, including two in the past five years; and three Excellence in Professional Service Awards, including two in the past five years; and one Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities, a category that was added in 2002. SUNY Chancellor’s Award recipients are nominated by a colleague and must receive the recommendation of a campus committee and the college president. A SUNY-wide committee then reviews the nominations and recommends selected candidates to the Chancellor for final approval. [CE5, 12]

The annual SUNY Chancellor’s Awards for Student Excellence were initiated in 1997 to recognize students who excel academically and contribute to the greater community. Thirteen students from the College at Oneonta have received the award in the five years of the program.

Internally, the College annually awards the Susan Sutton Smith Prize to a faculty member with an exceptional record of scholarship or other evidence of academic excellence, the Richard Siegfried Prize for junior faculty, the Simphiwe Hlatswayo Adjunct Award for outstanding part-time instructors, and the Outstanding Advisor Award.

In addition to many College-wide and departmental recognition programs, the College offers 15 honor societies for students.
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

[Characteristics of Excellence #3, 11, and 15 are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

The College’s goal in the area of admissions selectivity, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to attract and enroll talented students consistent with the College’s mission, goals, and resources.” Specific objectives include achieving “highly selective” status as defined by SUNY, continuing to meet campus enrollment targets while improving the new student profile, maintaining and refining recruitment and marketing strategies, and enhancing scholarship and financial aid opportunities.

A. Increasing Selectivity

The College’s objective in this area is to “achieve ‘highly selective’ status as defined by SUNY.” The state university defines “highly selective” through a selectivity matrix in which 60% of an institution’s incoming freshmen have a high school average of 85 or higher and combined SAT scores of 1100 or higher (See Appendix VI A).

In the early to mid-1990s, the College identified significant weaknesses in its admissions selectivity and its retention efforts. The weaknesses began to have a negative impact on the College’s financial situation as state funding became more closely tied to enrollment. Recognizing that its financial stability depended upon improvements in academic quality, recruitment, and retention, the College decided to attempt to attract increasingly well qualified students.

This objective was formalized through the signing of a Memo of Understanding with SUNY System Administration in December 2000 (See Appendix II C). The memo established annual selectivity benchmarks agreed to by both parties through fall 2004, defined as the percentages of enrolled students meeting Group 1 and Group 2 standards within the
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

The specific targets—aggregate percentages of Group 1 and Group 2 students—increase incrementally from 32% in fall 2001 to 60% in fall 2004. In fall 1996, the College’s aggregate percentage of students in Groups 1 and 2 was well below 20%. For fall 2002, the aggregate percentage increased to 51%, up from 37% in Fall 2001.

The College’s substantial progress towards becoming a highly selective institution is illustrated in the table below, which shows a dramatic decrease in the freshman acceptance rate—and thereby a dramatic increase in admissions selectivity—since 1996:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Fall)</th>
<th>Freshman Acceptance Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To help achieve highly selective status—and the inherent improvements in the academic profile of incoming students—the College re-engineered its admissions and recruitment programs in 1996. The Office of Admissions and the Recruitment Office (the location of the Recruitment Communications Initiative implemented two years earlier) were merged in 1996 into one functional area. Improvements in recruitment and marketing strategies (see Section C below)
and enhancements to institutional scholarship opportunities (see Section D below) have contributed significantly to the College’s efforts to increase selectivity.

B. Meeting Enrollment Targets with Stronger Students

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to meet campus enrollment targets while improving our new student profile.” The College has consistently met its enrollment targets in the 1990s and 2000s, and the freshman profile has increased dramatically since 1996. Ten-year enrollment trends and current projections are included as Appendix II B.

The College’s many initiatives in the area of undergraduate admissions and recruitment, discussed in Sections C and D of this chapter, have resulted in a dramatic increase in freshman admissions applications, as illustrated in the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Fall)</th>
<th>Freshman Applications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>10,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>9,278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>8,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>8,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>7,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>6,413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the College’s academic programs have increased in quality (see Chapter V of this report), the College has attracted more academically talented students. With the increase in the
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

overall number of applications and in the number of applications from academically talented students, the College has been able to meet enrollment targets while concurrently improving the freshman class profile. The chart below indicates improvements in high school grade point average and mean combined SAT scores of recent incoming freshman classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Fall)</th>
<th>Mean High School Average</th>
<th>Mean Combined SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>1098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>1060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>1046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>1039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>1018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>1015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International students account for approximately 1.3% of the College’s student population. Though there are no specific enrollment targets for international students, the College substantially increased the number of international students on campus in 2001 due in large part to a reorganization of the Office of International Education. This office handles
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

admissions for prospective undergraduate students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. The office sends catalogs and application materials to U.S. embassies, consulates, and advising centers abroad, as well as to potential students in response to inquiries; provides support services for international students in the areas of admissions, legal arrangements, and advising; evaluates foreign credentials for admission and transfer credit; issues the federal certificate of eligibility for undergraduate students to secure visas for entry to the U.S. and for enrolling at the College; and helps international students comply with U.S. non-immigrant legal requirements. By means of travel abroad and through the World Wide Web, the Office of International Education proactively recruits international students.

C. Recruitment and Marketing Strategies

The College’s objective in this area is to “maintain and refine recruitment and marketing strategies as part of a comprehensive institutional marketing plan.” The College has improved its institutional image significantly in recent years through appropriate marketing strategies and increased efforts in public relations, based on improvements in academic programs and student services. Overall institutional marketing efforts are described more fully in Chapter XI of this report. Specific to admissions and recruitment, the College’s recruitment communications initiative is noteworthy here.

In recent years, the College has refined its recruitment communications into a state-of-the-art communications plan for use in the undergraduate admissions and recruitment funnel. The communications plan is comprehensive, personal, and fully integrated from inquiry through enrollment. It is supplemented by an annual “search” mailing that adds more students to the developing pool of over 20,000 initial inquiries.

The communications plan is embedded with extremely high-quality, up-to-date recruitment publications, which recently received a gold medal in the national 2002 CASE Circle
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

of Excellence Awards, a silver award in the national Admissions Advertising Awards, and the Best of Category award in the SUNY CUAD Awards for Excellence. On the Student Opinion Survey, students’ ratings of the admissions publications and college catalog have increased on the five-point Likert scale from 3.46 in 1994 to 3.55 in 2000. The ratings of accuracy of information received before enrollment have increased from 3.29 to 3.33 in the same period.

[CE15]

The communications plan has been extended over several years with the design and development of a series of newsletters to support recruitment and enhance retention of enrolled students. Annually, the newsletters now include an academic newsletter for potential students, a student services newsletter for potential students, two high school counselor newsletters, a two-year college transfer counselor newsletter, two family newsletters for first-year students, a family newsletter for returning students, and a newsletter for returning students. Feedback from newsletter recipients has been very positive. On the Student Opinion Survey, ratings of the College’s “concern for you as an individual” have increased from 2.88 in 1994 (before the student newsletters were introduced) to 3.15 in 2000. [CE3]

Over the past several years, the College has also expanded and integrated its student-to-student recruitment activities, which include the implementation of a comprehensive student-to-student telecounseling initiative, the development of an overnight student hosting program, and the creation of a paid student admissions assistant staff, including admissions assistants in residence, receptionists, and tour team coordinators.

In the admissions process, the College has enhanced its customer-service focus, added a Saturday campus visit program, expanded off-campus receptions for accepted students, improved on-campus open house programs, expanded the use of the Internet in recruiting, and provided data regarding student progress at the College to counselors in high schools and two-year
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

[CE3]

During the fall 2001 semester, the College hosted its “Op Inform” program, which brought more than 140 guidance counselors to campus. Additionally, a number of changes were made to the College’s Open House programs as a result of feedback from participants. Further evidence of the success of the College’s recruiting efforts includes positive feedback from prospective students and their families and data showing that attendance at summer and fall Open House programs increased 35.8% from 2000-01 to 2001-02.

Several of the College’s admissions initiatives have also aided in increasing the diversity of incoming students, as described in Chapter VIII of this report.

D. Institutional Scholarship Opportunities

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to enhance institutional scholarship opportunities and financial aid incentives.” The College has made substantial improvements in the scope and use of its scholarships and significant improvements in its financial aid procedures.

The College has greater discretion in enhancing institutional scholarships than in providing financial aid incentives. Scholarships are based largely on private funds raised through the College Foundation, while financial aid awards are largely defined by the public funds available through state and federal financial aid programs. In the area of financial aid, the College has significantly improved customer service and processing time for financial aid awards over the years, and awards are made carefully to ensure the maximum benefit to students. For example, the College’s new Presidential Scholarships are defined as being for room and board instead of for tuition because that definition maximizes the additional tuition-based aid available to students.

On the Student Opinion Survey, ratings of financial aid services have shown statistically significant increases in all areas. The general rating of financial aid services increased from 2.71
VI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal II - Admissions Selectivity

in 1994 to 3.23 in 2000; the rating of quality of financial aid information from 2.89 to 3.30; and the rating of billing and payment procedures from 3.06 to 3.35.

Institutional scholarships have become an increasingly significant factor in the College’s ability to attract good students. A comprehensive merit scholarship program has been developed and expanded for use in the admissions and recruitment cycle. In 1996, the College offered fewer than ten scholarships targeted for recruitment. In 2002, the College offered over 200. Appendix XI A indicates the growth in the College’s endowed and annual scholarship offerings in the past ten years. [CE11]

For entering freshmen in fall 2002, the College offered its first 26 Presidential Scholarships. The new renewable scholarships, valued at $3400 annually, have been offered to applicants with high school averages of 90 or above and combined SAT scores of 1200 or above.

Recruitment scholarships at the College are generally targeted at incoming freshmen, but the program includes several scholarships designed specifically for transfer students. Procedurally, the process for reviewing applications and awarding scholarships has been fully integrated into the admissions cycle. The admissions scholarships complement a large scholarship program for students who are currently in attendance and some small departmental programs. Further discussion of scholarships is included in Chapter XI, Section C, of this report.
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

[Characteristics of Excellence #4, 10, 11, 14, and 16 are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

The College’s goal in the area of retention, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to increase substantially the number of students who complete programs of study.” Specific objectives include increasing freshman-to-sophomore retention, focusing on campus environmental issues, improving the quality of student life and learning, and using assessment instruments to determine student satisfaction. A true campus-wide commitment to retention has helped the College establish a solid foundation for meeting its goal. [CE16]

The College recognized its decreasing graduation rates in the mid-1990s. The six-year graduation rates for the entering freshman classes of 1993 and 1994 were 45% and 44% respectively, consistent with national averages for similar public institutions but much lower than the rates of 52% to 55% for classes entering in 1990 to 1992. Appendix VII A summarizes graduation rates for freshman classes entering the College in the 1990s.

Because the SUNY system tied state funding more directly to enrollment in the mid-1990s and more specifically to enrollment of upper-division students, the College recognized that improvements in its retention rate would result in improvements to its fiscal stability. The College identified weaknesses in freshman-to-sophomore retention, academic credentials of the incoming freshman classes, and campus environmental issues (identified through the Student Opinion Survey) as primary factors in the decreasing graduation rate. Knowing that incoming students with stronger academic credentials persisted at a higher rate, the College focused on recruiting stronger students. Because students are more likely to leave college between the freshman and sophomore years than between any other two years, the College also focused on improving freshman-to-sophomore retention. Having identified the environmental issues that
caused students to leave, the College addressed them through the relevant areas of campus operations. The Withdrawal Survey (See Appendix VII B) indicated that students listed the College’s academic reputation and academic advisement system as important reasons for leaving (among the areas that the College could influence directly). All of these issues were incorporated into objectives in the Comprehensive College Plan, and the College has improved substantially upon the weaknesses in recent years.

