Self-Study Report
January 2012
## Table of Contents

**Institutional Characteristics** ........................................................................................................... ii
**Introduction** ........................................................................................................................................ vii
**Overview** ............................................................................................................................................ ix
**Standard One** ...................................................................................................................................... 1
**Standard Two** ..................................................................................................................................... 7
**Standard Three** ................................................................................................................................. 14
**Standard Four** ................................................................................................................................. 21
**Standard Five** ................................................................................................................................. 42
**Standard Six** ....................................................................................................................................... 54
**Standard Seven** ............................................................................................................................... 69
**Standard Eight** ............................................................................................................................... 78
**Standard Nine** ................................................................................................................................... 84
**Standard Ten** ...................................................................................................................................... 91
**Standard Eleven** .............................................................................................................................. 94
**Appendices** ....................................................................................................................................... 99
  - Steering Committee
  - References
  - Data First
  - E-Series
  - S-Series
  - Organizational Charts
  - Affirmation of Compliance
III. Institutional Characteristics (Revised September 2009)

Date: 1/16/2011

1. Corporate name of institution: Curry College
2. Date institution was chartered or authorized: 1955, 1971, 1978, 1982
3. Date institution enrolled first students in degree programs: 1950 (4yr degree programs)
4. Date institution awarded first degrees: 1955 (4yr degree programs)
5. Type of control:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ State</td>
<td>☒ Independent, not-for-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ City</td>
<td>□ Religious Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Other</td>
<td>(Name of Church) __________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Specify) _____________________</td>
<td>□ Proprietary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Other: (Specify) ____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. By what agency is the institution legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond high school, and what degrees is it authorized to grant? Massachusetts Board of Higher Education: Baccalaureate and Masters Degree

7. Level of postsecondary offering (check all that apply)

   □ Less than one year of work
   □ At least one but less than two years professional degree
   □ Diploma or certificate programs of at least two but less than four years
   □ Associate degree granting program of at least two years
   □ Four- or five-year baccalaureate degree granting program
   □ First professional degree
   ☒ Master’s and/or work beyond the first professional degree
   □ Work beyond the master’s level but not at the doctoral level (e.g., Specialist in Education)
   □ A doctor of philosophy or equivalent degree
   □ Other doctoral programs __________
   □ Other (Specify)
8. Type of undergraduate programs (check all that apply)

- Occupational training at the crafts/clerical level (certificate or diploma)
- Liberal arts and general
- Occupational training at the technical or semi-professional level (degree)
- Teacher preparatory
- Two-year programs designed for full transfer to a baccalaureate degree
- Professional
- Other ______________________

9. The calendar system at the institution is:

- Semester
- Quarter
- Trimester
- Other ______________________

10. What constitutes the credit hour load for a full-time equivalent (FTE) student each semester?

a) Undergraduate 12-18 credit hours
b) Graduate 6-9 credit hours
c) Professional 0 credit hours

11. Student population:

a) Degree-seeking students¹:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time student headcount</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>2202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time student headcount</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>2,231</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>2,427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Number of students (headcount) in non-credit, short-term courses: 44

¹ Reports Fall 2011 figures
12. List all programs accredited by a nationally recognized, specialized accrediting agency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Accredited since</th>
<th>Last Reviewed</th>
<th>Next Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Off-campus Locations. List all instructional locations other than the main campus. For each site, indicate whether the location offers full-degree programs or 50% or more of one or more degree programs. Record the full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE) for the most recent year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full degree</th>
<th>50%-99%</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. In-state Locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Out-of-state Locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. International Locations: For each overseas instructional location, indicate the name of the program, the location, and the headcount of students enrolled for the most recent year. An overseas instructional location is defined as “any overseas location of an institution, other than the main campus, at which the institution matriculates students to whom it offers any portion of a degree program or offers on-site instruction or instructional support for students enrolled in a predominantly or totally online program.” Do not include study abroad locations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of program(s)</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Degrees and certificates offered 50% or more electronically: For each degree or Title IV-eligible certificate, indicate the level (certificate, associate's, baccalaureate, master's, professional, doctoral), the percentage of credits that may be completed on-line, and the FTE of matriculated students for the most recent year. Enter more rows as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of program</th>
<th>Degree level</th>
<th>% on-line</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Instruction offered through contractual relationships: For each contractual relationship through which instruction is offered for a Title IV-eligible degree or certificate, indicate the name of the contractor, the location of instruction, the program name, and degree or certificate, and the number of credits that may be completed through the contractual relationship. Enter more rows as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of contractor</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of program</th>
<th>Degree or certificate</th>
<th># of credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. List by name and title the chief administrative officers of the institution

---

22 Combines Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 FTE.
18. Supply a table of organization for the institution. While the organization of any institution will depend on its purpose, size and scope of operation, institutional organization usually includes four areas. Although every institution may not have a major administrative division for these areas, the following outline may be helpful in charting and describing the overall administrative organization:

a) Organization of academic affairs, showing a line of responsibility to president for each department, school division, library, admissions office, and other units assigned to this area;

b) Organization of student affairs, including health services, student government, intercollegiate activities, and other units assigned to this area;

c) Organization of finances and business management, including plant operations and maintenance, non-academic personnel administration, IT, auxiliary enterprises, and other units assigned to this area;

d) Organization of institutional advancement, including fund development, public relations, alumni office and other units assigned to this area.

19. Record briefly the central elements in the history of the institution:

Since its founding in 1879, Curry College has always been a forward-looking institution that emphasizes individualized education and personal development. Curry College has a rich history whose roots lie in the intellectual traditions and personalities of 19th century New England. Now well into its second century, Curry has maintained a distinctive mission while creatively transforming itself over the years to meet new educational challenges.

The earliest form of Curry College was the Boston-based school of elocution established in 1879 by Anna Baright, a leading scholar in the field of oratory. She married Samuel S. Curry, a Boston minister, in 1882. Together they founded the College’s direct institutional precursor, the School of Expression, established in 1885 and incorporated in 1888. The Currys founded the school on the philosophy that individuals could reach their true potential by cultivating the art of expression, and coursework focused on such areas as drama, oratory and speech. Many other prominent New Englanders were involved in the institution’s founding and early growth, including the famous inventor, Alexander Graham Bell, a close friend of Samuel Curry, who served as the school’s chancellor from 1907-1922.

In 1938, the Massachusetts Legislature gave the institution the power to confer the degrees of Bachelor of Science of oratory and Master of Science of oratory. In 1943, the corporate name was changed to Curry College in honor of its founders. In 1952, Curry moved to its present location in Milton and became a traditional four-year liberal arts college with a strong emphasis on communication and self-development that continues today. The institution was authorized to grant the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in 1955. In 1974, Curry absorbed the Perry Normal School, which prepared teachers for careers in nursery schools, kindergartens and primary grades. A master’s degree program in education was established in 1981, with a master of arts in criminal justice following in 1998, a master of business administration in 2005, and a master of science in nursing in 2008. (From 2011-2012 College Catalog)
### CHIEF INSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function or Office</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Exact Title</th>
<th>Year Appt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair, Board of Trustees</td>
<td>Anthony Campo</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President/CEO</td>
<td>Kenneth Quigley</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Academic Officer</td>
<td>David Potash</td>
<td>Chief Academic Officer</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>Ruth Sherman</td>
<td>Dean of Continuing Education and Graduate Studies</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
<td>Richard Sullivan</td>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Student Services Officer</td>
<td>Maryellen Kiley</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Susan Pennini</td>
<td>Dean of Institutional Planning</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
<td>Ezekiel Kimball</td>
<td>Director of Institutional Research</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Cassandra Horii</td>
<td>Dean of Faculty</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Christopher Lawson</td>
<td>Chief Development Officer</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Ed Tallent</td>
<td>Director of Levin Library</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Information Officer</td>
<td>Dennis Thibeault</td>
<td>Chief Information Officer</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Education</td>
<td>Ruth Sherman</td>
<td>Dean of Continuing Education and Graduate Studies</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants/Research</td>
<td>Cassandra Horii</td>
<td>Dean of Faculty</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>Jane Fidler</td>
<td>Dean of Admissions</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Sally Buckley</td>
<td>Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management(^3)</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>Stephanny Elias</td>
<td>Director of Student Financial Services</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>Frances Jackson</td>
<td>Director of Communication</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni Association</td>
<td>Christopher Lawson</td>
<td>Chief Development Officer</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Mary Dunn</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) A search is presently underway for a Registrar. The Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management is the prior Registrar and will supervise that position.

Curry College 2012 Self-Study
IV. Introduction

The twin aims of accreditation, quality assurance and institutional improvement, are longstanding and ongoing priorities at Curry College. This ten-year self-study afforded Curry College a welcome and timely opportunity to examine itself in a formal and structured manner. Shaping the endeavor has been an institutional commitment to collaboration, integrity, and thoughtful consideration. The primary goal of Curry’s reaccreditation self-study, which has been undertaken in a period of institutional change and growth, is to shape and improve our College’s effectiveness. Curry College very much believes that this report and the work surrounding it will help Curry become a stronger institution of higher education.

Building off the collaborative effort that prepared the 2010 Interim Report to NEASC, Curry’s leadership envisioned the NEASC self-study in the context of two other significant institution-wide initiatives: the drafting of the College’s next strategic plan and the revision of our institution’s general education requirements. Curry’s previous strategic plan had expired and the institution was ready for new goals and directions. Linking the next strategic planning process with the self-study afforded a synergy to both. With respect to general education, Curry’s faculty widely recognized that the institution’s existing requirements needed to change and to be integrated and more outcomes focused. The broader objective, therefore, was to support each of these independent activities and to keep them mutually informed and integrated. In addition, aware of the demands that these initiatives would place on the institution and its resources, Curry’s leadership made the decision to defer a review of the College’s mission statement.

Primary responsibility for drafting the self-study was assigned to a 22-member Steering Committee, chaired by the Chief Academic Officer. Cognizant that the effort’s success would be best achieved through a balance of faculty and administration, each standard was assigned a faculty member and administrator with responsibility for gathering data, drafting a section of the report, and sharing in the overall responsibility of drafting a frank, accurate and substantive document. The selection of individuals for the Steering Committee was made by the President and the Chief Academic Officer in the Spring of 2010. Their decisions were informed by recommendations from faculty and staff, as well as recognition of the constraints of time, as there is significant overlap among the participants in the three major initiatives previously mentioned.

Work on the self-study began in earnest in September of 2010 at the steering committee’s inaugural meeting. The committee was asked to create a self-study that was a complete and honest reflection of the College, while employing a process that was both inclusive and transparent. Members studied the NEASC standards, which were distributed to all of Curry’s faculty, and the self-study guidelines. Steering Committee members reached out to other groups of stakeholders who might have relevant information as they undertook their research and writing assignments. The Steering Committee normally met every two weeks. The
Academic Dean’s Office coordinated the effort, sharing information and facilitating communication.

Early in the self-study process, communication with the College community was prioritized as an essential component to the process. Monthly and semi-monthly e-mail updates from the Academic Dean’s Office were sent to the community; brief reports were presented at faculty meetings; and key constituent groups were identified for outreach and consultation.

Research and preliminary data collection consumed most of the Committee’s early work. The College’s most recent self-study was reviewed, as were the significant changes in the self-study guidelines. Curry was among the small population of institutions for which the significant revision in Standards occurred during the course of the College’s visit preparation. In addition to securing and identifying the necessary data and documentation, the Steering Committee also collected new data from various constituencies. Particularly close collaboration was forged between the Steering Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee and the General Education Task Force.

Drafts were circulated in the Spring of 2011. The Steering Committee made a commitment to use existing data and reports whenever possible. Simultaneously, processes were put in place for data gathering and document identification and collection, and a NEASC site was established on the College’s web portal. By the end of September a full draft was distributed to the entire Curry College community – faculty, staff and students – for initial review and comment. Over the following two weeks in early October, the community shared comments with the Steering Committee through a series of six open forums and via e-mail. Each open forum focused on six-to-eight standards, and Steering Committee members were present to field questions and record comments. The input and feedback from the open forums and other feedback were reviewed, considered and incorporated where appropriate. A penultimate public version of the draft was again shared with the full Curry Community at the end of the 2011 Fall semester.
V. Overview

More than 130 years after its founding, Curry College offers education that incorporates liberal arts values and academic traditions with professional programs, providing its students with the skills for lifelong learning. Established in Boston in 1879 as the School of Expression and incorporated in 1888, the institution was granted the authority by the Massachusetts Legislature to award the B.S. and M.S. degrees in Oratory in 1938. Renamed Curry College in 1943 in honor of its founders, Samuel Silas Curry and Anna Baright Curry, the College moved from Boston’s Back Bay to a campus in suburban Milton, MA, in 1952. Curry College was authorized in 1953 to award the B.A. and B.S. degrees, and became known for its focus on communication and the needs of students as individual learners. Curry earned its first regional accreditation from the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of NEASC in 1970. In 1974 Curry absorbed the Perry Normal School of Boston. Over time, the College has significantly increased the acreage of its campus from 33 acres to 135 acres.