The College anticipates that improvements in freshman-to-sophomore retention and in the academic credentials of incoming students, in particular, will result in improvements in the six-year graduation rate in the very near future. Given the 13% increase in freshman-to-sophomore retention from 1996 to 2001, the College anticipates a six-year graduation rate in excess of 50%.

As illustrated in Appendix VII A, the five-year graduation rate for freshmen entering in 1996 (41.36%) has already exceeded the six-year rate for those entering in 1995 (41.01%). The four-year graduation rate for freshmen entering in 1997 (34.25%) shows a marked improvement over the four-year rate for those entering in 1996 (27.55%).

A. Freshman-to-Sophomore Retention

The College’s objective in this area is to “increase the freshmen-to-sophomore retention rate to equal or exceed the average for benchmark colleges.” The College has been increasingly successful in meeting this objective. The College’s Memo of Understanding with SUNY (See Appendix II C) establishes the specific objective of a 75% freshman-to-sophomore retention rate for fall 2003 freshmen returning in fall 2004, replacing the less specific reference to “benchmark colleges.”

Since the College adopted an enrollment management model in 1996, freshman-to-sophomore retention has increased to a rate of 73.6% for fall 2001 freshmen returning in fall 2002, up from 60.6% for fall 1996 freshmen returning in fall 1997. The table below indicates the
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

College’s gains since 1996-1997 in fall freshman-to-sophomore retention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Year</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
<th>Fall Year</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
<th>Retention Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>73.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1257</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1151</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1071</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1130</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1158</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improvements in retention have already helped the College meet its enrollment targets with smaller freshman classes, thereby contributing to gains in admissions selectivity, as described in Chapter VI of this report. In turn, the recruitment of increasingly talented freshmen has complemented retention efforts, as academic ability at the time of enrollment is the single factor with the highest correlation to retention.

To achieve its objectives in freshman-to-sophomore retention, the College revised the charge of its campus-wide Enrollment Management Committee in 1997 to include retention. Established primarily as an oversight body to review admissions programs and activities, the Enrollment Management Committee became more involved in the examination of campus-wide student life and learning issues, focusing particularly on their impact on retention. The membership of the committee was also expanded to increase faculty representation. [CE10]

The committee established an annual planning agenda that includes gathering and reviewing data on students’ perception of the quality of campus life and learning. The College produces a number of reports that are particularly relevant to the committee in its work on retention:
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

> annual review of student withdrawal data (See Appendix VII B)
> annual review of freshman first-to-second-semester retention data
> annual review of freshman-to-sophomore retention data
> semi-annual review of Admissions Decliners Survey (See Appendix VII C).

Based on its annual review of data, the Enrollment Management Committee has provided leadership or support for a number of diverse campus retention initiatives. Perhaps the most significant initiative was the 1997 campus-wide Retention Summit. The highly successful summit demonstrated the significance of retention to the College, established the concept that retention is an affect of the quality of student life and learning, brought a broad range of campus constituencies together in the effort to improve retention, and galvanized the campus community in support of retention efforts.

A second significant initiative related to freshman-to-sophomore retention is the College’s 1998 implementation of an annual six-week Freshman Satisfaction Survey (See Appendix VII D). The survey continues to provide valuable data about the adjustment of freshmen early in their first semester, a critical time for freshmen to establish ties to the College that result in their persistence. The College has used survey results to modify a number of its orientation processes and to implement new components in its freshman transition programming. A member of the College staff has also tried to contact every respondent who identified an individual issue with the College and provided contact information. [CE10]

The College’s creation of a summer orientation office and development of an expanded summer orientation program have also contributed to improvements in retention by easing the transition of new students to the College. The Office of Academic Advisement and Orientation schedules at least six two-day orientation sessions throughout the summer for new freshmen and their families and two one-day sessions for new transfer students. Students have the opportunity to learn about life at the College and its academic requirements. They meet individually with
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

faculty advisors, register for classes, and order textbooks. A faculty cadre has been trained to enhance advisement during the summer orientation program. These advisors meet in small groups with students and family members to discuss academic expectations, mingle with guests during meals and receptions, and assist with the advisement and registration of students. [CE10]

The College has several programs in place to increase the retention rate of students in academic difficulty. Learning Support Services (as described in Chapter V, Section C, of this report) offers skill-building services to help students academically. The Committee on Student Progress and Status recently initiated a re-orientation program for students who are placed on academic probation prior to their second semester; through the program, staff members offer advice on selecting majors and courses, time management, and study skills [CE4]. A new First-Year Experience program, described in Section B of this chapter, was implemented in fall 2002 [CE4]. The Committee on Student Progress and Status recently implemented a procedure that delays students’ academic dismissal in the spring semester if they are registered for summer classes to allow a re-evaluation of their progress at the end of the summer session.

In its continuing efforts to improve retention, the Enrollment Management Committee will identify annually factors which present barriers to students’ success and make related recommendations to appropriate groups and decision-makers across campus. The committee will also further examine the issue of retention after the sophomore year by analyzing withdrawal data by year level. The committee will also work with the Institutional Research Council to increase the availability of information on retention campus-wide.

B. Campus Environmental Issues

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to focus on campus environmental issues, such as student recognition and residence life, to create a safe and intellectually
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

stimulating environment for all.” The College has made significant progress in meeting this objective through enhancements to residence hall programs, campus facilities, health and safety programs, and student recognition programs.

The College has initiated a number of College-wide and department-specific student recognition programs in recent years. Some of these efforts in student recognition are described in Chapter V, Section G, and Chapter XI, Section B, of this report. Residence-hall-based recognition programs have also been expanded. The College now hosts a chapter of the National Residence Hall Honorary, which recognizes the top 1% of resident students for their academic success, and offers a National Residence Hall Honorary scholarship. Resident advisors who make the Dean’s List are also recognized through a new program.

Approximately 2800 students currently reside in the College’s 14 residence halls. Nearly all freshmen and sophomores live on campus, and in recent years, more juniors and seniors are choosing to live on campus. The College has plans to construct a new residence hall in the near future, which will offer apartment-style living quarters. In recent years, the College has made many improvements in the area of residence life facilities and programs, based largely on student responses to the annual Quality of Life Survey (See Appendix VII E).

The College’s focus on making the residential life experience part of the students’ overall educational development is evident in many programs. New living options have been offered—such as “freshman interest groups,” “international living,” and “education building blocks”—to group students with similar academic interests or majors. A number of hall-based academic programs have been initiated, including the Academic Team Member student-to-student mentoring program and the new First-Year Experience program. [CE4]

The Academic Team Member peer advisement program was created in the late 1990s to supplement faculty advisement and to enhance the academic environment in residence halls. The
members have many responsibilities within the residence hall, including holding ten office hours per week and designing and implementing at least one academic program per month. Residence hall students have benefitted from the informal advice and referrals of their academically successful peers.  

Because national research and the College’s experience have shown that first-year college students make a smoother transition to college when they establish a positive relationship with a faculty or staff member, the College introduced a program in 2002 called Connections: The First Year Experience. Designed to welcome freshmen into the learning community, the program offers a series of events to connect new students with each other and with faculty and staff. Connections: The First Year Experience sponsors interactive programs by faculty, staff, and students on topics ranging from decision making to dream analysis. It connects students with faculty members (who participate in residence life events), heightens the sense of community, and provides informal mentoring in the comfortable environment of the residence halls.  

Up-to-date computer labs, which are open 24 hours a day and seven days a week, have been installed in every residence hall. Each hall is also home to at least one “Res-Tech,” a technology-savvy student who assists in maintaining the lab, installing equipment for other students, and trouble-shooting. [CE14]  

The College has undertaken several initiatives in recent years to promote student health and safety. A Personal Safety Committee—which includes student, faculty, and staff representatives—now addresses campus safety issues and perceptions, notably facilities-related safety issues. A Student Development task force was formed in the late 1990s to work on alcohol and drug-abuse prevention. A health educator has been hired to promote student health and wellness, and a substantial grant from the NCAA develops student-athletes as campus leaders to promote healthy living choices.
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

In 2001, the College introduced card key access to all residence halls, and the program is currently being implemented in academic and administrative buildings. The Public Safety Department was upgraded to the University Police, and officers now receive more extensive training and are eligible to carry firearms. The On-Campus Emergency Squad, a student medical response group supervised by the Health and Wellness Center and co-advised by the University Police, was established to respond to on-campus medical emergencies.

In 1998, following a comprehensive review of food service operations by a special committee and a campus-wide survey of customer satisfaction and preferences, the Board of Directors of the Organization of Ancillary Services (OAS) determined that a contract dining service would better meet the needs of students. The board entered into a three-year contract with Sodexho Campus Services, which began full operation in July 1999. The contract also provides students with the services of a registered dietitian.

Concurrently, the College committed significant funds, matched by a New York State bond issue, to renovating the campus food-service and dining facilities [CE11, 14]. In the four-year span that followed, the College completed dramatic improvements in renovating all of its food-service facilities and offering several new services.

Highlighted by the Sodexho’s “Campus Crossroads--Ultimate Dining” program at Wilsbach Hall, the College now offers two cyber-cafes, a convenience store, several new dining venues, and a variety of “branded” dining options. Customer satisfaction surveys indicate that students are very pleased with the new food-services. For example, 69% of students are now “highly satisfied” with Wilsbach Hall, up from 46% in just one year.

All residence halls at the College have been renovated in the past five years, and the College has established a regular cycle for renovating and refurbishing the halls. Academic and athletic facilities at the College have also improved dramatically in recent years, largely as the
result of an on-going, five-year, $21-million capital improvement campaign that used state matching funds to leverage the College’s investments in the project. Though they have contributed significantly to the College’s efforts in retention and admissions, many facilities improvements are discussed in greater detail in Chapter X of this report. [CE14]

The College has used recent renovations as opportunities for creating distinct environments to engage students intellectually. The recently renovated academic quad, for example, offers a variety of comfortable spaces that students use for studying or socializing. On the first day of classes, the quad is used as a focal point to help new students, with administrative staff and faculty available at tables to answer questions. In the renovation of Alumni Hall, space was created for Learning Support Services to support student study groups and individual tutoring, and the Student Disability Services office was expanded to offer spaces for students to take tests and get tutoring. The College Camp was reopened recently, and it is used for leadership training, recreational events, and astronomy courses that make use of the College observatory.

In 2000, during the regular administration of the Student Opinion Survey, the College was engaged in substantial construction projects in the area of the residence halls and in the academic quad. Consequently, students’ ratings of residence hall facilities showed only slight increases between the 1997 (3.06) and 2000 (3.15) surveys. A special local administration of the same survey in 2001 showed a dramatic jump to a rating of 3.43. Ratings of residence hall services and programs followed a similar track, moving from 3.06 in 1997 to 3.16 in 2000 and 3.44 in 2001. General condition of buildings and grounds also reflected the construction, moving from 3.30 in 1997 to 3.09 in 2000 and then jumping to 3.62 in 2001.

The SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey has shown a steady gain in the number of graduates who rate campus facilities as “good” to “excellent.” In 1996, 60.4% of graduates assigned those
VII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal III - Retention

ratings. By 2000, the percentage had increased to 78.8%.