Enrollment and financial concerns constrained the College for the following twenty years, culminating in a budget crisis in the mid-1990s. In 1996, under new leadership, the College balanced its budget, grew enrollments and faculty, and significantly strengthened the institution’s infrastructure. Steady growth took place until 2007 when enrollments began to flatten. Over the past few years, at a broad level, the College has been deliberately considering and preparing for its next phase of maturation and growth. Central to Curry’s recent thinking has been the aim of sustainable academic quality, from enrollment management to program development to strategic planning.

In May of 2011, the Self-Study Steering Committee, informed by rough drafts and much conversation, dedicated itself to a description and evaluation of Curry and a discussion of the College in the future. The emerging themes were extraordinarily consistent and are reflected in this document and other Curry plans and reports, most significantly, our Strategic Plan. Curry is at an inflection point as it works to define and distinguish itself while remaining true to its longstanding values. The College is a growing, complex institution, ready to become more data driven, outcomes based and disciplined in its planning, implementation and evaluation. The College’s organization and culture are steadily shifting in this direction, driven by external factors and also by internal aims, all while its values and ideals remain constant. Curry is in a period of transition. As articulated in the Strategic Plan, we seek to offer distinct, relevant and rigorous programs of quality, to attract, educate and graduate students prepared to engage in a complex and changing world, to foster an inclusive campus community that attracts, respects, and supports diversity in multiple forms, and to strengthen our culture of organizational integrity, accountability, and sustainability. This self-study, along with the College’s Strategic Plan and new General Education requirements, are significant strides in Curry College’s journey.

In 2010, Curry College provided a progress report to NEASC on (1) improving the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty members and enhancing the overall strength of the faculty; (2) using
assessment learning goals and measures that demonstrate desired outcomes in student learning; and (3) improving student retention and graduation rates. Those concerns are institutional priorities and figure prominently in the self-study.

Curry’s faculty today is increasingly full-time (from 107 in FY 2007 to 122 in FY 2012) and credentialed (from 64.5% to 73% with doctoral and terminal master’s degrees over the same period). Curry made measurable progress in its efforts to achieve a better balance between full-time and part-time faculty and to increase the number and percentage of full-time faculty with terminal degrees.

![Full-time Faculty Chart]

Faculty support and development have also been bolstered, most notably through the creation of a Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation.

The College has continued to make good progress on learning outcomes assessment. All undergraduate majors and master’s degree programs have published agreed-upon learning outcomes. In addition, all master’s degree programs and 60% of undergraduate majors are using learning outcomes data to inform plans. The institution’s culture and practice have come to embrace assessment through the work of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, professional development, and continual progress. Work is ongoing to complete the loop of articulating expectations and measuring outcomes across all courses, programs, and institution-wide. Using results to inform appropriate actions and ensure student achievement suitable to the degree is similarly ongoing.

Unfortunately and despite many undertakings and efforts there are no substantive improvements in retention and graduation rates to report. First-to-second year retention rates for our entering full-time, first-time student cohorts are consistently between 65 and 70 percent (with the notable exception of FY2010 when only 61 percent of first year students returned for their second year). Likewise, graduation rates are consistently between 45 and 50 percent during the past four years and show little movement from FY2009 (47%) and present
(48%). As this self-study documents, the College is increasingly adopting many of the best practices in enrollment management to increase its graduation rates. Student support and outreach have been bolstered, most notably in the First Year Experience. We have dedicated more time and resources to data collection, analysis and evaluation, most visibly through the creation of an Office of Institutional Research. Improving graduation, a critical measure of institutional effectiveness, looms as Curry College’s preeminent challenge.

Much has taken place at Curry since the 2002 decennial self-study. Enrollment surged, for traditional, continuing education and graduate students. The growth in traditional students illustrates Curry’s growth.

**Traditional Student Admissions/Enrollment, 2000 - 2012**

New construction both contributed to, and was imperative for accommodating, the increased enrollment. After nearly three decades of no new construction, growth in physical facilities began in 1999. Four new residence halls were constructed over the next decade. Major development initiatives included construction of a new academic and performance center, consisting of classrooms, office space, a second commuter cafeteria, and the Keith Auditorium; expansion of the Levin Library; a Macintosh computer lab in the Hafer Academic building; expansion of the 55 Atherton Street administrative offices and Career Services Center; and most significantly, a new 84,000 square foot Student Center, a $37 million project, which has profoundly impacted the campus. The College closed a CE campus in Worcester and Medford and still retains a campus in Plymouth which serves CE and graduate students.
Significant program expansion was realized in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Curry now awards master’s degrees in Criminal Justice, Education, Management, and Nursing. Reflecting business and community needs, the College increased its offering with several non-credit professional certificate programs in the Continuing Education program, and an accelerated degree program in Nursing.

Several majors experienced review, growth, and/or substantive revisions to the major requirements or the creation of new concentrations and minors. These included a new major in Graphic Design and new minors in African American Studies and Asian Studies. Special initiatives in the First-Year Experience included collaborations between academic and student affairs to provide theme-based learning communities, a new First-Year Honors program and a new Scholars cohort program in Communication and Fine Arts. In addition to maintaining external discipline-specific accreditation in Criminal Justice, Education and Nursing, the College supported three areas, the Levin Library, Psychology, and the PAL program in formal self-studies with external reviews; more are anticipated for other departments.

Supporting some of these new programs was greater attention to faculty development and support, including creating a new Dean of Faculty position and a new part-time grant writer position dedicated to Academic Affairs. Efforts of these individuals, together with those of others, were critical in the awarding of a grant resulting in the establishment of the Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation.

Administratively, Curry has witnessed personnel changes and an enhanced focus on outcomes. Academic Affairs and Student Affairs have new leadership and staff since 2002. Career Services has new management, resources and direction as well, expanding services as part of a larger effort to enhance students’ educational experiences and outcomes. The College has established and staffed a Dean of Planning position, conference facilities, and overall, created a far stronger infrastructure.

The environment in New England for less-selective, tuition-driven liberal arts based colleges is extraordinarily competitive. The number of college-age students is declining, the economy is not strong, and higher education must be increasingly accountable to more demanding stakeholders. Curry College understands these external environmental pressures. Through increasingly rigorous self-examination, considered and informed institutional planning, a vigorous commitment to evidence-based decision making and best practices, and a dedication to our mission, it is our confident belief that Curry College will continue to prosper graduate more students, and send them forward to successful and meaningful lives.
Standard One: Mission and Purposes

Description

The College’s Mission Statement and educational goals were drafted in 1990 and formally approved by its Board of Trustees in February of 1991. They are represented through a one-page document consisting of three parts: a narrative description and overview of Curry College and the nature of the education it provides; a two-sentence “mission statement,” and seven educational goals formulated to lead to attainment of the mission. Taken together, these components of the College’s mission define its distinctive character and reflect its traditions and goals for the ongoing development of the students it serves.

The Mission Statement asserts that the College develops “liberally educated persons who are able to gain and to apply knowledge humanely, intelligently, and effectively in a complex, changing world.”

The educational goals are:

- **THINKING CRITICALLY** (to analyze, synthesize, hypothesize, evaluate, and to reason quantitatively)
- **COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY** (to see, listen, speak, read, and write well)
- **UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT** (to articulate an interdependence of individuals, family, societies, history, and the natural environment)
- **APPRECIATING AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE** (to experience and comment on artistic phenomena)
- **DEFINING A PERSONAL IDENTITY** (to identify strengths and weaknesses as learners, to become increasingly self-directed and disciplined, to care for self and others, to behave more responsibly, both personally and collectively, to become more aware of physical, social, psychological, and spiritual identity)
- **EXAMINING VALUE SYSTEMS** (to formulate and apply standards for behavior, to make informed choices with awareness of responsibilities and consequences, to increase tolerance and appreciation of diversity), and,
- **ADAPTING AND INNOVATING** (to access information, to anticipate, detect, respond to, and create change, and to prepare for lifelong learning)

As an institution with the liberal arts foundation suggested through its mission and goals, Curry’s curriculum and programs have, over the years, reinforced its mission and focus on two hallmarks of the College’s education: “a high respect for the individuality of every student and a developmental approach to learning that maximizes opportunities for achievement,” as emphasized in Curry’s Catalog. The College’s curricula, policies, student life and the larger Curry community have been infused by these values: the liberal arts, the application of knowledge in the world, respect for the individual, and the maximization of opportunities for achievement.

The College shares its mission and goals through a range of media to its key stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, administration, alumni and the broader public. The Mission Statement is
accessible in multiple locations: on the College’s website; page 3 of the printed course catalog as well as the electronic version; on page 2 of the Employee; and on page 4 of the Student Handbook.

The College’s web architecture reflects the mission’s primacy; search engine optimization ensures the ready access of the Curry mission statement and related goals to the public. The mission statement, however, is not included in admissions and marketing materials, nor is it added as boilerplate language in press releases. Curry’s mission is made visible to external stakeholders (e.g., parents, community members, etc.) through the above, consistent with the College’s ongoing communication and public disclosure efforts (See Standard Ten, Public Disclosure).

Prospective and matriculating students learn about Curry’s mission statement through the College’s paper and electronic catalogs and from interaction with Curry faculty and staff. Summer Orientation and convocation, a formal college-wide ceremony celebrating first-year students’ matriculation into the College, are very much mission-driven; they are designed to underscore the College’s priorities and values in bringing new students into the Curry community and to reinforce the importance of the College’s mission. In the classroom, some faculty members incorporate the mission statement into their course syllabi, and/or class discussions. This happens most often in first-year core courses and in senior seminars.

Closely aligned with these efforts, are the many ways that the faculty learn and pursue the mission. Mission figures prominently in searches for full-time faculty and in new faculty orientation. Requests for faculty positions are justified within the context of academic planning and the College’s mission and candidates for full-time faculty positions receive information from the College’s Chief Academic Officer, Dean of Faculty, Dean of Students, faculty, staff and students about the many ways that Curry pursues its mission. The values outlined above are highlighted, and that message recurs during new faculty orientation.

The College is currently in the process of revising its general education curriculum in the context of its mission. A multidisciplinary General Education Task Force, comprised of faculty and administrators is charged with making recommendations to the faculty relative to Curry’s liberal arts and general education requirements that incorporate nationwide best practices and align with Curry’s mission and core values.

In May 2010, the faculty approved a statement of core values and learning outcomes recommended by the General Education Task Force; such outcomes were based on the current Mission Statement and the College’s commitment to integrating a strong liberal arts-based education as a foundation to all of its academic programs. Strengthening and streamlining the general education requirements as a critical manifestation of the mission continues to be a priority; and, since the current Central Liberal Arts Curriculum was originally designed in 1981 and modified in 1991, many feel that the current review is both timely and important in delivering a curriculum that actualizes the College’s mission and is in accord with its core values and learning outcomes.
Fulfillment of the Mission itself has not been assessed directly. The seven learning goals that flow from it are fulfilled through the College’s Central Liberal Arts Curriculum (CLAC), as well as through specific coursework in academic disciplines, departments, and programs. Each goal is actualized through a variety of general education and specialized courses, including those listed below:

- Developing a Personal Identity: Psychology, Sociology, Women’s and Gender Studies;
- Appreciating Aesthetic Experience: Dance, Graphic Design, Music, and Visual Arts;
- Communicating Effectively: Communication, English, and Information Technology;
- Understanding Context: multi-disciplinary, including African-American Studies, Asian Studies, Management, Politics and History, the Sciences, and Nursing;
- Critical Thinking and Examining Value Systems are threaded throughout the academic programs.

College-wide efforts to strengthen learning outcomes assessment (see Standard Four) are closely tied to the institutional mission and the attainment of learning goals developed to achieve the mission. The College has placed a renewed focus on assessment of core outcomes with its implementation of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2008-2009; and, with the leadership and support of the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, learning outcomes assessment is taking place at the assignment, course, program, and degree level. The development and assessment of outcomes that relate to the College’s mission and educational goals will become more comprehensive and systematic over time, consistent with the directions articulated through the College’s new strategic planning process. That process is discussed in Standard Two, Planning and Evaluation, as well as in Standard Four, The Academic Program.

Appraisal

The College’s commitment to its mission is tempered with challenges and opportunities. Originally adopted in 1991, the Mission Statement has remained constant while the College and the external environment have undergone, and continue to undergo, significant changes. As an illustration, two tensions highlight some of the differences between Curry then and Curry in 2012: the College’s traditional commitment to the liberal arts in the current context of today’s students’ preference for pre-professional majors; and Curry’s commitment to the individuality of its students juxtaposed against the College’s increased size and complexity.