C. Quality of Student Life and Learning

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue campus-wide efforts to improve the quality of student life and learning.” Since its adoption in 1997 following the Retention Summit, the commitment to this objective has touched all divisions of the College, as illustrated throughout this report. Assessment measures of the quality of instruction (cited in Chapter V, Section A, of this report), residential programs (previous section of this chapter), facilities (previous section of this chapter), and student recognition programs (Chapter XI, Section B) demonstrate the effectiveness of the campus-wide effort. [CE16]

In recent years in the Division of Academic Affairs, the College has, for example, hired over 80 new faculty, instituted an Office of Educational Advisement and Field Experience, expanded opportunities for service learning and volunteerism through the Center for Social Responsibility and Community, and enhanced International Education opportunities. [CE16]

The Division of Student Development has improved academic advisement processes, enhanced the summer orientation program, added programs to support students on academic probation, initiated the Academic Team Member and First-Year Experience programs, offered new leadership programs, and expanded the services of the Career Development Center. [CE16]

In the Division of Finance and Administration, the College is in the fourth year of a five-year, $21 million capital improvement project that has already brought dramatic improvements to the campus and its facilities. In the Division of College Advancement, the College has greatly expanded scholarship opportunities, added student recognition programs, and significantly augmented the student/faculty research grants program. [CE16]

D. Student Opinion Survey and SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey
The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to utilize the ACT Student Opinion Survey and SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey as a means of determining student satisfaction with their experiences related to academic programs, student services, and administrative services.” The College has used information from both surveys effectively to modify its programs and offerings, and both surveys remain important to the College’s assessment efforts. Through the new Institutional Research Council, the College intends to widen the distribution of survey results to the campus community as appropriate.

A summary of Student Opinion Survey results from 1994 to 2000 and a copy of the survey are attached as Appendix VII F. A summary of SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey results from 1996 to 2000 and a copy of the survey are attached as Appendix VII G.
The College’s goal in the area of pluralism, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to implement pluralism in the College community through a climate of encouragement, understanding, and respect among all members.” Beyond its commitment to democratic ideals, the College’s commitment to pluralism is based on recognition that its students will live in a global multicultural society, that they will work in a world economy, and that they will need to value and understand people who are different from themselves.

College personnel recognize that enhancing pluralism presents a number of challenges. A rural location, while offering many advantages to students and faculty, presents special challenges to an institution’s ability to recruit and retain underrepresented students and faculty. The College has worked towards increasing the percentage of underrepresented students, concurrent with the implementation of initiatives to enhance admissions selectivity and retention. Therefore, the College targets underrepresented students who are also highly qualified and highly sought-after by selective private and public institutions. The College has endeavored to create an environment, both intellectual and social, where underrepresented students, faculty, and staff represent an important part of the campus community.

To achieve its goal in pluralism, the College’s specific objectives include continuing to recruit and retain traditionally underrepresented members of the College community, addressing pluralism through departmental academic offerings, and continuing to present programs that promote pluralism. The College has made progress in the area of pluralism, as evidenced by the steady increase in its minority student enrollment and by students’ ratings of relevant items on the Student Opinion Survey.
A. Recruiting and Retaining Underrepresented Members

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to recruit and retain traditionally underrepresented members of the College community, and continue to raise minority student enrollment to 12% by September 1, 2003.” The College has increased its minority student enrollment and expanded its efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented faculty and staff.

The College continues to make progress towards its objective of raising minority student enrollment and raised its objective to 13% by fall 2004 in its Memo of Understanding with SUNY (See Appendix II C). In 1997, 8.6% of the College’s 4845 undergraduates who self-identified their race/ethnicity were Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native. In 2001, 10.2% of the 4989 who self-identified were Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native. Appendix VIII A demonstrates the increased enrollment of underrepresented students over the past ten years.

New leadership in the International Education Office has resulted in a marked increase in the number of international students studying at the College. While international students represent a small percentage of the College’s overall enrollment, they bring a valuable perspective to campus. The number of international students increased from 18 in fall 1996 to 41 in fall 2000 to 66 in fall 2001. The College’s objective in this area, as established by the Memo of Understanding with SUNY (See Appendix II C), is to increase the number of new freshman international students to 75 by 2005. Recent changes in immigration policies may make this objective difficult to attain.

The increasing diversity of the student body is reflected in increasingly positive ratings on the Student Opinion Survey. In 1994, the mean rating for “racial and ethnic diversity of the student body” was 3.24. In 2000, it rose to 3.36.

With a number of recent initiatives and on-going efforts in place, the College expects to
continue to progress towards meeting its objectives in recruiting and retaining minority students. In the area of recruitment, the College adapted the state-funded Edward R. Murrow High School initiative into a highly successful campus-funded “On-Site Acceptance” program at 12 New York City high schools. In partnership with SUNY, the College sponsors a bus trip for students accepted through the program to the College’s annual Accepted Student Open House. Participation has increased from 43 potential students in 1998 to 80 in 2000. The yield rate for participants was extremely high, as over 80% of participants enrolled in the College in 2000, up from 39.5% in 1998.

Additional merit scholarships have been created for underrepresented student groups, and 36 underrepresented students currently receive annual renewable $1000 scholarships. The Admissions Office has also added a part-time recruitment position specifically for outreach to underrepresented student groups, and the office has increased visits to high schools with significant minority student populations. Since 2001, reply cards in recruitment materials have requested ethnic background as an optional question to help target recruitment information to minority students and their families. [CE1]

To aid in efforts to recruit and retain underrepresented students, the College opened an Office of Multicultural Student Affairs in 2002. In fall 2002, the coordinator introduced an African-American, Latino, Asian, and Native American Peer Mentor Program to assist new students in their first year at the College. [CE1]

The College is engaged in a continuing effort to recruit underrepresented faculty and staff. That effort was expanded in 2002 with the creation of the Employee Recruitment and Retention Task Force. The Human Resources Office maintains an Affirmative Action recruitment database, and in 2001, the office implemented a web page listing all job vacancies at
VIII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal IV - Pluralism

the College and linking to other SUNY campuses and the community.

In the effort to recruit more underrepresented faculty, the College has also increased the amount of funding available for recruitment and expanded advertising in publications that are specifically directed to recruitment of minorities, females, veterans, and disabled persons. Search committees are trained and given guidelines before conducting searches.

While the College is still enhancing efforts to recruit underrepresented faculty and staff, it has made progress in recent years. Annual Affirmative Action reports demonstrate a decrease in “underutilization” of minorities and females. The percentage of minority faculty at the College increased from 8.96% to 10.6% from 2000 to 2001. The percentage of female faculty increased from 37.2% to 39.7% in the same period.

In an effort to increase retention of faculty and staff, the College has introduced individual or group orientation sessions for all employees. The Human Resources Office now gathers information from all employees leaving the College. The new Employee Recruitment and Retention Task Force will serve as a driving influence in the enhancement of employee recruitment and retention. Its initial focus will be on faculty positions. Its initial objectives are to increase the success level of recruitment for full-time, tenure-track faculty positions and to explore avenues that will lead to stronger retention, particularly of underrepresented members of the College community.

The College continues to pursue other initiatives aimed at increasing retention of underrepresented faculty and staff. An Affirmative Action Advisory Committee has been convened to advise the President [CE1]. A number of environmental improvements are contributing to the College’s effort, including an increase in the professional development opportunities for employees, new faculty orientation sessions, and expanded collaboration among student organizations, faculty, staff, and community groups in programs of the Center for
Multicultural Experiences.

**B. Pluralism in Academic Offerings**

The College’s objective in this area is “address pluralism through departmental academic offerings.” In addition to long-standing course offerings that address pluralism, notably through departments such as Africana and Latino Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies, the College has had a cultural diversity component in its General Education requirement since 1996. Many academic departments now offer courses that focus on cultural diversity as part of their regular offerings. The Office of International Education actively encourages students to participate in study abroad programs offered through the College and other SUNY institutions. The Student Opinion Survey reflects a significant gain in the mean rating of “multicultural content of courses you have taken,” which increased from 3.35 in 1994 to 3.52 in 2000. [CE6]

The College added a “Cultural Diversity Perspectives” requirement to its General Education program in 1996 “to encourage awareness of the differences which have been underrepresented in the dominant U.S. curriculum, differences expressed by such categories as gender, race, sexuality, class, nationality, religion, and culture and their interrelationships.” The SUNY General Education 2000 curriculum includes an “Other World Civilizations” requirement through which “students will demonstrate knowledge of either a broad outline of world history, or the distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture, etc., of one non-Western civilization.” [CE6]

Beyond the General Education requirement, many academic departments continue to develop and enhance programs that have a cultural diversity component. The Division of Education, for example, requires all students to take a “Diversity in Teaching” course and
VIII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal IV - Pluralism

includes diversity as one of the four themes in the division’s conceptual framework. Diversity is included as a theme in all required Education courses. The division’s graduate Literacy and Childhood Education programs include the required “New Trends in Literacy: Special Populations and Cultural Pluralism.” The graduate Adolescent Education program requires the course “Issues in Diversity and Education.” Also worthy of note is the series of books on the material culture of African Americans, Latino Americans, and Asian Americans currently being created by the Cooperstown Graduate Program. [CE6]

As demonstrated by class schedules and catalogs from the past five years, the College has dramatically increased the number of courses that emphasize cultural diversity.

C. Promoting Pluralism

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to present programs that promote pluralism for students, faculty, and staff.” Many areas of the College have been involved in promoting pluralism through programs and activities. On the Student Opinion Survey, the mean rating for “extent the campus has helped you appreciate diversity” increased from 3.03 in 1994 to 3.24 in 2000. On the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey, the ratings of the College as “good” to “excellent” for helping students “appreciate cultural differences” increased from 66.4% by 1996 graduates to 74.1% by 2000 graduates.

Programs promoting pluralism have been sponsored in recent years by academic departments and programs, Student Development Division offices, the Center for Multicultural Experiences, the Student Association, and many other campus organizations.

The Center for Multicultural Experiences, which the College established in 1993 to provide social and academic support to students of color and international students, is one of the leading agencies in presenting programs to promote pluralism at the College. In March-April 2002, for example, the center sponsored an Israeli folk dance program, multicultural student
dance party, a film on Asian-American women’s poetry, a holocaust program, a film screening by a lesbian filmmaker, a Native American celebration, and several other events.

The Center for Multicultural Experiences has also expanded its collaboration with student clubs and organizations, faculty, staff, and community groups, all of which often schedule events at the center. Several student cultural groups have office space at the center.

The College has offered several relevant programs for faculty, staff, and students, including diversity workshops, “Train-the-Trainer” programs through the National Coalition Building Institute, and training in the Anti-Defamation League’s “Campus of Difference” diversity model.

The Alumni Association has also taken an active role in promoting pluralism. The Alumni Association provides annual supplemental funding for programs at the Center for Multicultural Experiences, and the association often brings alumni from various cultures to campus for special events and presentations. Recently, an Educational Opportunity Program Alumni Association was formed, which is publicized through the Alumni Association’s magazine and on-line community.

In recent years, the Student Association has increased funding to underrepresented student groups. A number of Student Association sponsored clubs have been created to address the interests of underrepresented students, notably the Students of Color Coalition, Hispanic Organization for Learning Advancement, International Students Organization, and Open Minded Unity—a student organization dedicated to providing a safe environment for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students. The Student Association and its affiliated clubs have sponsored many events that promote pluralism at the College.