As the College began its work planning this self-study, two large institution-wide initiatives loomed: a strategic planning process and the revision of the College’s general education requirements. Recognizing that it was not prudent to engage in these as well as to conduct a thorough review of the Mission Statement, the College leadership decided to affirm the existing Mission Statement with an understanding that a future review of the statement was likely. Accordingly, academic planning is based on the current Mission Statement, as are institutional learning outcomes assessment processes and general education reforms.
Of these multiple efforts, Strategic Planning has emerged as the best institutional “space” for understanding the strengths and limitations of Curry College’s Mission Statement. Representatives from the NEASC Steering Committee were among those who helped inform the Strategic Planning process in its earliest stages. Information gathered early in the self-study process, along with NEASC Standards of Accreditation and earlier College reports and self-studies were shared with the Strategic Planning Committee in early 2011; and at an October 2011 meeting, co-chairs of the Strategic Planning group presented their interim report to the NEASC Steering Committee. In it, they emphasized the need for the statement to reflect the College’s evolution. They recommended, as well, that a Mission Statement revision should “draw upon the work of the Strategic Planning Committee to develop Core Values and Core Vision Statements that align with the College Mission.”

Throughout all of these processes, there has been agreement on the need for the College to review and possibly update its mission.

Mission Familiarity
The wider Curry community was given an opportunity to bring their perceptions of the College’s mission to the self-study process as well. In Spring 2011, survey research specific to Curry’s mission was conducted to gather data in two areas: familiarity with the mission and feedback about the College’s success in fulfilling its mission. A total of 159 students, 85 faculty, and 16 administrators/staff members were surveyed voluntarily and with assurance of anonymity. Most respondents had an awareness of the mission. Faculty and staff reported greater familiarity than did the students. The results were inconclusive at best that stakeholders recognized a clear relationship between initiatives and the mission.

Some respondents, when given the opportunity on the survey questionnaire to comment on ways that the College could better fulfill its mission, suggested that publishing the mission, posting it in common areas—even in every classroom—and making it more evident to the community would be valuable. Other suggestions included a dialogue about it with students, discussing and explaining it early on, including it on course syllabi, and making every class fulfill the mission in some way. One obvious finding from the survey exercise is that whether Curry writes a new Mission Statement or re-affirms its current mission, the College needs to engage in a systematic and formal attempt to publicize its mission and to link it explicitly to the life and work of the college.

Alignment of the Mission and the College’s Identity, Values, Priorities and Activities
While some within the community are familiar with and confident that Curry does a good job of fulfilling its mission, is not clear that the College’s mission and purposes provide adequate direction to the curricula and form the basis on which expectations for student learning are developed.

An example of a disconnect between mission and student learning is that the College community—faculty, students, and administration—engages in a variety of activities such as public service, volunteerism, and community engagement; and there are frequent opportunities for on- and off-campus experiences. These activities, however, have not been
formally linked to the mission or evaluated in terms of the Mission Statement. There are many other such examples, where goals and activities that the College community now values do not connect in clearly-identifiable ways with its current Mission Statement. The reverse may be true as well; Curry has not in recent years sought to verify that the mission and goals are clearly enacted and assessed within the College’s curricula.

Critical to any review of the mission is determining which parts of the Mission Statement matter more and which parts matter less. As Curry wrestles with the tensions noted previously (e.g. liberal arts and professional preparation), those same pressures contribute to the difficulty in “branding” the College. Curry faculty, staff and administration continue to engage in extended discussions about who and what we are: an institution in transition; vital, complex, and caring; striving for increased academic relevance and rigor; working to develop a shared vision and shared direction. The College looks just as closely at who and what we hope to be: an institution of distinction, academically rigorous; stable, vibrant, and yet continuously improving; increasingly sophisticated in institutional planning and decision-making; a community of engaged students, faculty, and administrators. To distinguish and brand itself effectively, Curry College must ensure the alignment of its vision, values, and mission.

Another issue relative to alignment is the extent to which the Statement speaks to all that is uniquely Curry and/or addresses the ways in which Curry is changing. Significant anecdotal evidence from the Office of Admission indicates that much public perception focuses on Curry’s nationally-recognized Program for the Advancement of Learning (PAL) as what sets us apart from other small liberal arts-based colleges in New England. However, that perception does not acknowledge the advances and strengths of the institution’s programs in nursing, criminal justice, communication, and other areas of academic and programmatic vitality.

**Projection**

The College will:

- Establish a mechanism for a community-wide review of the Curry Mission Statement and begin the process of review by 2013.
- Build institutional knowledge about the value, importance and use of Mission Statements by making the Mission Statement more visible throughout the College community, connecting the Mission Statement to planning, budgeting, and other broad institutional decision-making activities.
- Establish a timetable for the evaluation of the Mission Statement’s integration with College activities and priorities.
- Investigate the possible development and use of a Vision Statement in partnership with the revised, rewritten or re-affirmed Mission Statement.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

While Curry College’s Mission Statement has not been reviewed for many years, the Fall 2011 Strategic Plan Interim Report outlined an intent “to review and assess the ongoing relevancy of
the College’s Mission Statement.” The Strategic Planning Committee recommended that such a review occur “in the near future to ensure that it continues to best reflect and encompass the College’s considerable growth and evolution over the past 20 years.” It also recommended that “the College. . . draw upon the work of the Strategic Planning Committee to develop Core Values and Core Vision Statements that align with the College Mission for broad internal and external dissemination.” The Strategic Planning Committee based its recommendations on internal discussions informed by feedback from the entire Curry community.

A common goal among the various constituencies seeking a focused and expressive Mission Statement is to ensure that the College’s mission become a guiding force for student learning, institutional priorities, and activities that support the College’s mission and purpose. There is institution-wide recognition that for such synergy to exist, the mission must be regularly reviewed to ascertain its ongoing effectiveness in guiding the institution.
Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

Description

Since 1998, Curry College has used strategic planning as a broad-based and participatory means of setting institutional priorities and developing initiatives to support them. The College’s first Strategic Plan was created with broad input and provided a foundation for the institutional vision for growth. Curry’s second Strategic Plan, A Call to Action, was completed in 2003 and articulated a plan for growth in more detail. Of equal importance was the development of a community process to review the plan annually with town meetings held in 2004 and 2005. Updates to the plan following these community reviews indicated what was accomplished during a specific time period and what revisions were developed to further focus and develop goals and initiatives.

The College’s significant enrollment growth and changes in key personnel impacted the initiation of the third strategic planning process, which began in the Spring of 2011 and is currently underway. The most recent process is using a data-driven approach, scanning the external environment and soliciting input from all college constituencies. Documentation of the entire process is available to the full college community through the Curry Portal—myCurry, an intranet providing information to the community.

In addition to the strategic planning process, the College employs other broad-based planning efforts, described below:

- The Master Plan was an outgrowth of the 2003 Strategic Planning process, providing a framework for integration of physical facilities planning with program and budget planning during a time of institutional growth. The plan, whose development was overseen by the Dean of Institutional Planning, is supported through the work of the Physical Facilities Committee that includes administrators, faculty and staff; it is reviewed and updated annually by Senior Staff. Facilities decisions are folded into the annual budget process, and implementation is overseen by the Dean of Institutional Planning, the CFO, and the Director of Buildings and Grounds.

- The annual budget process serves as the primary ongoing and broad-based review of planning initiatives. This process includes input from all areas of the College and draws upon qualitative and quantitative data gathered from administrative and academic areas. The annual budget process is reviewed by the Budget Committee, consisting of administrative staff and faculty. The recommendations of the Budget Committee reference the Strategic Plan, the Master Plan, and other planning processes, and are in turn reviewed by the Senior Staff, which brings final recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

- Academic planning takes place annually at the unit level through an iterative process that encompasses budget requests. Units submit self-assessments, priorities and plans that are shared among all academic units internally, and commented upon by the deans before being resubmitted and aligned with academic unit budgeting requests. These are woven into a larger academic plan and budget, which is reviewed and shared with the
academic units. In addition, the larger academic departments have meetings with the dean’s office staff in order to further share, understand, and align planning, priorities and needs.

- Strategic Enrollment Management was identified as an area for development in the College’s second Strategic Plan, and the process of defining and strengthening this effort continues. Recent Strategic Enrollment Management efforts included the work of a broad-based administrative committee. Initially, the main focus of the committee was to inform the development of institutional research reports to support data-driven enrollment planning; subsequently the committee was charged with identifying items for immediate action to enhance recruitment efforts. Results of this work include: a restructuring of merit aid awarding to support the recruitment of academically qualified students in targeted subgroups; data-driven recruitment efforts; the development of dashboard-type reporting to monitor enrollment outcomes; and focused strategic enrollment management meetings with individual academic departments, informed by institutional research tailored to those academic areas.

- The College employs a number of institutional evaluation tools described more thoroughly in other sections of this document. Of note are the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey and an annual survey of graduating seniors.

**Institutional Research**

Prior to 2011, the Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management and Registrar and the Director of Enrollment Management were the primary providers of institutional data. A Director of Institutional Research position was created to oversee and centralize institutional research efforts to support data-driven decision-making, comprehensive planning, and institutional effectiveness. The position, staffed as of December 2011, reports to the Chief Academic Officer. Even with centralization of the oversight function, data collection and analysis within local areas will continue as needed.

**Planning**

Senior Staff integrates Curry’s long-term planning efforts by establishing feasible priorities annually through the budget process. The typical annual budget process incorporates short-term objectives, many of which are based on longer term goals and plans (the Strategic Plan, the Master Plan, and the college Mission Statement). An institutional SWOT from the Strategic Plan analysis identifies overarching internal and external opportunities and constraints. Other planning documents that are included in the annual budget review vary, but significant planning recommendations come from the following:

- The academic planning process, identified earlier, prioritizes and makes recommendations relative to departmental and interdepartmental needs, and incorporates analyses from broad-based and specific academic planning and evaluation initiatives currently underway. Some are described below:
  - The General Education Task Force was formed in 2009 to review the college’s central liberal arts curriculum (CLAC). This group is charged with updating and renewing the college’s general education program in light of the college
The committee’s final recommendations must be approved by the faculty, and the report, with its implications for physical facilities, technology, staffing, and assessment, will be brought to the budget review process for consideration.

- Academic units have begun to undergo voluntary self-studies with support and encouragement from the Dean’s Office. These efforts, thus far undertaken by the Program for the Advancement of Learning, the Psychology Department, and the Library, have been valuable in establishing thoughtful requests for resources that can be considered within the context of all-college budgeting.

- Technology planning is presented through the efforts of the Technology Governance Committee, comprised of administrative staff and faculty, and the Educational Technology Committee, a faculty standing committee. Annually, the Technology Governance Committee presents its recommendations based on the outcome of its review process.

- NEASC accreditation recommendations are considered and incorporated into college goals and related budget requests.

**Evaluation**

While the College has not systematically evaluated the achievement of its mission, it plans to do so through the strategic planning process and a subsequent mission review, noted in Standard One. To begin data-gathering that will support the review, survey information was gathered from faculty, students, and staff relating specifically to familiarity with the College mission. The results, documented in Standard One, create a piece of the foundation upon which a mission review process will be built.

The College’s educational objectives are evaluated through individual and ongoing efforts such as the following:

- The Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee is an institutional committee charged with leading efforts in learning outcomes assessment “as a continuous improvement model.” Institutes and workshops support development of assessment practices at the academic program and department level that align with the institutional mission.

- Academic Program Planning frames the discussion of academic goals, directions and priorities and includes an annual self-assessment and appraisal process to help align departmental needs with the budget processes and departmental and institutional priorities.

- The Criminal Justice and Nursing programs are periodically reviewed by external agencies in their disciplines, and the Education programs are reviewed by the State Board of Education. New and existing graduate programs are subject to review by the State Board of Higher Education.

- Strategic Enrollment Management data at the program level provides assistance with academic evaluation and planning.

- Individual evaluation efforts that have the potential to impact students in all academic programs include: a rubric developed by faculty in the college Writing Program to norm student work, evaluate differences, and recommend grading requirements within the
writing sequence\textsuperscript{xxiv}; and standardized testing initiated by the library to measure First-Year students’ information literacy skills\textsuperscript{xxvi}, and develop specialized instruction.

In addition to these efforts to support evaluation of educational objectives, the NSSE, Noel-Levitz, and Senior Surveys\textsuperscript{xxvii} provide quantitative assessment of institutional performance in a variety of areas:

- The NSSE was administered by Enrollment Management for the first time in 2007. The results were shared with college constituents and were used in planning, especially by Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, to inform first-year experience programming and increase enriching educational experiences, such as internships, and other high-impact practices.
- In summer 2011, the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) was administered to nearly 600 new students. The results were reviewed by a faculty-staff Student Success Committee to develop and support interventions with students. A Senior Survey is administered annually by Career Services and the results are shared with a variety of college constituents through Academic Affairs.\textsuperscript{xxviii}

Finally, Student Affairs has recently undertaken a self-assessment through the Council of the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, which was used to align efforts across sub-departments and set common goals.\textsuperscript{xxix}

**Appraisal**

While substantial planning and evaluation has occurred through many of the processes described with this Standard’s Description section, the initiatives have not been consistently connected or aligned. It is for that reason that the College community is committed to a strategic planning initiative to establish a college wide context in which further planning, implementation and assessment will take place.

**Institutional Research**

Prior to 2011, institutional data was gathered and disseminated through the Office of Enrollment Management and Registrar, as well as through other contributing departments and areas, often on an as-needed basis. A Director of Enrollment Management position, staffed in 2009, provided a significant degree of research and analysis. Recognizing the inadequacy of this approach for ongoing systematic research to support college and departmental goals, Institutional Research has been designated a priority. Data-driven decision-making is more in evidence, and the new position of Director of Institutional Research now supports the development of an ongoing, systematic data collection for institutional and individual planning and assessment efforts. The position supports the College’s efforts to base strategic directions and decisions on thoughtful consideration of data that informs priorities, actions and decision making.

**Planning**

A review of prior strategic plans and the Master Plan demonstrates the College’s ability to plan
and to implement the results of planning successfully. Specific examples include attaining goals relative to: increased enrollment, development of graduate programs in Management and Nursing; completion of significant capital projects including major building projects, such as the Student Center.

Institutional planning occurs on many levels at Curry, and there is evidence that planning has been successful in a number of separate initiatives. An example is within Academic Affairs, where meaningful steps toward integrated planning are being taken through the development of clearly articulated self-assessment, priority, and planning documents.

Technology planning occurs through the Technology Governance Committee, which generates an annual review of technology needs and submits them to the Budget Committee and the Educational Technology Committee. Recommendations that are made throughout the academic year are then aligned with the budget process. However, a clear institutional process that integrates technology plans with other planning and resource allocation processes is needed, and will have to be developed in the context of the College’s strategic initiatives.

The need for more integrated and systematic planning has also been identified in the area of strategic enrollment management. Curry’s strategic enrollment management efforts began to take shape over the past few years, and recently gathered data has been used to increase awareness of external competition, to reflect on student academic performance within programs, and to elucidate program enrollment patterns. In some cases, curricular changes have been made as a result of these efforts. The College’s current size, level of sophistication, and complexity, however, require well-formed structures and more focused effort to drive enrollment decisions and to systematically integrate enrollment management throughout the organization. To date, the main focus of strategic enrollment management has been the realization of short-term recruitment goals, but a longer-term enrollment plan that flows from the College’s strategic directions, and outlines enrollment goals and the strategic initiatives necessary to achieve them, is needed. There is also a need to include data relative to student persistence-to-degree-completion to capture the entire enrollment picture at Curry.

The recently-launched Strategic Planning process is occurring at an opportune moment for Curry. Comprehensive strategic planning has not been undertaken in eight years; the context both within and outside of the institution has changed, and there is recognition that understandings about the College’s mission, purposes, and goals in 2012 and beyond need to be crystallized and serve as the foundation for further institutional development.

The current strategic planning process began with a college-wide SWOT analysis, in which effort was made to distill and understand the student, faculty, and staff voices on questions relating to the College’s mission, core values, and effectiveness. The Strategic Planning Committee used the results of the analysis to develop the plan’s core vision and values elements, strategic considerations, and strategic directions. Initiatives to support the four identified strategic directions were developed during the Fall 2011 semester through numerous open community meetings. They are:xxx
• Offer distinctive, relevant, and rigorous academic programs of quality
• Attract, educate, and graduate students prepared to engage in a complex and changing world
• Foster an inclusive campus community that attracts, respects, and supports diversity in multiple forms
• Strengthen a culture of organizational integrity, accountability, and sustainability

Academic quality and improvement will be at the core of the institutional planning and evaluation process. Planning efforts at all institutional levels must take into account dynamic changes and include clear processes for assessment and evaluation. Such a framework will yield results that can be more easily be shared and utilized for ongoing development and improvement.

A comprehensive and ongoing strategic planning process is needed to allow the institution to move in purposeful directions, to support thoughtful integration of a variety of separate planning efforts, and to utilize the budget process to support and reinforce institutional planning priorities. Such an integrated approach would also demand more regular communication and involvement with appropriate constituencies, including students. It is a vehicle to ensure that the College stays true to its mission and serves students in the best possible ways.

**Evaluation**
The College Mission Statement currently serves as a common reference point in multiple institutional planning efforts. However, evaluation of mission achievement has been approached through assessment of the goals and outcomes of individual efforts, rather than through an overarching institutional assessment.

The Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee supports the development, review, and use of learning goals and assessment mechanisms for the institution, academic programs, and courses, in relation to departmental standards and the College’s mission. The committee, consisting of faculty and administrative members from academic and student affairs, has contributed significantly by offering targeted professional development, developing an [electronic guide and resources](#), developing shared processes and initiatives with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and enhancing sharing of results across areas of the College.

To date, academic programs have made progress on articulating learning outcomes, implementing assessment mechanisms, and utilizing assessment results to inform ongoing curriculum and instruction revisions (see Standard 4). Academic departments and the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee recognize the need for continued progress, extending consistently to the level of individual course syllabi and connecting more intentionally to institution-wide assessment efforts. Obtaining more information from alumni that would help the institution understand what its students have gained as a result of their education, and utilize their feedback for planning and public information, has been a challenge as well. Strong
efforts, utilizing social media technology, are underway to establish and maintain contact with new graduates to obtain valuable feedback.

Institutional assessment efforts such as NSSE and the Senior Survey have provided data that is highly relevant to many College efforts. While the data was made available on the Portal, Curry has not yet developed an ongoing cycle of institutional assessment and data reporting to keep the institution systematically informed of its performance on key indicators. A clearer, shared process is needed for purposeful, coordinated utilization of the information or for feedback on initiatives undertaken to improve performance on any of its indicators.

Overall, the College is hoping to establish a cycle of evaluation that will result in a cycle of continuous improvement. Such a process will facilitate necessary change to ensure that the institution remains viable in an increasingly challenging, competitive, and regulated higher education environment.

Projection

The College’s mission, vision, and strategic initiatives must remain at the center of all planning and evaluation efforts. Curry has made great strides toward improvement in this area and has to renew focus on integrated efforts that will be necessary to achieve strategic goals and support continued institutional effectiveness. The College will:

- Complete the Strategic Planning process by Spring 2012 and utilize the identified strategic directions and initiatives to frame the next phase of institutional development.
- Implement actions toward completion of the Strategic Planning initiatives though an integrated process, including data-driven assessment of efforts and progress, alignment of resources to support the goals of the Strategic Plan, and a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the strategic planning process.
- Continue to review Curry’s organizational structures and resources to determine if they are aligned appropriately to accomplish goals.
- Increase the integrated use of data to inform evaluation through the work of a Director of Institutional Research and designation of an area of the Portal and website for planning and evaluation materials.
- Increase the systematic gathering and integrated use of evidence about the success of recent graduates to inform ongoing planning.

Institutional Effectiveness

Curry has used its annual budget process (through resource allocation), achievement of enrollment goals, learning outcomes assessment, and the strategic planning process as opportunities to evaluate its institutional effectiveness. Curry’s increased commitment to integrate institutional research into planning and evaluation will enhance the institution’s systematic use of data to inform ongoing improvement.
Standard Three: Organization and Governance

Description

The legally constituted Board of Trustees of Curry College is charged with managing the affairs and activities of the Institution and ensuring the College’s success in fulfilling its mission and achieving its purpose. As reflected in the minutes of the Board and its various committees, the Board sets and reviews institutional policies, approves major new initiatives in alignment with the College’s mission and resources, and monitors the College’s fiscal solvency.

The College’s by-laws state that the Board will consist of no less than one member and no more than 27 members. The Board currently consists of 17 members and includes the President, who serves in an ex-officio capacity. The governing authority and responsibilities of the Board are detailed in the College by-laws that were most recently amended and adopted by the full Board in October 2004.

The Board discharges its ongoing roles and responsibilities through a standing schedule of meetings in October, February and May. The Board has generally chosen to discharge its activities as a committee of the whole, which has assured broad participation of all Trustees. Beyond the full Board, some functions are delegated to standing committees. For example, the Finance and Facilities Committee meets regularly to review the College’s operations, plans, and budgets. It also serves as an independent Audit and Compensation Committee, reporting its activities back to the full Board. In addition, Trustees communicate directly with College personnel regarding Academic Affairs each spring with respect to graduates and on an ongoing basis with respect to development activities.

With Board members who bring diverse experiences, competencies, and outlooks, robust and fully informed discussions occur. The Board has considered this structure, believes it works well, and plans to continue discharging its functions in this manner. The February Board Meeting focuses on Trusteeship issues including governance, board performance and executive performance. For many years, this meeting has concluded with an executive session.

Special Board meetings may be called at any time by the President, Board Chair, or one or more Trustees. Board Minutes from each meeting are distributed to all Board members and maintained by the President’s Office. New Board members are recruited through a nomination system that considers Board needs and prospective members’ skill sets and demonstrated commitment to the College Mission. The majority of Board members have no personal or immediate familial financial interest in Curry College. The Board’s membership includes six Curry alumni. Members hold office for a term of three years. The relationship between the Board of Trustees and the College President is delineated in the College by-laws. The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer and is accountable to the Board for overseeing the overall administration and supervision of the College, and maintaining significant responsibility for outreach, development, and fundraising. The Board is responsible for appointing and reviewing the President’s performance.
The President delegates authority and responsibility to members of his Senior Staff who serve as the College’s senior management team and represent the College’s major administrative areas. Two faculty members elected by the full faculty also attend Senior Staff meetings. The President convenes bi-weekly agenda-driven Senior Staff meetings where members provide input into key decisions that impact institutional priorities as well as ongoing operational issues. The Senior Staff is also responsible for assisting in the development, review, and finalization of the College’s annual operating and capital budget that is recommended to the Board of Trustees. The College’s Chief Academic Officer (CAO) convenes bi-monthly meetings with his Academic Dean’s Council comprising the Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of Continuing Education and Graduate Studies, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management/Registrar, along with the Dean of Students every month, to discuss academic issues, address problems, coordinate efforts and plan.

Acting as both the academic and administrative heads of their respective academic divisions, Division Chairs serve as the departmental representatives and liaisons with the Chief Academic Officer. Their primary responsibility is to ensure academic quality. Specific responsibilities include oversight of program development, planning, and evaluation; recruitment and supervision of new full- and part-time faculty; preparation and administration of divisional budgets; management of course scheduling and assignments; and coordination of departmental learning outcomes assessment.

Department Chairs hold faculty rank and are voted into office by their respective departmental faculty for a renewable three-year term with the approval of the CAO in accordance with procedures detailed in the Curry College-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement. During the academic year, Department Chairs are provided a reduction in load to carry out their administrative duties; to fulfill summer responsibilities, they are paid an administrative stipend. In large academic departments, program directors/coordinators are also elected and tasked with administrative duties to assist with the management of the department. The full position descriptions of these roles are detailed in the Curry College-AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Since 1995, the College’s Division of Continuing Education and Graduate Studies has offered academic programming at a satellite campus located in Plymouth, Mass. While the campus is managed by a Campus Director, its courses are integrated into the College’s existing Milton-based structures, and teaching faculty are overseen by Milton-based department chairs.

The College maintains a Table of Organization that delineates the relationships of the administration, major College units, and College staff. The Curry College Employee Handbook, detailing important College policies and procedures, is distributed to all staff in hard copy at New Staff/Administration Orientation and is readily accessible on the College’s Human Resources section of the Portal.

The College mission is supported through faculty governance regarding matters of academic
policy and planning and peer faculty evaluation. The Faculty plays a major role in academic affairs, sharing institutional governance through monthly faculty meetings, faculty standing committees, institutional committees, ad hoc committees, and task forces. Faculty meetings are subject to Robert’s Rules of Order and are led by an elected faculty chair whose responsibilities include overseeing meeting agendas, calling special meetings as needed, serving as a faculty advocate, and meeting with the Chief Academic Officer and other senior leadership regarding faculty matters.\textsuperscript{xli}

Much of the institution’s academic business is conducted through faculty standing committees that address academic policy, undergraduate and graduate curriculum, educational technology, library and information resources, graduate programs, excellence in teaching, and faculty welfare and evaluation. Committee membership is by general faculty vote, and committee participation is associated with service and leadership requirements for promotion to the next rank. The Committee on Committees is charged with making recommendations regarding changes to the structure or function of standing committees for full Faculty vote. All standing faculty committees are subject to the By-laws for Faculty Standing Committees.\textsuperscript{xlii}

In addition, the College’s institutional committees, comprised of staff and faculty, also serve to promote the College’s mission. Membership for individual faculty, approved by general faculty vote, also fulfills service and leadership requirements for evaluation and promotion. Institutional committees oversee and make recommendations regarding course scheduling, learning outcomes assessment, technology, budgeting and investments, physical facilities, health and safety, and pandemic planning. Information from these committees is brought to the staff and faculty for informational purposes. Through negotiations between the College and the AAUP, joint committees are established to address contractually related issues such as release time, health insurance, assigned time, intellectually property, and student course evaluations.\textsuperscript{xliii}

All full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate faculty who hold the rank of Lecturer or greater are eligible for membership in the Curry College Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The AAUP and the College agree to “shared responsibility and cooperative action” for institutional governance as defined in the \textit{Joint Statement of Government in Colleges and Universities} (1966, updated 2001). All eligible unit members, full-time faculty and part-time faculty holding the rank of Senior Lecturer, have voting rights in both general faculty and department meetings in which they hold their primary appointment.