Several items on the Student Opinion Survey reflect the College’s progress in promoting pluralism. Perhaps most significantly, students’ mean rating for “racial harmony at this college”
VIII. Comprehensive College Plan Goal IV - Pluralism

has increased significantly from 2.63 in 1994 to 3.44 in 2000. The survey also showed significant gains in “racial prejudice by students seldom occurs” (which increased from 2.91 in 1994 to 3.58 in 2000), “racial prejudice by faculty seldom occurs” (3.39 to 3.71), “racial prejudice by staff seldom occurs” (3.18 to 3.68) and in “campus atmosphere of understanding,” (2.96 to 3.41). [CE9]
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

The College’s goal in the area of technology, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to enhance the use of technology to further the College’s Educational Mission.” The goal for technology was added to the CCP in 1997 when the College committed to integrating technology to enhance student learning and student life. Because of the rapidly evolving nature of technology, it is also the most fluid goal area of the CCP. To address the challenge of dynamic change in technological development and its impact on the College, the College created a broadly represented group, the Educational Technology Committee (ETC), which contains representatives of the faculty, students, and administration. The College’s anticipation of widespread applications of technology to support learning, its accurate evaluation of need and demand, and its commitment of resources have ensured that students and faculty have access to the educational technology that enhances teaching and learning in today’s curriculum.

The Technology Steering Committee, consisting of the faculty chair and vice-chair of the ETC and the two administrators responsible for academic and administrative technology, provides an efficient structure for coordinating technology campus-wide. An advisory committee of students, faculty, and administrators helps direct programs funded through the student technology fee. These groups, in consultation with College administrators, have proven effective for providing oversight and direction for the College’s efforts related to technology.

The College’s commitment to technology is evidenced in its Universal Computer Access for Students (UnCAS) initiative (See Appendix IX A). UnCAS is centered on the belief that computers are as basic to a student’s education as textbooks. The proposal was developed by the ETC as a result of working with a consultant from Sonoma State College in California. The plan
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

was approved by the College Senate and the administration in late 1997 and implemented in 1998.

Beginning with full-time incoming freshmen in 1999, students were assured of access to the information technology that had become essential to the curriculum and the workplace. In following the “textbook” model, individual students have access to computer hardware and software through personal ownership, leasing, loaner programs, or connections in the residence halls, classrooms, and labs. Based on responses to the Student Technology Initiative Survey, over 75% of the College’s students now own personal computers. Through the UnCAS program, the College remains committed to providing ubiquitous access to computers and information technology for all students and faculty. [CE14]

In support of its technology goal in the CCP, the College has also enhanced support for faculty by establishing the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center (TLTC) in Milne Library. For all users of technology, the College established the Information Technology Help Desk, which provides walk-in, telephone, and on-line support for any member of the College community. Additionally, the “Res-Tech” program provides on-site support for resident students. These programs are described in greater detail below.

Since 1998, the College has enhanced campus-wide access to electronic communication media, such as e-mail and the campus network; coordinated the acquisition, management, and support of information and instructional technology; offered training to the entire campus community in the application of technology; and expanded the use of the Internet, particularly the World Wide Web, as a tool in instruction, recruitment, student services, and public relations. [CE8, 14]

As cited below, student and faculty evaluations of campus technology have been very positive in recent years. Data collected through the Student Opinion Survey, local and national
technology surveys, and other sources indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the College’s technology and technical support. In the most recent annual survey by *Yahoo Internet Life*, the College was recognized as one of the nation’s “200 Most Wired Colleges.”

**A. Technology-Friendly Campus Environment  [CE8]**

The College’s objective in this area is to “develop a ‘technology-friendly’ campus environment to facilitate the integration of technology into the teaching and learning process, and demonstrate improvements in the campus technology environment by September 1, 2000.”

Evidence of the College’s accomplishments in this area can be found in the results of the Student Opinion Survey and the Student Technology Initiative Survey. On the Student Opinion Survey, students’ ratings of computing services and facilities increased significantly from 3.41 in 1997 to 3.81 in 2000. The College’s annual Student Computing Survey (See Appendix IX B) also indicates that students are pleased with technology at the College. On the 2002 survey, 84.6% of students indicated that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with computing at the College, an increase from 78.8% in 2001.

The College has emerged as a leader in the SUNY system in making computer technology part of every student’s education. Faculty incorporate technology into their teaching at a far higher rate than the national average, using computer-based classrooms, e-mail, Internet resources, and web pages (See Appendix IX C). The College ensures that all students have access to computers that meet their academic needs. All of these factors require a robust technological infrastructure as well as significant technical support. [CE14]

The College has made a substantial commitment to update and upgrade continually its environment for technology. Students have almost 600 up-to-date computers available to them in general-purpose computer labs, instructional labs, and departmental labs. Every residence hall has a computer lab open 24 hours a day, and all academic buildings have computer labs in them.
The 2001 student/computer ratio at the College was 9.2/1, substantially better than the national average of 12.4/1 for four-year public institutions. [CE14]

Faculty access to technology has improved greatly in recent years. Since 1995, the College has purchased approximately 250 computer systems for faculty, an investment of over $500,000. All new faculty are provided with an office computer of their choice. Faculty office computers are upgraded on a four-year cycle, and internal grants through the College’s Educational Technology Committee provide for the advanced needs of faculty. Administrative and secretarial computers are also upgraded on a regular cycle. [CE14]

In 2001, the College acquired access to a suite of software products through the Microsoft Campus Agreement. All computers in student labs, as well as faculty office and home computers, now have the most up-to-date version of the basic Office applications available. In addition, the College provides a wide variety of specialized software covering disciplines such as Art, Chemistry, Geography, Human Ecology, Mathematics, and Statistics. [CE14]

Along with the hardware and software itself, the College has made a significant commitment to a variety of methods of technical support for users. The College offers many technology training opportunities, including computer-based training, seminars, workshops, and classroom instruction. The Teaching, Learning and Technology Center offers a training program to support faculty in their use of educational technology. In 2001-02, the TLTC offered 20 different workshops, attended by over 240 participants, on various uses of technology in instruction. Many more attended informal TLTC events designed to promote the use of technology in teaching, such as technology expos, luncheons, and teaching breakfasts.

A centralized Help Desk coordinates technology support for faculty, staff, and students, providing referrals to desktop support personnel across the campus and providing in-person
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

support at the Help Desk. The Help Desk maintains a sophisticated database of all support calls and problems. The database is used in a variety of ways to improve support, such as problem tracking, frequency-of-problem recognition, and frequency-training issues. The database records include over 7,600 calls for 2001-02. The College continues to use the database and annual surveys of students and faculty to guide its progress in maintaining a technology-friendly campus. [CE14]

B. Enhancing Access [CE8]

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to enhance access to computing and educational technology for student learning, services, and information, via the campus networks, Internet, and related technologies.” The College has made substantial progress in this area.

Every residence hall room and all classrooms now have reliable, high-speed connections to the Internet. An automated process has been established to enable the College to connect the computers of all incoming students to the network in a secure and cost-effective manner. In recent years, the College has also established computer labs in every residence hall and provided support through a highly effective “Res-Tech” program.

The College currently offers 41 technology-enhanced classrooms. Since the spring of 2000, the College has created 15 new “fully enhanced” classrooms and an additional 15 “semi-enhanced” classrooms. The campus has three primary classroom configurations: the traditional classroom with an overhead projector, screen, television, chalkboard, and generally a VCR; the “semi-enhanced” classroom with the above and an LCD projector and connections for a computer; and the “fully enhanced” classroom with a computer built into a lectern in addition to the equipment of the “semi-enhanced” classroom. [CE14]

The College recently received a $500,000 grant that will be used to renovate Schumacher
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

Hall as a new “Academic Technology Building” for instruction. The College is upgrading the instructional facility into a “smart” building with eight enhanced multimedia classrooms with projection capabilities from a range of data and video sources. A new computer teaching lab is already in place, and an innovative classroom with 25 wireless laptops will be available in the near future. [CE14]

The College’s campus network provides the greatest bandwidth to the Internet of any of the state university colleges. Through network software, the College is able to prioritize the allocation of network resources for academic applications. Free 56K dial-up Internet access is available to all off-campus students, faculty, and staff. High-speed Ethernet data connections are available to all residence hall students. Many buildings on campus now offer wireless networking, which is expected to be ubiquitous within a year.

Access to services through the campus network has also been enhanced. Through the campus network and the Internet, students can register for classes, complete coursework, check grades and academic standing, pay phone bills, and perform many other tasks. Faculty can perform such tasks as entering grades, downloading rosters to spreadsheets, printing rosters, downloading e-mail addresses to address books, accessing advisees’ academic records, and checking course enrollments. Through the Milne Library web site, users have access to over 12,000 major journals, 100 informational databases, and a wide variety of electronic books. The College also provides 50 megabytes of shared network storage to each student. Accessible to the user from any computer on campus or off, this storage reduces the possibility of losing important information.

C. Training Opportunities

The College’s objective in this area is to “enhance training opportunities for faculty, students, and staff in the effective applications of technology in teaching and learning.”
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

The UnCAS program included development of the Teaching, Learning and Technology Center (TLTC). Through the TLTC in Milne Library, the College offers faculty access, development, and support opportunities in educational technology. The TLTC makes advanced equipment available for faculty use and has staff available to provide hands-on support. The Center provides training opportunities for all interested faculty to make the best use of technology in their teaching and research.

The Teaching, Learning and Technology Center offers an on-going series of workshops presented by faculty, staff, and outside experts on such topics as using course management software, developing enhanced PowerPoint presentations, using web-based tools to detect plagiarism, finding web resources not available through search engines, and developing web pages. The workshops are evaluated by the participants, and these results, along with surveys of the Help Desk and an analysis of its database, guide the College in planning future training opportunities or modifying current ones.

The TLTC provides a system to maintain electronic discussion forums and currently supports over 100 such forums. The center offers computer-based training and assists faculty who wish to offer on-line courses through the SUNY Learning Network. The TLTC also supports faculty in their use of Blackboard, the College’s course management software. With 373 sections of courses using Blackboard this year, the TLTC’s training and support are crucial to faculty for establishing and developing course materials and content. Most Blackboard courses at the College are taught in traditional classrooms, but the TLTC also supports the small number of courses that are offered completely on-line.

One of the key programs that the TLTC offers is a faculty fellowship program, which provides faculty opportunities to improve student learning through the use of technology. Any faculty member at the College may apply for fellowships, which generally range from $1000 to
$5000, to pursue initiatives related to technology and teaching. “TLTC Teaching Fellows,” as the recipients are known, offer presentations at the TLTC to share their expertise with their colleagues. As a result of another initiative by the Center, the College recently presented its first annual award for innovative uses of technology, and the faculty recipient offered a presentation of his teaching methods at a seminar.

Professional staff and secretarial staff take advantage of many of the relevant training opportunities offered by the TLTC, particularly those related to the standard software used campus-wide. Participants evaluate the training sessions, and the results of the evaluations are used in planning future training. For example, the TLTC and the Human Resources Office are currently working to establish an information technology core curriculum for College personnel. The College’s computer-based training program now offers nearly 200 modules that are used by faculty, staff, and students.

Training for students in the use of technology is offered in a variety of venues. Several courses, for example CSCI 100, focus on technology topics as the main element of the course. Faculty members who are familiar with the specialized software appropriate to their disciplines incorporate instruction into their courses. In addition, faculty invite information technology staff to present guest lectures on technology topics. The library offers an active information literacy instruction program. Outside of the classroom, students can learn from on-line documentation available on the College web site and from workshops on basic campus-supported software through Academic Computing Services and the “Res-Tech” program. A commercial computer-based program called Smartforce offers over 200 modules on basic and advanced technology topics that can be used by both students and employees.

D. Assessing the Impact of Technology  [CE8]

The College’s objective in this area is to “establish systematic procedures for assessing
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

the impact of technology on the curriculum.”

The College uses multiple instruments to assess the impact of technology. While there is a lack of national or local data demonstrating the direct impact of technology on the curriculum, alumni ratings of the overall quality of instruction and quality of instruction in the major have improved in the time since the UnCAS program was implemented in 1998. In the class of 1998, 78.7% of alumni rated overall instruction as “good” to “excellent”; the percentage increased to 82.6 in the class of 2000. In the class of 1998, 87.8% of alumni rated instruction in the major as “good” to “excellent”; the percentage increased to 89.7 in the class of 2000.

Results of the Student Opinion Survey also show evidence of the impact of technology. Students’ use of computers for courses “almost daily” and “several times per week” increased from 24.1% in 1994 to 38.9% in 1997 to 68.1% in 2000. Their use of word processing “almost daily” increased from 4.1% in 1994 to 30.3% in 1997 to 65.8% in 2000.

The College also tracks faculty use of technology with various surveys from Academic Computing Services. A recent survey shows that faculty requests for a laptop computer cart for classroom use have increased from 504 in 1995/96 to 829 in 2001-02. The number of requests for LCD projectors increased from 71 in 1995-96 to 322 in 1998-99 and then decreased to 73 in 2001-02. The decrease reflects the significant increase in the number of enhanced classrooms, which are already equipped with projectors.

A recent survey, administered annually by the TLTC, indicated that the College’s faculty use computer-based classrooms at nearly twice the national average. Over 75% of the College’s faculty now use e-mail in their courses, and over 60% use web pages. These applications have increased significantly since 1998. The results of the survey and comparisons to national averages from Kenneth Green’s “National Survey of Desktop Computing and Information Technology in Higher Education” are included as Appendix IX C. In the most recent
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

administration of the survey, the TLTC asked faculty how well prepared they felt to use information technology and the World Wide Web in their teaching. Survey results indicated that 64.8% of faculty felt well prepared to use information technology and 62.3% to use the web.

To assist in assessing the impact of technology on the curriculum, the College administers the “Seven Principles Survey” to faculty who teach courses using the College’s course management software. The results indicate that the software encourages principles of good teaching as defined by the American Association of Higher Education. The TLTC has incorporated the results of the survey into its planning for instructional technology. A copy of the survey and results is attached as Appendix IX D.

In addition to the “Seven Principles Survey,” the College gleans valuable data from the aforementioned Student Technology Initiative Survey and Faculty Use of Technology Survey. Annually, the College also reviews student/computer ratios, student computer ownership figures, and computer lab usage reports.

Assessment results are used in the College’s planning for educational technology. A copy of the College’s “Plan for Educational Technology,” developed by the Educational Technology Committee and Technology Steering Committee, is attached as Appendix IX E.

E. Leadership in Technology

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to serve as a regional leader in information technology and telecommunications.”

The College has established itself as a regional and state-wide leader in the use of technology. As a result of the UnCAS initiative, the campus hosted a Universal Computer Access for Students Conference on campus in 1998, which was supported by SUNY’s Office of Advanced Learning and Information Services. The conference brought together representatives from the state’s public and private institutions to hear about the College’s experience in the
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

application of technology to student learning and to share their knowledge about this challenging area of higher education.

More recently, the College hosted the SUNY Conference on Instructional Technologies in May 2002. The conference, built around the theme of “Meeting the Challenge: Technology for Scholarship and Teaching,” attracted about 700 faculty, instructional support professionals, and policy-makers. The Conference on Instructional Technologies was established in 1992 by the SUNY Faculty Access to Computing Technology Advisory Committee, under the leadership of two College at Oneonta faculty, to provide faculty and instructional support professionals with an opportunity to share experiences and expertise, discuss common problems, and explore innovative avenues for improving the learning environments with technology. The first two conferences were held at the College in 1992 and 1993, and the event is now held annually on a SUNY campus. The 2002 conference was co-sponsored by the University Faculty Senate, the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and the SUNY Training Center.

College personnel demonstrate leadership in technology by serving in key positions on national and state technology organizations. For example, members of the staff are currently serving as chairs, presidents, or executive committee members of several SUNY groups: the Council of Chief Information Officers, SUNY Connect Advisory Council, Computer Officers’ Association, Educational Technology Officers Association, and Telecommunications Officers Association.

In 2001, the College received approval from the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association to offer an on-line dietetic internship through the World Wide Web, the College’s first program offered through the SUNY Learning Network, a consortium of SUNY campuses who have joined together to offer on-line courses. Through on-line coursework at the College and supervised practice in their local communities,
IX. Comprehensive College Plan Goal V - Technology

the program prepares entry-level dietetic practitioners nationwide by helping them learn about comprehensive food and nutrition services. College at Oneonta faculty offer the courses through the World Wide Web. Students who complete the four on-line courses and the supervised practice in their local community are eligible to take the ADA’s national exam to become registered dietitians.

Additionally, through its Center for Economic and Community Development, the College offers considerable technological assistance to agencies in the surrounding region. A number of non-profit organizations are also represented on the College’s web site.
X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community

[Characteristics of Excellence #1 and 15 are illustrated in this chapter, as noted by bracketed references, e.g., CE2, in the text.]

The College’s goal in the area of community, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to strengthen the sense of community, develop a unity of purpose, and encourage a sense of shared responsibility for the College’s mission among all groups and individuals on campus.” College personnel recognize that a sense of community will not come about simply as a result of the expected interactions between and among faculty, students, and staff. Concerted efforts must be undertaken to promote community. The College’s many initiatives to accomplish the objectives in this area have fostered a growing sense of community on campus. Campus programs, communications, and facilities all make important contributions to the College’s successful and on-going efforts to build support for the College on and off campus.

Two items on the Student Opinion Survey demonstrate improvements in strengthening the sense of community on campus. Students’ ratings of the “campus atmosphere of understanding” increased significantly from 2.96 in the 1994 administration of the survey to 3.41 in the 2000 administration. Ratings of “your sense of belonging on this campus” increased from 3.40 in the 1994 administration of the survey to 3.50 in the 2000 administration. The SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey provides a less direct measure in its queries about working in groups and being a team member. Alumni ratings in the range of “good” to “excellent” increased from 73.2% by the class of 1996 to 83.6% by the class of 2000.

A. Fostering Collegiality

The College’s objective in this area is to “continue to enhance programs and events that foster collegiality and respect among faculty, staff, and students.” The College offers a multitude of campus events and programs to foster collegiality among its key constituencies.
X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community

Through its Student Development Division, the College offers the expected range of extra-curricular events for the on-campus community, such as concerts, entertainment shows, fairs, and friendly competitions. Seventy clubs and organizations, many related to academic interests, are offered annually through the Student Association, which now also offers major spring and fall weekend events. The Center for Multicultural Experiences offers a diversity of programs, as described in Chapter VIII of this report, and has greatly expanded its collaborations with student clubs and organizations, faculty, staff, and community groups. On the Student Opinion Survey, ratings of “college social activities” increased significantly from 2.94 in 1997 to 3.14 in 2000. Ratings of “opportunities for personal involvement” increased significantly from 3.36 in 1994 to 3.54 in 1997 and maintained that level in 2000.

Two efforts in event programming for students are particularly noteworthy here: the College’s leadership programs and its late-night programming.

The College’s three leadership programs support the mission statement’s emphasis on fostering the individual student’s civic and personal development. The annual Student Leadership Institute, now in its fifteenth year, is an intensive weekend experience through which students learn about leadership through presentations by faculty, alumni, and outside experts. The Emerging Leaders Program gives students a chance to develop leadership skills through an eight-week series of presentations on topics and discussions related to leadership such as communication skills, diversity issues, ethics, and conflict resolution. The Spring Leadership Series is a series of workshops designed to give students the opportunity to learn about various aspects of leadership through presentations by campus personnel. From the classes of 1996 to 2000, alumni ratings of “development of leadership skills” increased from 64.2% to 71.5% in the “good” to “excellent” range.

The College implemented its popular late-night programming initiative in 1999 in an
effort to provide students late-night, on-campus weekend entertainment. The program has a good
deal of faculty and staff involvement, and events have ranged from friendly athletic competitions
to “dive-in” movies at the campus pool.

Two formal programs undertaken by the College benefit the College community and the
broader community, region, and state: the Center for Social Responsibility and Community and
the Center for Economic and Community Development.

Since 1991, the College has provided guidance, continuity, support, and expertise in the
organization of a campus-based volunteer center. Building upon a grant-funded Community
Volunteer Services center, the College opened the Center for Social Responsibility and
Community (CSRC) in 1994 with support from a major W. K. Kellogg Foundation grant. On the
Student Opinion Survey, ratings of “opportunities for community service” increased from 3.41 in
1994 to 3.61 in 2000.

By promoting volunteerism and developing service-learning opportunities for students,
the student-run CSRC strives to instill in students a sense of social responsibility and an
understanding of its relationship to building strong communities. The Center coordinates the
College’s participation in the AmeriCorps national service program through the Rural School
Empowerment Program in which volunteers work with students, teachers, and parents in local
schools. The CSRC also coordinates the College’s program in American Humanics through
which students develop competencies and receive certification for careers in non-profit
management. Through its sponsorship of events such as “Into the Streets,” the area’s largest
single day of service to the community, the CSRC provides students with a multitude of
opportunities for volunteerism, building a sense of community with the volunteers and with the
region. In recent years, over 1000 students have participated in CSRC-sponsored events
annually, including over 400 in “Into the Streets.” Students contributed over 44,000 hours of
X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community

volunteer service in each of the past four years (See Appendix X A). The CSRC is one of the major contributing factors to the College’s having been named twice to the Templeton Honor Roll for Character-Building Colleges.

The Center for Economic and Community Development is the primary agency of the College that links its staff and physical resources to business and community organizations in collaborative efforts which promote economic and community development. The Center is especially committed to the purpose of enhancing the College’s role as an economic, social and educational resource for small businesses, non-profit organizations, and communities throughout a three-county area. The Center provides technical resources, expertise, instructional programs and special workshops to meet the needs of the community at large. Some of the services offered include basic and applied research, data management and analysis, electronic library services, community priorities and land-use planning, and work-place literacy.

Also focusing on building better relationships with the broader community are events such as the Public Events Committee reception, which invites community members to campus for a social hour and on-campus artistic presentation; the Public Events Committee’s support of concerts and lectures, all of which are open to community members and designed with them in mind; and College at Oneonta night with the Oneonta Tigers professional baseball team, through which the College offers free admission to a minor-league baseball game.

Community among faculty and staff is promoted through a wide range of events, ranging from formal gatherings such as Commencement and the December Candidate Recognition Ceremony to informal receptions, annual picnics, employee recognition events, and the annual Mid-year Mingle.

The Division of College Advancement sponsors a number of events with ties to external constituencies. The annual Winter Luncheon Series, Cornell-Gladstone-Hanlon-Kaufmann
X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community

Lecture, Mills Lecture Series, Susan Sutton Smith Lecture, and Richard Siegfried Lecture provide venues for faculty and visiting dignitaries to share their expertise with the broader campus community. Reunion Weekend and Homecoming & Family Weekend provide opportunities for alumni and parents to interact with the College community. The President’s Scholarship Dinner brings together scholarship donors, recipients, and their parents in celebration of academic excellence at the College.

B. Enhancing Communication

The College’s objective in this area is to “enhance avenues of communication for increasing awareness, gathering consensus, and building collaboration in the best interest of the College.” The College has made a number of efforts in recent years to enhance communication and collaboration through on-campus and off-campus publications, both electronic and paper.

Since the initial development of the College’s web site in the mid-1990s, the College has expanded and improved its web presence. Nearly every campus office and academic department now maintains a web page or site specific to its function. Through the general pages of the web site, the College provides information on College news, information, events, and policies, organized for audiences such as current students, prospective students, faculty and staff, and alumni. The searchable web site provides a wealth of information about most topics of interest to members of any of the College’s constituencies. Broad e-mail and voice-mail distribution systems allow other quick means of communication with the campus community.