The Student Government Association (SGA) is the authorized governing group to provide a voice for Curry’s student body and to oversee student clubs and committees and allocate funding for club requests. SGA members are elected annually by the greater student community. Governance operates through an Executive Board, consisting of five officers, and a Legislative Assembly that includes officers and a representative from the first year, sophomore, junior, and senior classes. The SGA’s charge is governed through its by-laws and Constitution, available on the \texttt{SGA Home Page} located on the Curry College web site.\textsuperscript{xliv}
The Curry College Board of Trustees brings diverse perspectives and a breadth of expertise, competence, and commitment to its role in effectively overseeing the College. To support its deliberations and decision-making, the President routinely provides the Board with a wide range of institutional performance indicators and comprehensive reports prepared by senior staff members with responsibility for managing key operational areas of the College. The President maintains a continuous flow of communication with the Board. In advance of standing meetings, each Board member is provided with a Board Book that contains extensive reports from the College’s major administrative units. The Board regularly receives, reviews, and discusses this information to inform its work and monitor institutional effectiveness.

The institution’s current by-laws were prepared by the College’s outside Counsel. In the view of the College, these by-laws incorporate the best not-for-profit practices. The Board adheres to the College’s by-laws and maintains sufficient independence to act in the College’s best interest. In accordance with its by-laws, the Board delegates to the President the appropriate authority and autonomy to manage the day-to-day affairs of the College. The President periodically submits a written assessment of his performance to the Board and receives the Board’s feedback.

Appraisal

The College’s Board of Trustees has been proactive in maintaining transparency regarding any conflict of interest that may arise in its work. In May 2007, the Trustees approved a Conflict of Interest Policy that requires each Trustee to affirm in writing his/her receipt, understanding, and agreement to comply with the Policy. Each Board member fulfills this requirement by filing a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement annually. When financial matters arise in which a Trustee is involved, such interest is fully disclosed prior to the Board vote, and the interested Trustee recuses himself/herself.

The Board works closely with the President to assure that all College officers manage risk and maintain compliance with all federal, state, and other regulations. To ensure appropriate risk management and regulatory compliance, the College contracts with specialized legal counsel for advice, on an as needed basis, when issues arise in which a legal interpretation or opinion would result in a more informed decision or action.

The College has demonstrated strong responsiveness to significant student enrollment growth across its undergraduate, continuing education, and graduate programs by increasing staffing and faculty in key areas. Over the past five years Curry has expanded faculty lines and created new administrative and/or staff positions in the areas of faculty support, institutional research, grants development, student development and residence life, athletics, admissions, financial aid, informational technology, human resources, and marketing. All new employees are provided with an extensive orientation to the College by participating in a New Employee Orientation Day and a follow-up appointment with Human Resources. With strategic personnel hiring and staffing decisions, the College has strengthened its ability to meet its mission and advance institutional effectiveness.
The College demonstrates a strong commitment to communicating regularly with constituencies and soliciting feedback through face-to-face, electronic, and print medium. The President regularly participates in the monthly faculty meeting to update the faculty on important College matters and to respond to questions and concerns. He meets as well with committees and other campus groups, as circumstances dictate. In addition, he hosts a town hall style meeting to provide a briefing to all College staff on important College matters and to address questions and concerns.

The President also interacts on a regular basis with students, attending student-sponsored events and recognition ceremonies, participating in the Student Government Association’s Annual Student Town Meeting and other SGA meetings, and attending student athletic events. There is not, however, a formal mechanism to include a student voice in institutional governance, though there is increasing discussion about the merits of implementing one.

Alumni and parents receive ongoing information and updates about the College, but greater emphasis will be placed on the feedback they can provide the College by way of insuring and enhancing its effectiveness.

Electronic communication has increasingly helped to foster communication. The President and his Senior Staff communicate and solicit college-wide input via regularly scheduled newsletters, all-College announcements, and responses to inquiries. The College’s investment in an internal Portal also serves as an electronic channel for special interest discussion groups and for informational exchange among staff, faculty, and students.

The Chief Academic Officer enhances his communication electronically, maintaining a highly informative Faculty page on the College Portal to provide faculty with ready access to important academic initiatives, upcoming events, committee information, teaching and advising tools, scholarship and research opportunities, and professional development information.

Academic governance and transparency have benefited from several measures and processes. The Academic Dean has initiated a process for departmental goal setting and planning, as well as regularly scheduled agenda-driven meetings of the Department Chairs, Directors, Program Coordinators, Deans, and Academic Committee Chairs to discuss issues and share information.

Through standing committees and the Department Evaluation Committees (DECs), the Faculty maintains a significant voice in all academic decisions; curriculum development; outcomes and assessment; and rank, promotion, and sabbatical recommendations. Each standing committee has an established mission, clear committee eligibility, and length of service guidelines. To improve communication, standing committee chairs have been encouraged to share information and updates more regularly at monthly faculty meetings. Most committee members serve a staggered term to allow newly elected members to serve with more experienced members; however, there is a lack of formal training and faculty development to inform more effective committee membership and practice. Additionally, there is currently no
mechanism in place to assess committee effectiveness in meeting its charge and maintaining relevance.

Institutional committees are less formalized than standing committees, and some are convened on an ad hoc basis to address a specific need. To improve governance effectiveness, the College is currently reviewing and updating all institutional committees to determine mission relevance, committee membership, eligibility, and the appointment process.

The Student Government Association (SGA) plays an active role in informing the greater College community, partially through an open time block for weekly SGA meetings that are open to the College community. Additionally, the SGA has links to and representatives from Public Safety, Food Services, and Academic Affairs, as well as all areas of Student Affairs in order to provide a mechanism for student voices in these important areas. To encourage open communication among students and administrators, the SGA invites all students to a Town Hall Meeting each spring to raise questions and concerns, and make recommendations to a panel consisting of the College President and key Senior Staff members. Similarly, Residence Hall Councils provide Residence Life staff with student input regarding on-campus student activities.

At times, a number of SGA leadership positions remain unfilled, particularly in the representative roles for the junior and senior classes and in the Court of Appeals, whose charge has not been fulfilled in recent years. In a student survey conducted by the Strategic Planning Committee in Spring 2011, a large number of students ranked satisfaction with student governance as lower than their approval ratings on academics, residence life, career preparation, campus supports, and safety. While some students sit on institutional committees (e.g. the ADA subcommittee and Diversity Committee), there are no formalized provisions for obtaining student input on Faculty Standing Committees.

Projection

The College will:

• Review the Institutional Committee structure, including appointment, election and reporting practices, to ensure inclusive and transparent processes, facilitate communication between committees and the community, and develop processes to regularly evaluate how committees address their charges and maintain relevance.

• Strengthen communication and efficacy of Faculty Standing Committees by increasing sharing of information and creating a process to mentor faculty for committee leadership and membership roles.

• Identify strategies and structures to expand student input into relevant standing and/or Institutional committees.

Institutional Effectiveness

The College continually demonstrates commitment to improve the effectiveness of its organizational and governance systems. The Board of Trustees and the President are in the
process of reviewing their self-evaluation practices to improve effectiveness. Through Senior Staff, all employees hold annual staff and administrator evaluations to assess and improve organizational effectiveness. Faculty committees are being asked to report more regularly on progress toward goals, and the institutional committee system is under review to assess its effectiveness in meeting the College’s current needs. In addition, the SGA is examining current practices in an effort to improve effectiveness of student governance.
**Standard Four: Academic Programs**

**Description**

Curry’s Academic Programs provide a wide range of professional and liberal arts educational experiences to its undergraduate, continued education, and graduate students. Since the mid-1990’s, Curry has more than doubled the size of the student body while growing and evolving its academic programs. Development and refinement of its curriculum has been enhanced with increasing attention to effectiveness and data-driven decision-making. The College’s portfolio now includes 20 majors, four graduate programs, and 66 minors and concentrations. Since the last NEASC visit, new programs advanced by faculty initiative include two new graduate programs (Master of Business Administration and Master of Clinical Nurse Leader), four new majors, and three new minors and concentrations. Each new program has advanced through the departmental level to the faculty at large through the oversight process described below. Such review addresses the coherence of new program goals, structures, and content and the extent to which expectations and evidence of student learning match that of existing programs. Across all programs, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, student achievement and evidence of attainment of program goals increasingly guide curricular developments and revisions as part of an ongoing process of program improvement.

**Undergraduate Programs and Majors**

At the undergraduate level, Curry’s 20 majors lead to Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees in recognized fields of study. The highest enrolled majors in Fall 2010 (see Data First form) were, in order of their size: Nursing, Management, Criminal Justice, Communication, Psychology, Education (including those in Child, Youth and Community and licensure majors in Elementary, Special Education, and Early Childhood), Community Health and Wellness, Graphic Design, and Information Technology. Programs in Sociology, Biology, English, Environmental Science, Integrated Liberal Studies, Philosophy, Politics and History, and Visual Arts constitute the remaining majors. Enrollment management data describes the enrollment and persistence rates of students within the above programs.

New program development has taken place within the context of a continuing liberal arts foundation that undergirds and supports all College majors and the College mission. College-wide discussions about Curry’s mission, its liberal arts focus and core values have been stimulated through the General Education reform process that began in Fall 2009. (This is discussed more fully in the General Education section.)

Oversight and review of the academic programs reside with the Faculty, who initiate program changes at the departmental level. The 20 academic majors reside within 11 departments/divisions, represented on the Academic Affairs Organizational Chart. Additional academic units that oversee curricular offerings include: Academic Enrichment, First Year Studies, Honors, and the Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL). Proposed curricular changes are brought forward by the department or program to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), following a process described in the Integrity in the Award of Credit section. Since the last
NEASC visit in 2002, the organizational framework of oversight for the academic programs has remained unchanged.

Curry’s Division of Continuing Education at both Milton and Plymouth campuses offers many of the same programs as those offered in the traditional day program and draws upon the same faculty for instruction. The curricular structures and program oversight are also the same, and quality control processes are led by College department chairs and program coordinators. More than 1,100 undergraduate students and almost 400 graduate students enroll in courses and programs through Continuing and Graduate Studies. Curry’s Plymouth campus currently serves approximately 520 of those students, 450 undergraduates and 70 graduate students.

Continuing Education enrollments have seen significant but fluctuating increases over the last ten years. Changes since the last NEASC visit include the closings of both the Worcester and Chicopee sites and the consolidation of offerings, based on enrollment and growth projections for programs aligned with Curry’s mission. Consolidations and program eliminations were planned to assure opportunities for program completion by currently enrolled students.

Curriculum oversight at the department/program level for the College is increasingly guided by an orientation grounded in evidence of student learning. The E-series captures each academic area’s articulation, evaluation, reflection and re-design of offerings at the course, program and institutional level. Programs are at varying stages of integrating evidence into the process of curricular assessment and redesign; and faculty work reflects an understanding that all program planning must be grounded in an understanding of what and how students are learning. Program learning outcomes can be seen on the web and are described in greater detail in the E-series. Examples in the E-series, along with catalog descriptions of program goals and structure, articulate the coherence of each program.

Academic planning and review based on evidence of student learning has been supported by a recently developed uniform planning process across all academic units. A planning partnership between the Academic Dean’s Office and the academic areas includes the use of a common template for academic program planning. Program reports submitted from all academic areas evaluate program goals, strengths, and weaknesses and explicitly use learning outcomes assessment information to inform the academic planning and improvement process. Additionally, comprehensive departmental self-studies were completed in Psychology, the Program for Advancement of Learning, and the Library in 2010-2011, with reviews of Honors and Communication scheduled for the next cycle.

Many of the recent curricular changes in majors, minors and concentrations resulted from careful review of programs, their intended outcomes, and the learning activities and strategies that lead to those outcomes. Examples of these changes and review processes include:

- Communication
  - Established new selective cohort program, Communication Scholars.
  - Added concentrations in Film, Corporate, and Relational Communication.
  - Aligned multiple section offerings of COM1010 with common learning goals.
• Community Health and Wellness
  o Re-named major (formerly Health Education) and re-aligned course content with Certified Health Education Specialist requirements.

• Education
  o Redesigned all programs (early childhood, special education, elementary licensure) to align with newest Massachusetts state licensure requirements.
  o Created Child, Youth and Community major, formerly “non-licensure” track of Education, including concentrations in Early Care, School-age, and Community Education.
  o Added significant math requirements and required MTEL preparation experiences integrated into course content.

• Fine and Applied Arts
  o Added Graphic Design major.
  o Redesigned Senior capstone series.

• Honors
  o Created First-Year Honors program.
  o Planned comprehensive self-study for AY2012-2013.

• Humanities
  o Added Concentrations in American Literature and in British Literary Heritage.
  o Deleted undersubscribed concentrations in Literary Genre and Movement and in Women in Literature.
  o Redesigned English major.
  o Added Asian Studies Minor.
  o Redesigned Philosophy Major.

• Information Technology
  o Added concentration in Network Administration.

• Integrated Liberal Studies
  o Redesigned major to increase choice for students beyond those enrolled in the Education licensure program.

• Levin Library
  o Introduced pilot credit-bearing offerings of information literacy courses.
  o Conducted comprehensive self-study in AY2010-2011.

• Management
  o Added Residential Property Management Concentration.
  o Conducted comprehensive curriculum mapping tied to learning goals; resulted in revisions linking Applied Technology and first year Management courses.

• Natural Science and Mathematics
  o Added Math minor.
  o Eliminated Chemistry major.

• Nursing
  o Redesigned program as a 5-semester cohort sequence which:
    ▪ Added an inquiry-based introductory clinical course.
• Increased opportunity for study abroad.
• Improved structure of clinical placements to increase clinical supervision.
  o Created ACCEL, accelerated 18-month second degree B.S. in Nursing cohort program offered through Continuing Education.

• Politics and History
  o Added African American Studies Minor.

• Program for Advancement of Learning
  o Completed learning outcomes curriculum project evaluating metacognitive learning.
  o Conducted comprehensive self-study in 2010-2011.

• Psychology
  o Added Gerontology and Substance Abuse concentrations and minors.
  o Introduced new course “Get Psyched” as entry point to the major.
  o Conducted comprehensive self-study in AY2010-2011.

• Sociology and Criminal Justice
  o Integrated significant field experiences early in the curriculum.
  o Increased focus on internship experiences and realignment of courses in curriculum with Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP) standards.

Curry has also focused on significant learning experiences that extend both beyond the classroom and beyond specific disciplines, including:

• First Year Inquiry Groups, learning communities designed to provide early opportunities for engagement and themed inquiry with a cohort of peers;
• Increased internships and other experiential learning opportunities;
• E-portfolio pilots in multiple areas to provide for self-reflection and for area-specific learning outcomes assessment.

**General Education**

Curry’s Central Liberal Arts Curriculum (CLAC) has been in existence since 1981, with its first comprehensive re-design in 1991, and a current re-design effort expected to conclude in Spring 2012. As described in the Catalog and to incoming students in an Orientation resource book, the current CLAC includes distribution requirements at both the introductory and intermediate levels, specifically with 40-44 credits in introductory courses required across 14 areas of study and 18-20 credits outside a student’s major required at the 2000 and/or 3000 level. Such requirements are designed with explicit attention to the College mission statement and the educational goals of thinking critically, communicating effectively, understanding context, appreciating aesthetic experience, defining personal identity, examining value systems, and adapting and innovating.

As evident in the list of requirements, CLAC provides broad breadth of content for students of all majors across the Arts and Humanities, Sciences and Math, and Social Sciences. Multiple course requirements to advance written and oral communication, critical analysis, and technology/ information literacy are also explicitly required. Such requirements provide Curry graduates with knowledge of scientific, historical, and social phenomenon and experiences in
quantitative reasoning as part of foundational lifelong learning, including courses focused on an appreciation of aesthetics and ethics.

General education requirements provide structure to develop proficiency in oral and written communication. Competencies for writing and oral communication are assessed at the course level, with major-specific writing competencies evaluated at the Senior Capstone level or in writing-focused major courses (for example, the COM major requires one of several Writing in Communication courses). CLAC also requires all students to complete COM1010, Fundamentals of Communication, which includes learning goals for effective oral presentation skills.

CLAC requirements have increased over the last decade with the inclusion of a mathematics requirement (in 2001) and a technology literacy requirement (in 2007). Additionally, many courses have been added to meet the Literature, Multicultural, or Philosophy and Religion requirements. Beyond these additions, however, CLAC as a whole had been largely unchanged and un-assessed since 1991. Thus, in Fall 2009, Curry launched a formal General Education reform process recognizing the need for a coherent, relevant, and assessable General Education curriculum. The process began with the establishment of General Education Task Force 1 and later in Fall 2010 with its successor, General Education Task Force 2. A Blackboard site created specifically to visibly share the work of both Task Forces provides details of the ongoing process and guiding principles, which are summarized and assessed below in Appraisal.

**Graduate Programs**

Curry offers four graduate programs: Master of Arts in Education (M.Ed.), Master of Arts in Criminal Justice (MACJ), Master of Business Administration (MBA), and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN). These four programs collectively enroll approximately 120 new students per year and graduate approximately 100 students annually. With the additions of the MBA (2005) and the MSN (2008), Curry doubled its graduate offerings and changed its Carnegie Classification from IIB to IIA: Master’s College/University. The graduate programs are housed within their respective academic departments, and each is led by a Graduate Program Director (a faculty member with administrative assigned time). Curricular revisions are approved by the Department/ Division, reviewed and approved by the Graduate Council, and then reviewed and approved by the full Faculty. Full-time faculty in each area and all Senior Lecturers (part-time faculty with voting and governance rights) participate in decision-making at both the departmental level and at Faculty meetings. The College’s Division of Continuing and Graduate Studies serves as the administrative unit responsible for recruitment, registration, admission, advising, and scheduling of the graduate programs.

All four graduate programs use a cohort delivery model. All programs recognize and adhere to external guidelines for their specific professions, including those promulgated by professional accrediting agencies as well as continually changing practices and expectations within the respective fields. The professional organizations that guide standards in curriculum and program development and oversight are:

- MSN: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
- M.Ed.: Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE)
• MACJ: Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP)
• MBA: Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Each of the graduate programs gives students a mastery of complex issues within its field, challenging students at advanced intellectual and performance levels (see Catalog and Web program and curriculum descriptions). Each also incorporates capstone or embedded experiences, listed below, that underscore and reinforce their identity and priorities, student learning goals, and Curry’s mission:

• MSN – Evidence and clinical application including quality and safety issues;
• MACJ – Thesis-based on the reflective practitioner;
• M.Ed. – Practice in the field including classroom research;
• MBA – Team-leading and a practice-oriented capstone involving an authentic consulting project for an area business.

In each program, Master’s degree candidates gain a broad conceptual understanding of the field as well as specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that strengthen their professional preparation for advanced practice within their fields of study. The curricular sequences, documented both in print and online, illustrate the sequential development of learning that accomplishes each program’s learning goals. Each program utilizes specific learning outcomes to guide student learning and assessment of achievement. The area reports and the utilization of data to inform curricular decision-making has increased significantly (see section below on Learning Outcomes Assessment). Curricular changes to improve student learning are considered each academic year based on student outcomes on certification exams, where applicable; accreditation modifications; faculty review of student outcomes; student evaluation feedback; and data that documents the nature of graduate students’ learning.

The Graduate Studies Division has been forward-thinking regarding instructional delivery methods for adult students. Recognizing the potential benefits of hybrid learning for increasing student achievement, a Hybrid Learning Task Force worked during 2010-2011 to examine matters of pedagogy and practice, including resources for technological support, faculty development, and student service. Since that report, progress in advancing hybrid models has been seen in:

• New course offerings in Criminal Justice, Communication, and Management courses, with additional offerings under development in Education and Nursing.
• Faculty training that has included both online resources and on-site, faculty cohort-based training and curriculum development retreats.
• A redesigned Master in Criminal Justice program serving as a model for other programs seeking to develop additional hybrid components.

The technological infrastructure necessary to support web-based learning has increasingly become an issue as Curry moves further in this direction. (This is discussed further within the Appraisal section.)
The infrastructure to support the Graduate Admissions process is commensurate with the relative size of the Graduate Program enrollment, as compared with the structures and supports that exist for the traditional undergraduate program. Graduate Program Directors and the Graduate Studies staff work closely to prepare program materials, formalize procedures, and vet graduate student candidates.

**Integrity in the Award of Credit**

Each Bachelor of Arts or Science degree at Curry requires successful completion of 120 credits of course work. On average, 30 credits are in the academic major, 60 credits are in the Central Liberal Arts Curriculum (CLAC) and the remaining 30 credits are unrestricted elective credits, which may be applied to a minor. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA for graduation. Prerequisites and sequences within the majors are determined at the departmental level to assure appropriate preparation for intermediate and advanced material; and a senior capstone experience, intended to contextualize learning and integrate theory and practice, is included within each major. Required credits for the Graduate Programs range from 30 to 37 credits.

An annual catalog—in hard copy and online—and a web-based course selection guide published each semester (including summer and winter intersession) serve as guideposts for students and advisors in creating academic plans. The Academic Catalog includes pertinent information about CLAC requirements, major and minor admission and continuation requirements, and elective options. Academic policies (e.g. academic integrity, drop/add dates, withdrawal process) are also included. Catalogs representing all course offerings available during a three-year window are reassessed annually by chairpersons and coordinators for accuracy.

Students and advisors can readily view unofficial academic transcripts and a degree audit through the Curry Web Information System (CWIS). Additionally, seniors receive a formal degree audit from the Registrar’s Office in the fall of their senior year. Frequency of course offerings is carefully monitored by both the Registrar’s office and the Departments, particularly to assure timely degree completion.

The awarding of credit within Academic Programs is overseen by the faculty in the Academic Departments and by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the full Faculty, and approved by the Chief Academic Officer. Credit-bearing course offerings are first proposed and reviewed at the departmental level; then through the UCC, which reviews evidence of alignment with the College’s mission and program goals, course goals and objectives, and assessment of student outcomes. New courses may be piloted as experimental courses and can be offered twice under experimental status; after that, they are subject to review through the UCC process. Departm ents oversee the development of hybrid design courses following the guidelines of the hybrid task force report to assure consistent standards, knowledge, and competencies.

Ongoing review of approved courses and programs of study are the purview of the individual departments under the direction of department chairs. Syllabi and course evaluations are
submitted to the department chair, and scheduled monthly meetings are devoted to academic review and oversight. The Nursing, Education, and Criminal Justice programs are accountable to outside accrediting agencies that oversee their curricula and program outcomes; the remaining academic areas develop their curricula, including internships and field experiences, based on the department’s academic plan and learning goals, consistent with the College mission.

The award of transfer credit is based upon departmental review of the course description and syllabus and is awarded through the Registrar’s Office, which also maintains a data base of approved courses. Guidelines for credit approval are described, both in print and electronically, in the Catalog and a tool for assessment of credit approvals is available on the website; a minimum of one fourth of students’ credits must be completed at Curry including required work in the major and at the 2000 or 3000 level.\textsuperscript{lx} Curry’s policy on the credit hour was revised by the Undergraduate Academic Policy Committee in compliance with new federal guidelines.\textsuperscript{lxii} A list of \textit{articulation agreements} is available on the website.\textsuperscript{lxiii}

\textit{Learning Outcomes Assessment}
Assessment of student learning at the institutional, programmatic, and course levels has been an area of substantial focus at Curry College during the past decade. Multiple initiatives have contributed to demonstrable progress on the development of clear and shared learning outcomes statements, implementation of outcomes assessment, and the use of assessment information to inform improvements in academic programs.\textsuperscript{lxii, lxiv, lxv}

Developing systematic and sustainable structures across areas of the college to lead and support this enterprise has been a priority. In 2009, a Dean of the Faculty was appointed to provide guidance, oversight, faculty development, continuity, and management of resources for learning outcomes assessment. An Assessment Task Force was subsequently appointed in 2010 to make recommendations for a Standing Committee to coordinate, process, and utilize results from student learning assessment on an ongoing basis. The Task Force’s recommendations led to the 2011 launch of a reformed Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (LOAC), with a revised membership and charge (see LOAC Charge, Membership, and Structure, all of which are located in the workroom).\textsuperscript{lxvi} The LOAC is charged not only with monitoring and evaluating institutional progress, but also with consulting (as local experts) on assessment efforts and advocating for resources, such as faculty reassigned time and funding for key assessment projects and pilots that go beyond routine work.

Since early 2011, the LOAC has:
\begin{itemize}
\item Developed and implemented workshops in April 2011 for both academic and student affairs departments to evaluate progress, choose meaningful next steps, and plan and implement actions on learning outcomes assessment. (Workshops were attended by 40 faculty members, representing all academic departments and >50% of interdisciplinary/non-departmental programs; and 12 Student Affairs staff.)\textsuperscript{lxvii};
\item Provided academic area planning/assessment retreats in May 2011, with committee members serving as guest facilitators;
\end{itemize}
• Provided follow-up consultations and workshops in Fall 2011, focused on using learning outcomes assessment results to implement curricular change;
• Expanded internal, online resources for faculty and staff on learning outcomes assessment.