Several paper publications are important in the continuing efforts to improve communication on campus. To enhance both integrity and consistency in the College’s rules and regulations, the Council of Deans--the advisory body to the Provost in the Division of Academic Affairs--has sent the fall 2002 semester reviewing all College policies on a line-by-line basis for an upcoming revision of the Faculty Handbook. The Council’s objective is to make the
handbook comprehensive and easier to use as a reference source. [CE1, 15]

*The Bulletin* is distributed weekly to all employees of the College to share announcements, events, key dates, congratulations, and items of interest related to the campus. To determine the success of *The Bulletin*, the College recently surveyed recipients. Of those who responded, 86% read the publication from cover to cover; 91% found the articles useful and informative; 87% felt that it should continue to be published weekly; and 88% found the format appealing and easy to read.

A separate monthly calendar of events, “On Campus,” is also distributed campus-wide. Various offices distribute campus-wide newsletters to share information about specific programs or facilities, such as *Fund It!* from the Grants Development Office, which informs faculty and staff of opportunities for funding research and creative activity; *CAT Prints* from the Office of Computing and Telecommunications; and *Grist* from the Milne Library. Annually since 2000, the President’s Office has published *New Faces* to introduce new members of the campus community. The booklet contains photos and short biographies of new faculty and staff and is distributed to all faculty and staff.

In addition to many informative mailings by appropriate offices, the College maintains communication with students and prospective students through a series of newsletters, as described in Chapter VI of this report. Potential students also receive the College’s recruitment publications, which are also described in Chapter VI. The student newspaper (*The State Times*), radio station (WONY), and television news broadcast (*Venue*) provide opportunities for students to share news and their views with each other and with the broader community. On the Student Opinion Survey, ratings of “campus media” dropped slightly from 3.74 in 1994 to 3.64 in 1997 and maintained that level in 2000.

The College’s quarterly alumni magazine, *Reflections*, maintains communication with
X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community

alumni and is also distributed to all current students, faculty, and staff. Approximately 46,000 copies of each issue are distributed. In recent years, the Office of Alumni Affairs has significantly increased and enhanced its communications with the College’s alumni.

In 2000, the office implemented the Oneonta Alumni On-Line Community web site (www.oneontaalumni.com) specifically to communicate with alumni about a wide variety of issues, including contacting other alumni, contributing to the College, registering for upcoming College events, shopping for College Store products, and many others. In the same year, the office added a position for a Coordinator of Young Alumni Programs, which targets programs and communications to young alumni. The recently created “Oneonta Metro Alumni Alliance” provides events and information for alumni in the greater New York City area. The “College at Oneonta Alumni Directory,” published most recently in 2001, provides a comprehensive listing of alumni in the form of a book or CD-ROM.

In 2001, the Division of College Advancement conducted a special survey of alumni, which provided new information on alumni views of the College, including the College’s communications with alumni. The survey revealed that over 90% of alumni respondents rate the College’s publications as “good” or “excellent”; nearly 92% believe the amount of correspondence and frequency of contact with the College is “about right”; and approximately 96% rely on official news sources, particularly Reflections magazine, to learn about the College. Based on other information regarding specific content of alumni communications, the College has made minor adjustments to its alumni communications.

C. Improving Facilities

The College’s objective in this area is to “improve facilities and enhance campus events with the development of the College’s Facilities Master Plan.” A summary of the College’s five-year Capital Plan is attached as Appendix II H. In recent years, the College’s new facilities such
as the Alumni Field House, improvements to existing residential life facilities and academic buildings, and upgraded computer facilities have greatly enhanced the campus. On the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey, the percentage rating “college facilities” as “good” to “excellent”, increased from 60.4% by the class of 1996 to 68.5% by the class of 2000.

The Alumni Field House, which opened in 1999 as the first major new building on campus in over two decades, has provided an outstanding venue for athletic events, admissions open houses, major community events such as benefit concerts and the annual spring fair, and many other events, as described in Chapter II, Section E, of this report. The Morris Conference Center continues to be used by a wide range of campus and community organizations, local businesses, and educational organizations for conferences and other gatherings. Many campus events are coordinated by the Events Council, which consists of building administrators and other individuals with responsibility for scheduling events in their facilities.

Recent renovations to the Hamblin and Goodrich Theaters in the Fine Arts Center have offered enhanced possibilities for musical and theatrical productions. Student Opinion Survey ratings of “cultural programs” have increased from 3.43 in 1997 to 3.58 in 2000. Renovations to academic facilities, as described in Chapter II, Section E, of this report, have allowed the College to enhance programs or offer new programs.

In the area of residence life, the College completed a ten-year renovation plan in 2002. In addition to standard maintenance and building improvements, all residence halls have been placed on a card-access system and have received new common area furniture. Satisfaction with the residence halls is rated high on the Quality of Life Survey (See Appendix VII E). Every dining facility on campus has also been renovated in the past five years, as described in Chapter VII, Section B, of this report. All residence halls now have computer labs, and telecommunications hook-ups have been provided in all rooms. The College has begun planning
X. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VI - Community

a new residence hall to meet student demand for on-campus housing.

Among other facilities improvements in the student-life area are the renovation of the cafe in the Hunt Union into a cyber-cafe, the repair of the Hunt Union Ballroom, and the long-range plan that has been developed for the complete renovation of the Hunt College Union.

Other significant recent improvements in athletic facilities include a substantial renovation of the soccer field, the addition of a number of baseball fields and practice fields, and the addition of a lighted, all-weather track and field. On the Student Opinion Survey, ratings of “athletic facilities” increased significantly from 3.05 in 1997 to 3.88 in 2000. In the same time period, ratings of “recreational and intramural programs” increased significantly from 3.28 to 3.56.
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

The College’s goal in the area of image and tradition, as stated in the Comprehensive College Plan, is “to build a positive image for the College, both on and off campus, and to enhance and celebrate its traditions.” While measurements of image and tradition are difficult, results of recent surveys indicate that the College has made substantial progress towards its goal by enhancing its academic reputation, promoting and rewarding faculty and staff excellence, increasing scholarship opportunities, and creating and sustaining traditions that instill pride in the campus community.

A. Academic Reputation

The College’s objective in this area is to “enhance the College’s academic reputation through teaching excellence, advisement and mentoring, and opportunities for scholarship.” In recent years, the College has made significant progress in enhancing its academic reputation. On the special survey of alumni in 2001, nearly 57% of those with an opinion believed that the College’s academic reputation had improved since their graduation, and 96% of those with an opinion said they would recommend the College to a family member or other young person. On the SUNY-Oneonta Alumni Survey, ratings of “good” to “excellent” for “overall academic experience” increased from 77.8% by the class of 1996 to 87.4% by the class of 2000. On the Student Opinion Survey, ratings of “this college in general” increased significantly from 3.45 in 1994 to 3.73 in 2000.

One clear indication of the College’s emphasis on teaching excellence is the increasing number of the College’s faculty who have been recognized by SUNY for academic excellence, as described in Chapter V, Section G, of this report. Eleven members of the current faculty hold SUNY Distinguished Professorships, and 32 have received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching.
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

In the past several years, the College has established a number of awards and programs to highlight and enhance its academic reputation. For example, the College now has an annual award that recognizes faculty for outstanding academic advisement. The College Advancement Division has established an annual Fund for Academic Excellence, which recognizes faculty and students for their academic accomplishments. The Susan Sutton Smith Award and the Richard Siegfried Award annually recognize outstanding faculty accomplishments. The Student/Faculty Research Grant Program has been enhanced, and research is now highlighted through the annual Student Research Day and annual Faculty Research Show.

The College’s efforts to promote academic excellence, as described in more detail in Section B below, have contributed significantly to its academic reputation. The College has enhanced its efforts to build its academic reputation by publicizing the academic achievements of faculty, staff, and students through the local and state news media and in College publications. The College has also retained a public relations firm to assist in publicizing the College in state and national media.

The academic reputation of the College is further reflected in the increasing academic quality of its incoming freshman classes in recent years, as described in Chapter VI, Sections A and B, of this report. Since 1996, the College has increased selectivity dramatically, moving from accepting 76.5% of freshman applicants to accepting 47.7%. The freshman class profile has improved from a mean high school average of 82.0 and a mean combined SAT score of 997 in 1996 to a mean high school average of 86.2 and a mean combined SAT score of 1098 in 2002.

As described in Chapter V, Section D, of this report, the College has also enhanced its academic reputation through an institutional emphasis on increasing scholarships for academically talented students. In 1995-96, the total of scholarships awarded by the College was $143,000. The College now awards well over $800,000 in scholarships and will soon offer
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

approximately $1 million.

B. Promoting Excellence

The College’s objective in this area is “promote and reward faculty and staff excellence, student academic achievement, and alumni accomplishments through events, awards, and public recognition.” In recent years, the College has implemented a number of new programs to recognize and promote excellence among its constituencies.

On a College-wide level, the Public Relations Office has expanded promotion of faculty, staff, student, and alumni achievements to the media through news releases and other efforts to gain exposure in the media. A news page was introduced on the College’s web site to provide on-line access to newsworthy information about the accomplishments of the College community and its individual members. The College itself received a number of national recognitions for its programs, including twice being named to the Templeton Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges, being featured on the web site of the Institute for College Student Values, receiving a Best Practices Award from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and being named as one of the nation’s “200 Most Wired Colleges” by Yahoo Internet Life magazine.

To promote the scholarly achievements of its faculty, the College created and implemented its “Campus Connections” program, which developed a database of faculty who could serve as expert consultants for media inquiries, speaking engagements, and other purposes. The College also developed a number of honors for faculty excellence, including the Richard Siegfried Award for Academic Excellence to recognize junior faculty and the Susan Sutton Smith Award for Academic Excellence to recognize senior faculty, both of which carry monetary awards. Forums to enable faculty to share accomplishments with the community were also expanded through events such as the Alumni Winter Luncheon Series, Faculty Research Show, and other College Advancement events. Publications such as the President’s Annual Report and
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

Reflections magazine have placed a greater emphasis on the accomplishments of faculty, staff, students, and alumni in recent years, as have the College’s admissions publications.

The College has also committed to increasing faculty opportunities for funded research by entering into an understanding with SUNY to increase research funding by 40% by 2004. Through funds from its unrestricted endowment, the College has already increased opportunities for faculty/student research and for faculty and staff development.

Staff accomplishments have been promoted through the Public Relations Office and the “Campus Connections” program. Additionally, the “Make a Difference” program was implemented to recognize staff for sustained excellence and for outstanding individual accomplishments in their positions. Annual employee recognition events honor faculty and staff who reach important milestones in their service to the College.

The College has also made substantial progress in promoting the academic achievements of its students. In 1998, the Public Relations Office implemented the “Best and Brightest” program through which faculty nominate students for recognition. The program has assisted the College in identifying students to nominate for external recognition, such as the Student Initiative Award from the Association of College Councils and Trustees, which students from the College have won three times in five years. The “Best and Brightest” program has also assisted in developing nominees for the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence, which 13 students from the College have won in the five years that the awards have been presented.

In recent years, the College has also developed the Academic Achievement Awards to honor outstanding seniors in academic departments and the Alumni Book Awards to recognize exceptional performance in academic majors. Individual academic departments have developed a myriad of departmental honors, such as the History Department’s Crippen Award to the History major with the highest GPA, the Biology Department’s Jan Kee Ang Award to the outstanding
senior Biology major, and the Education Division’s Howard O. Yates Award and Class of ’48 Award. Many students are recognized by departments at their divisional commencement ceremonies in May. For example, the Psychology Department awards the Antonio Di Salvatore Award to the outstanding academic student and the Michael Siegel Award to the most well rounded graduating senior.