The LOAC has documented progress on adopting clear statements of student learning outcomes for academic programs, reflective of the mission and context of Curry College, and aligning with broader disciplinary expectations for specific degrees and with best practices in interdisciplinary, non-degree, and co-curricular areas (E-Series Forms). Summarizing this progress for academic areas and institution-wide efforts, Table 4.1 places academic programs into three categories: (1) Area has articulated learning outcomes and uses assessment information to inform decisions and improvements; (2) Area has articulated learning outcomes and is in the process of developing/implementing assessment mechanisms; (3) Area is in the process of developing both learning outcome statements and assessment mechanisms. Since Fall 2009, representation of academic programs (undergraduate majors, master’s degrees, and non-degree programs) in Category One has increased. Over half of undergraduate majors now routinely assess student learning and use the information gleaned to inform decisions and improvements.

Learning outcomes assessment support is provided in multiple ways to support a wide range of assessment activities. For example, stipends or administrative time are provided for areas undertaking qualitative assessment of student work. Examples include: Writing (utilizing first year and capstone level writing samples), Mathematics (introductory statistics problem solving samples, assessed through quantitative and qualitative analysis), Graphic Design (student portfolios), Education (student portfolios), and Politics and History (capstone project samples). Support for other areas that have adopted direct, quantitative methods includes funds and resources for administrative costs; examples include: content knowledge of Psychology majors, Information Literacy in first year students, and achievement on standardized Nursing exams required for licensure. Finally, self-report surveys capturing students’ understanding of their learning (indirect quantitative and qualitative methods) have been employed for assessment when student awareness of learning is a stated goal (e.g. assessment of metacognitive skill development in the Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL); assessment of student learning in Academic Advising) and were supported through release time.
### Table 4.1: Progress Summary of Learning Outcomes Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Fall 2011** | ✓ Articulated learning outcomes.  
✓ Assessment mechanisms developed and linked to decision making. | ✓ Articulated learning outcomes.  
✓ Assessment mechanisms under development. | ✓ Learning outcomes under development.  
✓ Assessment mech. under development. |
| **Institution-wide** | First-year Writing  
Information Literacy | Technology Literacy  
General Education | Capstone-level Writing Across the Curriculum |
| **Fall 2011** | Majors:  
Education: Child, Youth, Community Ed.;  
Early Ed.; Elementary Ed.; Special Ed.  
Fine and Applied Arts: Visual Arts, Graphic Design  
Humanities: Philosophy  
Management  
Nursing  
Politics & History  
Psychology  
Master’s: MEd, MSN, MCJ, MBA  
Minors: Mathematics, Philosophy | Majors:  
Communication  
Community Health and Wellness  
Humanities: English  
Integrated Liberal Studies  
Natural Sciences: Biology; Environmental Science  
Sociology and Criminal Justice: Undergrad. Majors  
| **Non-degree** | Academic Enrichment: Developmental Writing/Placement and Math Placement  
Academic Advising  
First Year Honors Program  
First Year Seminar Program  
Honors Scholars Program  
Program for the Advancement of Learning (PAL) | Education: Physical Education  
Experiential Education | N/A |
| **Fall 2011** | 12 Majors (60%)  
4 Master’s Programs (100%) | 8 Majors (40%) | N/A |
| **Summary** | 8 Majors (40%)  
2 Master’s | 4 Majors (20%)  
2 Master’s | 3 Majors* (18%) |
| **Fall 2009** | 8 Majors (40%)  
2 Master’s | 8 Majors (40%)  
2 Master’s | 4 Majors (20%) |
| **Summary** | 8 Majors* (47%)  
1 Master’s | 6 Majors* (35%)  
2 Master’s | 3 Majors* (18%) |

*3 majors were not tracked in 2007: Management, English, and Community Health and Wellness.

### Appraisal

**Undergraduate Programs, Majors, Minors and Concentrations**

As seen above, a wide and ambitious set of efforts to update and refine curricula has been undertaken. These program developments reflect a conscious commitment to increase academic quality and student engagement, to define and assess student learning, and, most importantly, to trigger a cycle of continuous change and improvement.

**Academic Program Planning and Review**

Curry has made significant progress in establishing a manageable and meaningful comprehensive academic program planning process. First, a number of Curry’s academic
departments and programs have now experienced a cycle that integrates review, reflection, and redesign based on evidence of student learning to guide curricular development. Next, with a structured program planning process introduced at Curry in 2008-09, academic programs quickly responded to the jointly developed common template for program planning. Common themes evident across multiple academic programs include an increased focus on curriculum revisions guided by learning outcomes assessment, new program development, internship integration and enhancement, and persistence-to-graduation efforts.

Feedback from faculty about the reports indicates strong perceived value of both the format and structured process and overall recognition of significant advancements of a college-wide effort to increase academic planning. Greater inclusion of external input via program review has stimulated a valuable exchange with peers outside the College and provided a rich mix of data from which to draw conclusions and consider new approaches. Further, departmental level program planning has resulted in an increased cross-disciplinary understanding of program-specific challenges and increased transparency in the alignment of resources and program planning efforts. Thus, input resulting from such reports informs the faculty hiring process and other key allocations of resources is tied to academic program goals. Although the level of detail and scope of planning vary widely across programs, the sharing of reports has stimulated a much more collaborative review of curricular goals and resource needs.

Support for these planning activities has included designated funds for broad-based and departmental retreats often occurring outside of the regular semester. Similarly, release time and other stipends supported the comprehensive self-studies launched in several key areas (Psychology, Levin Library, and the Program for Advancement of Learning). Finally, in addition to support for faculty time, there has been commensurate investment in the physical resources required to assure appropriate teaching and learning environments. Standards Seven and Nine describe both the ongoing annual expenditures toward academic facilities improvements and a recent $3-million Academic and Faculty Capital Projects initiative targeted to academic facility projects.

**Data to Inform Curricular Planning**
Curry’s growing familiarity, comfort, and enthusiasm for a data-driven approach to academic planning is supported by increasingly sophisticated ways of tracking and sharing information. The position Director of Institutional Research, provides enhanced focus on creating a data-oriented culture. Weekly updates regarding the composition of the entering class are disseminated, and they highlight patterns that draw attention to issues for further consideration. For example, such concrete data has drawn attention to the fact that enrollments in the Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL) and the Nursing program constitute nearly 40% of the entering class. Given the College’s mission and enrollment goals, there is a need to plan in an intentional way for further development of additional strategic goals.

Effective use of data is of the utmost importance for informed decision-making at a time when growth alone is no longer the primary vehicle for change. Thus, internal enrollment
management data helps departments/programs follow course under-enrollment patterns and modify curricular paths in order to build more sustainable cohorts of students within the majors. Simultaneously, oversight of the academic programs relies increasingly on a regular cycle of data from multiple external sources including nationally normed instruments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement. Examples of other ways that data has informed curricular change and improved student achievement are seen in the following:

First Year Studies was initiated to improve retention of entering students, based upon data. A multi-constituency group developed First Year Learning Goals that anchored the work of a First Year Task Force. The task force recommended initiatives and structures for curricular and co-curricular change including learning communities called “First Year Inquiry Groups” (FYIG’s). In Fall 2011 thirteen FYIG’s were offered with themes responding to retention data about subgroups and interests. An EXPLORE inquiry group was created in response to the high percentage of students (approximately 20%) that enter undecided. Survey results assessing the level of perceived engagement of students in the inquiry groups, as compared with students not enrolled in these programs, is encouraging. A summary of the project and research was presented at a recent NEEAN conference by the FY Inquiry Group.

Several selective cohort models have increased Curry’s success in attracting and retaining high achieving students. The addition of the highly selective Nursing ACCEL program in 2004 contributed to an increase in Nursing enrollments and continues to attract students with strong academic skills (approximately 32 new students enroll annually in ACCEL each semester). Similarly, the First Year Honors Program, implemented in Fall 2007, has enrolled between 12-30 new students each year, in an interdisciplinary learning community model. Finally, the Communication Scholars program, enrolling 17 new students in Fall 2011, provides students with high interest, achievement, and aptitude for Communications projects with early access to internships and special meetings with industry leaders. Each of these selective cohort programs has retained high achieving students at rates that exceed overall retention rates.

Efforts to increase internships and experiential learning have been guided by data analysis and planning. Curry has fashioned a dramatic increase in internship enrollments, showing nearly double the Spring 2010 enrollment in 2011. Contributing to this has been:

- Improved and streamlined registration process (now moved to an online system).
- Additional reassigned time allocations to faculty to oversee the curricular integration of internship experiences, and develop partnerships with Boston-area organizations.
- Increased area-specific oversight of internships resulting in curricular change and innovation that integrates internship expectations into the fabric of majors.

Senior capstone courses have existed for all majors at the College since the full implementation of the last Central Liberal Arts Curriculum in the early 1990’s. Over time, they have evolved to suit different programmatic needs, including alignment with professional expectations (e.g., Nursing, Education, and Criminal Justice) and discipline-specific priorities for integrated learning (e.g., Graphic Design pages of client-driven design products). Recently, an effort to look at the structure and goals of Senior Seminars across departments was initiated. Identified goals
include linking theory with practice, supporting knowledge integration and connecting student learning with transition planning as part of a larger Senior Year Experience program.

To shape further planning of the Senior Capstones, data regarding post-graduate employment outcomes is desired. Curry hopes to significantly improve this essential process of data gathering and regular connection with alumni to inform curricular re-design. Recent efforts included an alumni survey that sought feedback on the attainment of learning outcomes. However, weak response rates hampered the process. Career Services has taken the lead on utilizing an online system known as Curry Connect to increase contact and tracking of Curry Alumni. With a Fall 2011 goal of identifying the 6-month settle rate of the Class of 2011, (the rate of those landing in employment or graduation school), this process for tracking will serve as the basis for regular data gathering.

**Communication Literacy**

Ongoing multi-tiered efforts seek to further systematize the assessment and integration of writing skill development. Some of the components of this effort are described by program in both the E-series and within the Learning Outcomes Assessment section. Additional examples of program-specific initiatives include the addition of major-specific writing courses such as in Communication or a pilot one-credit writing lab attached to a Nursing Transitions course that is being planned for the RN-BSN program to integrate skills development with course content. Cross-area reviews of student writing are supported across programs with increased opportunities for both Senior and First Year writing to be assessed and analyzed.

Working across the institution, a Curriculum Innovation Community through the Faculty Center is focused specifically on writing initiatives to inform the development of General Education. This year, the group developed criteria for writing intensive and writing enhanced courses that will be integrated into the proposed revision of General Education. The revised General Education proposal includes several targeted writing intensive experiences with multiple structured checkpoints for institutional assessment of student writing across majors. Future efforts are expected to build on these essential foundations.

**Information and Technology Literacy**

The Department of Applied Technology and the Levin Library have collaborated on a multi-tiered effort to advance information and technology literacy within and outside the curriculum. Current curricular structures provide for students to attain such competencies through required course work in the Central Liberal Arts Curriculum. Recent efforts to advance a comprehensive assessment and revision of curriculum to further support such skill development include:

- Articulation of Technology Literacy Goals by the Educational Technology Committee
- Assessment of new student information literacy to inform pilot credit-bearing offerings in information literacy.
- Creation of a robust set of department-specific resources to increase information literacy and critical thinking skills. (Refer to Standard Seven for additional details.)
- Pilot a credited course entitled “Living on the Digital Highway” (a first year learning community integrating information literacy instruction with first year curricula).
Recent purchase of Atomic Learning to provide “just-in-time” instruction to students to develop technology literacy skills and connect to course curriculum.

Building on the above efforts, Information and Technology Literacy learning goals have been included within the proposed revised General Education curriculum. The current proposed model for Gen Ed revision is expected to further integrate and systematize the College’s assessment and support for students’ skills in these areas.

**Continuing Education**
Curry’s Plymouth campus has demonstrated efficacy as a destination site for residents from greater Plymouth, Cape Cod, and surrounding communities. Following a comprehensive assessment of student needs and learning opportunities offered on the South Shore, Curry recently renewed a five-year lease to continue in Plymouth. Academic programs at the Plymouth campus remain strong and students at the Plymouth campus regularly achieve academic success at a level comparable to their Milton peers.

On the main campus, support for the adult learner has seen dramatic recent growth. Recent usage has expanded to better support the success of adult learners, and more than half of the current Academic Enrichment Center’s tutoring hours are now directed toward supporting Continuing Education students. However, the need continues for additional attention to increasing the communication literacy skills of the adult learner. Similarly, hybrid learning (appraised with the Graduate Programs section) is a strong example of the ways in which pedagogical inquiry and new modes of instruction more clearly linked to adult needs can improve student learning. Consistent with other pedagogical initiatives, assessment and integration of information from such offerings are increasingly built into new courses, but are yet to be evaluated across programs.

**General Education**
The General Education reform effort has engaged multiple constituencies (students, faculty, administrators, and alumni) in both evaluating the deficiencies of the existing CLAC, and developing a coherent set of principles for a revised General Education. Data from multiple constituencies surfaced concerns about CLAC that mirror common criticisms of General Education at other institutions:

- Its heavily distribution-focused approach provides breath but lacks clarity of purpose.
- Relationships between and among disciplines depend on individual instructors; there is no systematic integration across areas.