In addition to its annual spring Commencement, the College now honors candidates for December graduation through a December Candidate Recognition ceremony. A new Student Research Day showcases research conducted by students with the guidance of a faculty member. The final presentation in the College’s Faculty Convivium is done by the student who presents the best project at Student Research Day. The President’s Scholarship Dinner celebrates scholarship recipients, as well as their parents and those who support scholarships at the College.

The College promotes the achievements of its alumni in a variety of publications, notably *Reflections* magazine and its admissions publications. A special salute came in 1999 in the 110th Anniversary Alumni Profiles, which profiled 110 distinguished alumni of the College. Alumni are often featured speakers at College events on and off campus. Notably, the senior class has selected alumni as Commencement speakers for several consecutive years.

C. Increasing Scholarship Opportunities

The College’s objective in this area is to “increase scholarship opportunities for academically talented students.” From 1996 through the present, the College increased its total scholarship offerings from $143,000 to over $800,000 with plans to offer $1 million in the near future. The College now offers over 90 named scholarships, two-thirds of which were established since 1995 and 31 of which were established in the past two years. Appendix XI A indicates the growth of endowed and annual scholarships at the College.

The number of alumni giving to the College has increased significantly in the last five
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

years, as have their total donations. Contributions from alumni and other supporters have been a driving force in the growth of scholarships at the College. The Student Association, individual faculty and staff, and academic departments have also been instrumental in establishing scholarships.

The important role that scholarships play in recruiting academically talented students to the College is discussed in Chapter V, Section D, of this report.

D. Creating Traditions

The College’s objective in this area is “create traditions that recognize academic accomplishment, superior job performance, and College and community service to instill pride in College at Oneonta students, faculty, staff, and alumni.” The College has developed a number of recognition events that have become campus traditions in a relatively short time.

With the support of the Division of College Advancement’s Fund for Academic Excellence, the College has established several traditional events in celebration of academic excellence, including the President’s Scholarship Dinner, Academic Achievement Awards for students, Alumni Book Awards for students, Susan Sutton Smith Award for senior faculty, and Richard Siegfried Award for junior faculty. In recent years, many individual academic departments have established traditional honor societies specific to their disciplines. The Student Association’s Annual Banquet has become a traditional venue for honoring student leadership and service on campus.

The College has several noteworthy annual and semi-annual recognition ceremonies and community-building activities. Each spring, the athletics program sponsors a banquet to recognize the achievements of student-athletes on the playing field and in the classroom. In 2002, members of 11 women’s and ten men’s teams were honored. The Employee Recognition Luncheon honors faculty and staff for their years of service at the College. The All-Campus
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

Picnic and Faculty/Staff Breakfast bring together members of the entire campus community to celebrate the beginning of the new academic year and to welcome new faculty and staff. The Mid-Year Mingle brings together faculty and staff at the beginning of the spring semester. Following Commencement, the All-College Picnic unites members of the campus community to mark the conclusion of the academic year.

The Alumni Association now presents annual awards at Reunion Weekend, including the Emeritus Faculty/Staff Award, Distinguished Alumnus Award, Excellence in Alumni Service Award, Friend of the College Award, and Lifetime Achievement Award. With the opening of the Alumni Field House, the College established its Athletic Hall of Fame, which honors a new class of alumni athletes and coaches each year at Homecoming & Family Weekend.

E. Building Relationships

The College’s objective in this area is “build positive relationships to effectively utilize the experiences, interests, and resources of alumni, parents, and community members.” In recent years, the College has established many positive relationships with businesses, non-profit organizations, local governments, groups, and individuals. Monetary and other support from alumni, parents, and community members continues to grow.

The College’s Center for Economic and Community Development, which is described in greater detail in Chapter X, Section A, of this report, has helped to develop the College’s relationships with local businesses, non-profit organizations, and governments. The Center has participated actively with, for example, the Otsego County Chamber of Commerce, the Otsego County Strategic Planning Committee, and the Downtown Oneonta Improvement Task Force. The Center’s 2000 study, *Economic Impact of the College at Oneonta and its Affiliated Operations*, has helped the College and the surrounding communities understand the vital role of the College in the local economy. The Center was also instrumental in establishing and
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

sustaining the Non-profit Leadership Forum to assist in the development of leaders for non-profit organizations and the Leadership Otsego program, which helps to develop leaders for the county.

Through its Catskill Area School Study Council, the College has participated in a partnership with area schools for over 50 years. Through the partnership, the College has assisted local school districts and maintained an on-going relationship with them through a formal operational structure. The Council has provided many varied learning experiences for local educators and students that involved the resources and staff of the College.

In 1996, the Otsego County Chamber of Commerce adopted a formal resolution of support for the College. In 2001, the Chamber of Commerce honored the College as its “Business of the Year.”

Since 1989, the College at Oneonta Foundation has presented a special Distinguished Service Award eight times to recognize local residents for significant contributions to the local community. Presented on campus, the award has built positive relationships with many prominent community leaders and brought many community members to campus for the award ceremonies. The Division of Education’s Awards for Exemplary Service, established in 1999 and presented annually to local teachers at a “Celebration of Teaching Reception” on campus, have solidified the College’s relationships with many school districts.

Hundreds of business and community leaders accept invitations to visit campus each year to attend meetings, events, workshops, and conferences in campus facilities, notably the Morris Conference Center. Additionally, many community members have shared expertise and experience that is particularly relevant to specific academic disciplines. For example, business leaders have spoken in Economics and Business classes at the College. In all disciplines, the College’s relationships with local businesses and organizations have expanded students’ opportunities for internships and other experiential learning. Local teachers and school personnel
XI. Comprehensive College Plan Goal VII - Image and Tradition

are integral to the College’s programs in Education as cooperating teachers, guest speakers, and curricular resources. Through the Center for Social Responsibility and Community, the College has established relationships with a multitude of non-profit organizations, which provide mutually beneficial community service opportunities for students.

The College has successfully expanded its efforts to build relationships with alumni in recent years. Alumni participation in Reunion Weekend, Homecoming & Family Weekend, and other events on and off campus has increased steadily. Alumni host events for other alumni in major cities throughout the United States. They often return to campus as guest speakers in classes or other venues, and the Student Leadership Institute features an Alumni Career Panel. Alumni support of the College, notably through the Alumni Annual Fund, has also increased. In 2001, the College experienced a 29% increase in donations to the fund and a 33% increase in donors. Appendix XI B indicates the increases in donations and donors to the fund.

The College has recognized the need to continue to develop positive relationships with parents. In the past five years, the College has greatly expanded and targeted its programming for parents at summer orientation. Recent additions to the slate of orientation activities for parents include workshops on “Surviving Letting Them Go,” a welcome message specifically for parents by the Vice President for Student Development, and information sessions on topics such as financial aid, student accounts, and the University Police.

The Admissions “Spend the Night On Campus” program also features activities targeted towards parents, including a coffee hour, campus tours, and question-and-answer sessions with College personnel from the Offices of Academic Advising, Financial Aid, University Police, and Residence Life.

The Division of Student Development recognizes the important role that parents play in the retention of students. In the past three years, the division has introduced three new
newsletters geared specifically to parents of current students. Two provide information to the parents of new students and the third to the parents of returning students on topics such as the transition to college, career development, support services, and campus activities.

One measure of the effectiveness of the College’s efforts to build positive relationships with parents is the annual Parents Fund through which parents support the College with monetary donations. In 2001, the Parents Fund experienced a 5% increase in donations and a 28% increase in the amount of the average gift. The College publishes a special “thank-you” page to acknowledge parents in the President’s Annual Report.
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

As noted in the preface to this self-study report, the College began the self-study process early so that it could act on findings and recommendations generated through the process. The 16 recommendations developed by the Middle States Steering Committee and submitted to the President and his Cabinet in December 2001 are listed below, along with a brief explanation of actions taken through early fall 2002.

Following discussion among the President, his Cabinet, and the MSA Steering Committee in January 2002, the recommendations were separated into two general categories: procedural recommendations, which were handled administratively by the President and Cabinet, and recommendations that required modification of the Comprehensive College Plan, which were forwarded to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group. In some cases, multiple recommendations addressed similar topics. In some cases in which recommendations were functionally related, they were combined.

The President shared the complete set of recommendations with the Strategic Planning Advisory Group, which is responsible for recommending revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan. Based on the MSA Steering Committee’s recommendations, the Strategic Planning Advisory Group proposed revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan, which received preliminary approval from the President and Cabinet and were presented to the College Senate. The proposed revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan were discussed College-wide, and the entire campus community had opportunities for input before final revisions were adopted.
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

Recommendations from MSA Steering Committee
December 12, 2001

Please note: The numbers of the recommendations below refer to the original non-prioritized order of the recommendations as presented by the MSA Steering Committee.

1. Improve cooperation, coordination and collaboration between student development activities and academic endeavors in order to ensure that students entering the College receive an academic and student development experience that reflects the increased expectations of better prepared students.

Discussion between the President’s Cabinet and MSA Steering Committee identified two key areas in which the committee saw the need for better coordination between the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Development: the new First-Year Experience program and the Enrollment Management Committee. These concerns were addressed administratively by increasing faculty representation on the Enrollment Management Committee and by increasing consultation with faculty in the First-Year Experience program.

2. Create an academic research position to initiate, analyze, interpret, and communicate quantitative and qualitative information in order to assist faculty and staff in improving the academic, student development, and administrative experiences of students.

3. Develop an office of evaluation and assessment to coordinate planning and evaluation and to manage a campus-wide plan for conducting studies and analyses that support assessment, evaluation and planning.

5. Develop, support, and monitor a comprehensive College-wide plan to improve the communication of reports, results, findings, and other information to the College community.

Because the three recommendations from the MSA Steering Committee were functionally related, they were combined. In considering these recommendations, the President and his Cabinet determined that the College would not commit funding to an academic research position or to an office of evaluation and assessment. The College Registrar and Director of Academic Data Resources was recently promoted to Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support, and the College employs a full-time Senior Staff Associate for Institutional Research.
The Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support was assigned responsibility to work closely with administrative staff in support of campus planning and assessment. The position includes functions such as developing and coordinating an annual schedule of planning and assessment activities in consultation with the President’s Cabinet; assisting the President, President’s Cabinet, and Strategic Planning Advisory Group in the review and updating of the Comprehensive College Plan; reviewing the major divisional annual reports and related planning documents in order to identify opportunities for enhanced planning and assessment activities within and across administrative divisions; at the direction of the President’s Cabinet, reviewing campus planning documents and giving advice regarding such logistical issues as timing and responsibilities for goal achievement, criteria and measures for assessing programs, and potential issues and opportunities for follow-up; and advising the President’s Cabinet, in consultation with the Institutional Research Council, regarding major studies and analyses in support of campus planning.

To address the concerns identified in the recommendations, the President also convened an Institutional Research Council with representatives of the four College divisions, which is chaired by the Associate Provost for Data Resources and Academic Support and includes as resources the Senior Staff Associate for Institutional Research and the Manager of Administrative Computer Services. The charge of the Institutional Research Council is to provide leadership and support for planning and institutional research; coordinate and disseminate institutional data; provide a clearinghouse for institutional data; offer recommendations for broadening and coordinating institutional research activities; and advise the President and Cabinet on priorities for institutional information, research, and assessment activities.

The council met regularly in spring 2002 and is ascertaining those areas where data is
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

needed and the collection of data is weak or non-existent. The council has identified and
undertaken two initial tasks:

> to develop a set of empirical indicators that can assess the College’s programmatic and
financial condition and help direct the College’s strategic planning processes.

> to compile an institutional data inventory that will be shared at a later date with the
campus community.

The council obtained through the President’s Cabinet a list of the current leading indicators used
in each of the divisions to assess effectiveness of performance. The council also administered a

4. **Ensure that each unit and division has a clearly stated annual and long-term plan that
provides for a better articulation, prioritization, and focus of the College’s resources to meet the
current goals and objectives of each division as well as those reflected in the College’s Mission
Statement and Comprehensive College Plan.**

14. **Develop a multi-year plan to secure additional funding from sources other than tuition
and state support.**

These two recommendations were combined because the implementation of revised
divisional annual reports with long-term plans (see below) will result in multi-year plans for each
division as well as the College. This gives focus to resource planning. While the first
recommendation deals with existing basic resources (tuition and state funding), the second
moves the College more aggressively toward securing external funding through the Division of
College Advancement, which has primary responsibility for fund-raising.

For annual reports beginning with the 2001-2002 academic year, the President and
Cabinet approved a revised standard report format (See Appendix XII A) based on a draft
prepared by members of a sub-committee of the Council of Deans. The format was revised with
input from many constituencies in the College community. The revised format incorporates the
recommendations of the MSA Steering Committee.

6. **Develop a coordinated ongoing series of faculty development activities that focus on
enhancing student learning and improving assessment of student learning and that support other
professional responsibilities of college faculty.**

192
15. *Provide incentives for and recognize faculty efforts in scholarship and academic research that enhances undergraduate teaching and learning.*

Because these two recommendations were closely related, they were combined. The Provost’s Office has increased coordination of faculty development opportunities and increased publicity for them. In fall 2002, the office published the first compilation of faculty development opportunities at the College, which was sent to all faculty (See Appendix XII B).

The Council of Deans—which consists of the associate provosts, academic deans, and program directors and is charged with advising the Provost on matters of academic policy--is currently conducting a detailed review of all procedures in the *Faculty Handbook*, including those related to faculty development, in an effort to make them timely, consistent, and clear.

The College has modified an objective in the Comprehensive College Plan to incorporate the components of these recommendations and to acknowledge that efforts in the area of faculty development will continue. In the “Academic Quality” section of the Comprehensive College Plan, Objective F now reads as follows:

Publicize and coordinate the on-going faculty development opportunities and provide incentives for faculty development in a wide range of areas, including teaching effectiveness, assessment of student learning, technology, and disciplinary research.

7. *Review the Comprehensive College Plan Technology section with the intent of updating objectives, incorporating the assessment of technology use, and ensuring that students are acquiring computer skills and information literacy.*

Concurrent to this recommendation, the Educational Technology Committee revised the College’s “Plan for Educational Technology” (See Appendix IX E), which now addresses the components of this recommendation. The Strategic Planning Advisory Group’s revisions to the Comprehensive College Plan updated the “Technology” section by eliminating two objectives that had already been accomplished (developing a technology-friendly campus and serving as a
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

regional leader in technology).

In line with the Educational Technology Committee’s plan, SPAG added references to smart classrooms and distance learning in Objective B related to enhancing access to educational technology. SPAG added a new Objective A based on the Educational Technology Committee’s plan, as follows:

Provide access to current technology for all members of the campus community with demonstrable needs.

Based on the recommendations of the MSA Steering Committee and the Educational Technology Committee, SPAG also added a new Objective E to emphasize students’ information literacy and computing skills:

Ensure that students acquire computing skills and develop information literacy appropriate to their academic disciplines.

8. Develop an integrated, institution-wide master plan for retention of students and employees.

10. Develop innovative ways to support the recruitment of racial and ethnic minority students and faculty in order to meet the goals of the Comprehensive College Plan.

16. Develop a more systematic process for incorporating into the institutional long-range enrollment plan the capacity of programs to meet changing student demand as well as maintain program quality.

Because the College views recruitment and retention as closely related goals, these three recommendations were considered together. Because different areas of the College have primary responsibility for recruitment and retention of students and for recruitment and retention of employees, the resulting issue was separated into two parts. The responsibility for developing an integrated campus-wide plan for retention of students was assigned to the Enrollment Management Committee. The Strategic Planning Advisory Group added a new Objective A in the “Retention” section of the Comprehensive College Plan to reflect the institution’s emphasis
on achieving the objective and the Enrollment Management Committee’s responsibility for developing the plan:

Continue to increase retention rates through an integrated, College-wide plan developed and coordinated by the Enrollment Management Committee.

Concurrently, SPAG revised Objective B in the “Admissions Selectivity” section to reflect the Enrollment Management Committee’s role in coordinating efforts in student recruitment:

Continue to meet campus enrollment targets through an integrated, College-wide effort coordinated through the Enrollment Management Committee, while improving our new student profile.

Primary responsibility for the retention of employees lies with the Office of Human Resources in the Division of Finance and Administration. To address retention of faculty and staff, a new Employee Recruitment and Retention Task Force was formed with faculty, administrative, and student development representatives. The task force began work in spring 2002. The new task force will serve as an influence in the enhancement of employee recruitment and retention. Its initial objectives are to recommend methods for successful recruiting of full-time, tenure-track faculty positions and to explore avenues that will lead to stronger retention, particularly of underrepresented members of the College community. The Strategic Planning Advisory Group modified Objective A in the “Pluralism” section of the Comprehensive College Plan to emphasize the need for innovative methods of recruiting and retaining underrepresented members of the College community:

Continue to develop innovative ways to recruit and retain traditionally underrepresented members of the College community, and continue to raise minority student enrollment to 13% by September 1, 2004.

9. Sustain attention to the quality of programs, faculty and staff, adequacy of resources and facilities, quality of students’ educational experiences aided by assessment efforts, and actively pursue new or revised programs that build upon the quality of faculty and our current course offerings in order to remain competitive.
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

When the President’s Cabinet and the MSA Steering Committee discussed this objective, its somewhat global nature was distilled into a focus on remaining competitive as a College by striving continually to improve the College’s academic programs. Because the components of the recommendation are centered in the Division of Academic Affairs, the recommendation was incorporated into the Comprehensive College Plan as a new Objective H in the area of “Academic Quality”:

Remain a competitive college by maintaining current program quality and by actively pursuing new or revised programs that build upon the quality of faculty and current course offerings.

The College has made substantial progress in maintaining or strengthening the quality of its academic programs and the overall educational experience for students. Evidence of these accomplishments includes the results of multiple on-going assessments, new and continuing national accreditations of academic programs, dramatic improvements in the academic profile of incoming students, the high quality and on-going development of faculty, and internal and external recognitions of academic achievements.

11. Include a goal for graduate study in the Comprehensive College Plan, and implement a plan of action to support graduate study that reflects the goals for graduate education in the College's overall plan.

The Strategic Planning Advisory Group added a new Objective I to the “Academic Quality” section of the Comprehensive College Plan, as follows:

Implement a plan to support graduate studies and to enhance the overall quality of graduate programs consistent with the College’s overall goals for graduate education.

The Provost has convened a Task Force on Graduate Studies, which began its work in fall
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

2002. The College has committed to specific increases in graduate enrollment in its Memo of Understanding with SUNY. The task force will develop a plan of action to support graduate study that reflects the goals for graduate education in the College’s overall plan, which includes identifying graduate programs with a potential to grow, analyzing and addressing staffing needs to support growing programs, evaluating graduate survey data to get more and better information for program development, and devising strategies to support graduate student persistence and retention.


The President has assigned responsibility to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group for reviewing the Comprehensive College Plan and for proposing revisions to it. As was the case with the 2002 revisions, the entire campus community has opportunities for input into any revisions to the CCP, and proposed revisions are also presented to the College Senate.

13. *Broaden participation by the campus community in developing, monitoring, and revising the College's five-year academic and capital dormitory plans.*

In discussion between the President’s Cabinet and Middle States Steering Committee, the core issue underlying this recommendation was identified as the need for more student input in developing campus renovation plans, notably the plans for the new residence hall to be constructed on campus in the near future. To address this concern, the President directed that several campus groups be consulted regarding the residence hall plans and future campus renovation plans. The Strategic Planning Advisory Group made minor modifications to Objective C in the “Community” section of the Comprehensive College Plan:

> Improve facilities and enhance campus events with the development of the
XII. MSA Steering Committee Recommendations and College Actions

College’s facilities plans.
XIII. Conclusion

[Please note: The MSA Institutional Profile 2001-2002 is included as Appendix XIII A.]

Based on its accomplishments in recent years, the SUNY College at Oneonta is well positioned to continue to fulfill its mission for many years to come. With a shared sense of purpose and the on-going guidance of the Comprehensive College Plan, the campus community will build upon the College’s successful initiatives in the areas of academic quality, admissions selectivity, retention, and technology. Planning and assessment have become integral to the College and will remain vital as the College faces the continuing fiscal challenges.

The opportunity to undertake an institutional self-study has been beneficial to the College. As described in Chapter XII of this report, the campus community identified several areas in which the College can improve. The College has already taken action to address many of the concerns identified through the self-study process, and the others are under review by groups charged with addressing them. Plans to address these concerns will be in place shortly.

The Strategic Planning Advisory Group has provided an important vehicle for review and revision of the Comprehensive College Plan. The entire campus community participated in the most recent revision of the CCP, which now reflects the current state of the College, offers new approaches to continuing concerns, and identifies new challenges for the future. The College at Oneonta is committed to continuing its dramatic positive momentum, and the CCP will help to coordinate the campus-wide effort to do so.

Four challenges, in particular, are worthy of note as the College looks to the future: continuing to recruit and retain more academically qualified students; attracting and retaining first-rate faculty and staff; maintaining contemporary technology for teaching and learning; and adjusting to changes in the programmatic and social needs of students.

In the area of admissions selectivity, the College’s gains in the past six years have been
XIII. Conclusion

unprecedented. Nevertheless, the Enrollment Management Committee has been charged with coordinating a College-wide effort to continue to meet campus enrollment targets while improving upon the academic profile of entering classes. The College will continue its efforts to attract more and better qualified applicants, thus enabling it to become even more selective in the future. Concurrently, the College will continue to work to increase the diversity of the campus community through recruitment and retention initiatives geared both to students and to faculty and staff.

The Employee Recruitment and Retention Task Force has been charged with enhancing the College’s recruitment and retention efforts, with an initial focus on faculty positions. The task force has begun collecting local and comparative data, and it has developed two surveys specific to the College. In the future, the College expects to learn from data gathered through the new decliner survey of applicants who turn down positions and the new exit survey of employees who resign from positions at the College. Based on the task force’s recommendations, the College plans to develop initiatives to improve faculty and staff retention.

Despite significant recent improvements, the College needs to continue to focus on retention of students to graduation. The Enrollment Management Committee has been charged with developing and coordinating an integrated College-wide plan to continue to increase retention rates. The CCP has been updated to reflect the College’s on-going commitment to enhancing the quality of student life and learning.

Though not unique to the College at Oneonta, advances in technology will undoubtedly present challenges in the future. Several objectives of the CCP have been revised to reflect the need for all members of the campus community to have access to and facility with current technology. While the College is an acknowledged leader in the use of educational technology, a strong commitment will be necessary to enhance the technological infrastructure to keep pace
with the rapid evolution of educational technology.

Perhaps the most pleasant challenge that the College will face in the future is the need to modify programs to meet the changing needs of its students, particularly the needs of the more academically focused students that the College has attracted in increasing numbers in recent years. Increased diversity in the student population, evolving interests in different academic programs, and emerging social interests will undoubtedly result in the College’s needing to modify its programs. However, through any changes, the SUNY College at Oneonta will maintain its commitment as a student-centered institution of higher learning.