Faculty, students, and staff questioned what is “Central” about the “Central Liberal Arts Curriculum,” with advisors and students frequently referring to CLAC requirements as obstacles to “get out of the way.” Although recent messaging to students about the nature of Liberal Arts has been strengthened, the overall experience of CLAC remains a checklist of requirements with little coherence or integration.

To address the above concerns with CLAC, GETF1’s developed a set of core values and learning
outcomes describing competencies expected of all Curry graduates. This statement of core values, learning objectives, and a comprehensive list of architectural principles was widely circulated, discussed, and revised over the course of Spring 2010 and unanimously approved by the Faculty in May 2010. In Fall 2010, three distinct approaches to Gen Ed curriculum development based on the May document were presented to the faculty at its annual January retreat. With additional feedback on the approaches by online survey, the task force consolidated the three approaches into a single coherent and assessable model that has now been shared and discussed widely at a number of open forums.

Appraisals of General Education reform efforts include favorable assessment of the participatory nature of the process, the transparency of the communication via the Blackboard site, and the well-documented integration of best practices in higher education in developing the proposed model. Current timelines project that the GETF will present this model including structures for assessment of student learning to the UCC and the Faculty for approval in Spring 2012.

Graduate Programs
The growth of graduate education programs at Curry has been in the professional fields with a focus on expanding and diversifying capacity to contribute to adult student learning. With that development has come some challenges commonplace to a College in transition. Curry has been proactive in assessing the effectiveness of its graduate offerings and in identifying areas for further development to sustain and support high quality graduate education.

In 2010-2011, the Graduate Council assessed the Graduate Programs and developed recommendations to strengthen academic quality and competitiveness. As articulated in individual program reports, each Master’s program possesses unique strengths and challenges. Among their shared concerns are issues of governance, full- to part-time faculty ratios, hybrid and online course development support, and space issues.

Shared observations of strengths across the Graduate Programs include an emphasis on communities of practice through the cohort model; strong individual program identity, with unique foci; consistently strong linkages with external professional standards, including foundational learning outcomes; and an explicit commitment to the integration of theory and practice. This integration is well illustrated in the capstone requirements of each program, discussed within Description and evident in print and web-based program descriptions. Culminating comprehensive projects are used to document substantive integrated learning in each of the graduate programs and demonstrate students’ critical thinking and applied learning skills within their respective disciplines.

The cohort model, now a “signature” feature of Curry’s graduate programs, has resulted in high retention-to-graduation rates. Since its inception in Fall 2005, the MBA program has enrolled fourteen different cohorts on the Milton and Plymouth campuses. Of the 273 enrolled students, 236 graduated, yielding a graduation rate of 86.4%. The MSN program graduated 81% of its cohort, which began in Fall 2008. Both M.Ed. and MACJ students are new converts to the
cohort model; similar completion rates are anticipated.

With the doubling of the number of Graduate programs (from two to four), essentially all aspects of graduate program oversight and ongoing administration have increased both in volume and complexity. Across all four programs, key areas of tension include governance, administrative support, and appropriate structures for curricular decision-making. In the past, when Curry’s graduate education offerings were more limited, graduate program issues were addressed as “extensions” of the traditional undergraduate academic curricula. Along with the addition of new programs, competition for time within department meetings has increased; and the focus on graduate education is no longer sufficient to adequately address graduate student learning issues and challenges.

Also related to growth in graduate studies is a notable increase in demand for facilities and technological support that better support graduate instruction: seminar rooms appropriate for day-long classes and those spanning five-hour time blocks, as well as adequate computer laboratories to accommodate instruction and review. Similarly, while current resources provide noteworthy instructional technology support, there is increasing need for additional academic technical support for students and faculty engaged in hybrid offerings, including the need for support and training for part-time faculty in effective utilization of Blackboard 9. Other technological tools that can improve graduate student achievement include software to support research, provide online tutorial support, and enable supplemental instruction for licensure test preparation. The latter are being explored on a pilot basis; experience with them will aid in determining their utility in providing effective support for the graduate student population.

Integrity in the Award of Credit
The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) recently identified several key areas for further review regarding the award of academic credit. Each is rooted in an overall issue: Course offerings are initially approved through the UCC and subsequently overseen by the individual departments in which they reside. Questions of consistency across areas have recently come light recognizing that there has not been a cross-area review of the ongoing oversight process to assess whether standards for demonstrable student learning are applied consistently or not. Informed by the results of identified review processes, appropriate next steps will be identified by either the UCC or the respective departments to advance ongoing oversight of appropriate credit awards for courses within each category.

The identified goals for this focused UCC review are to:

Increase consistency in course levels (1000, 2000, 3000 and 4000)
General guidelines to assure consistency in expectations in course levels have long been promulgated (e.g., 1000-level courses are introductory, 2000-level assumes prerequisite knowledge or skill, and 3000-level represent advanced inquiry and upper-division skills). However, these have rarely been reviewed beyond the departmental level to identify common understandings of student learning at each level across programs. To address this, a
subcommittee began reviewing 1000-level courses across programs to identify patterns evident in syllabi and frame next steps regarding possible templates for oversight and ongoing review.

**Develop additional guidelines for credit-bearing internships**
While each department proposes and oversees its own internships, guidelines are inconsistent. Progress has been made to address this issue. A comprehensive review of the internship process included the recent creation of an interdisciplinary team that has clarified discipline-specific expectations for internship quality, the mechanism for assuring oversight of such quality, and the specific learning outcomes required from each internship experience. The next step will be to increase the multiple means by which such outcomes are assessed and to explore cross-area validation of such assessments.

**Assess the criteria for awarding credit for skill-based classes, physical education courses, and other non-traditional credit-bearing courses**
The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee agenda for the 2011-2012 year includes a subcommittee review of relevant syllabi, focused on documentation of academic content and level of student learning and achievement. The subcommittee is tasked with reporting back to the UCC in Spring 2012 with a summary of findings. The subcommittee began its work with the above review of 1000-level course syllabi as a means of documenting criteria for the awarding of credits in traditional academic courses.

**Learning Outcomes Assessment**
Curry College’s approach to developing and supporting learning outcomes assessment is consistent with its prioritization of sustainable academic quality. The LOAC has emphasized three commonly recognized stages of assessment work: having clear and measurable learning outcomes at the course, program, and institution-wide levels; implementing assessment online methods that provide authentic and helpful insight about what and how students are learning; and making decisions and improvements based on evidence about student learning. The Committee has provided in-depth feedback and guidance to academic programs regarding their progress, supported departments in developing next steps, and worked collaboratively with the CAO to emphasize the importance of making progress through these stages and recognizing the ongoing nature of assessment for continuous improvement.

As documented in the summary chart and detailed in the E-forms, this approach has built capacity and expertise from within academic areas. Seven programs (undergraduate majors, master’s, and non-degree) moved from developing assessment methods to acting on evidence from their implementation; and two programs transitioned from development to approval of commonly accepted learning outcomes. In addition, campus-wide learning outcomes assessment has progressed in areas of information literacy, general education, technology literacy, and capstone-level writing. Salient examples of “closing the loop” (Category 1: using assessment information to inform decision making and improvements) include:

- **Mathematics:** Common outcomes and end-of-semester assessments in Statistics led to careful analysis of content variation across sections, common student errors, and identifiable patterns of learning. Faculty piloted a new common introductory curriculum
with enhanced online support for homework and strategy instruction, trained all full- and part-time faculty in the new format, and will be offering the redesigned sequence in 2011-12.

- **PAL:** Initial learning outcomes assessment studied student metacognition through indirect methods in 2009-10, and subsequent course-level learning outcomes and methods of instruction were assessed in 2010-11 (e.g., inventory of syllabi followed by program-wide recommendations by the faculty).

- **Information Literacy:** Pilot work with Project TRAILS (Tools for Real-time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills, a free, online instrument), 12th Grade Level, revealed enhanced effectiveness of student learning through library instruction when specific assignments were integrated with content-specific course material. Expanded assessments were next implemented in Fall 2011 using college-level Project SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills, a fee-based on-line instrument supported by the College) in Applied Computing 1000, a required first-year technology literacy course, to better understand information literacy gains in the first year.

While the above documented gains in academic program learning outcomes assessment represent progress, a priority in the *Projection* section is to ensure that every academic program regularly assesses what and how students are learning and incorporates that information into curricular, pedagogical, and other planning. In addition to supporting all academic programs to advance toward these goals, the LOAC has a significant role to play in advocating and advancing priority pilot initiatives that take a broad view of institutional progress. New pilots and initiatives informed by evaluation of assessment progress are expected to be furthered through the proactive work of the committee in recommending projects that increase the iterative use and assessment of learning outcomes in both curricular and co-curricular areas.

In supporting such developments within the academic domain, some important gains have already been achieved, and insights have emerged that have created consensus about the need for action. In the case of introductory statistics, for example, prioritization of learning outcomes assessment—reported to be a source of frustration for full-time, part-time, and cross-disciplinary faculty—paved the way for widespread adoption of a new curriculum and a high degree of participation in faculty development and training. This progress has informed the efforts of a new interdisciplinary “Curriculum Innovation Community” (a faculty learning community focused on curriculum support for Quantitative Literacy), thus impacting program development and resource requirements beyond the individual program.

In the student life and co-curricular domain, the College has also built learning outcomes assessment, both direct and indirect, into a wide range of programs and services. The process of bringing together faculty and staff from academic and student affairs in the same workshops series (Spring 2011) led to an enhanced understanding of common purposes and challenges in supporting student learning. For example, commonalities and intersecting priorities were identified in: learning outcomes in curricular internship instruction and student organization leadership; learning outcomes assessment for peer tutors and student employees; and the
need for consistent expectations when providing individualized student learning experiences in
math courses and within residence halls.

Projection

*Undergraduate Programs, Majors, Minors and Concentrations*
Curry endorses four commitments as central guiding principles for academic program
development and the improvement of academic quality. Initiatives should be: 1) faculty led, 2) evidence-based, 3) assessable, and 4) strategically connected to other college efforts.
Projections for next steps build on these principles in several key areas to advance new programs and curricular renewal.

- Continue to increase the strength of the Academic Program Planning process and the ongoing use of data to inform curricular development.
- Utilize enrollment management data to identify new programs for potential development such as additional cohort programs for high achieving students.
- Continue multi-tiered strategies to increase communication and information literacy from first year to senior year.
- Systematize and advance the process of gathering feedback and placement information from alumni to inform curricular planning.
- Continue to provide additional support for departmental budget planning and alignment of academic planning with budget development.

*General Education*
Curry will design and deliver a new General Education curriculum that will provide a fluid framework within which ongoing change, assessment, and re-alignment will become the norm.
The most important steps for the next phase of reform are to:

- Approve the new General Education core with a multi-year implementation plan and articulated process for ongoing assessment and review.
- Communicate General Education learning outcomes to students more visibly—across print, online publications, and course materials.

*Graduate Programs*
The College will:

- Identify new Graduate Program(s) to develop based on market analysis, faculty expertise, and institutional capacity.
- Provide increased technological support for students and faculty involved in web-based instruction and increased infrastructure to develop technology-infused offerings.
- Increase gathering of data from employers to evaluate graduates’ skills and knowledge.
- Continue to review and address student support at the Plymouth campus.

*Integrity in the Award of Credit*
Curry, through its Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and related campus units, will:

- Complete the work of the UCC subcommittee to develop and assess common criteria across programs for credit awarded for non-traditional courses.
• Develop a system to assess the implementation of agreed upon campus-wide standards to qualify for leveling at the 1000, 2000, 3000 and 4000 undergraduate course levels.
• Increase consistency in the award of credit as tied to learning outcomes for internships.

Learning Outcomes Assessment
The College, building on the many initiatives currently underway, will:
• Achieve and document sustained progress on learning outcomes assessment at the institutional, programmatic, and course levels, including increased departmental and institution-wide utilization of assessment information to improve instruction and outcomes.
• Launch and support focused projects advancing new areas of learning outcomes assessment activity, based upon LOAC-designated priorities.
• Increase internal sharing of outcomes, evidence, and actions within and across academic areas, and between and among academic and student affairs and other relevant divisions and/or departments.

Institutional Effectiveness

The introduction of departmental academic planning has been a significant and necessary step to increase the level of data-driven planning across all programs. With increased visibility of the planning process, Curry has progressed in aligning key information from strategic enrollment management and student learning outcomes assessment with academic program planning. Concurrently, both have been integrated more closely with recruitment/retention efforts and the budgeting process.

This process bridges the long-standing traditions of individualized attention and high touch support of students with a data-driven examination of student learning within cohorts and resource allocations based on data-informed planning. This framing seeks to maintain the values of Curry’s history while strategically assessing, building, and revising programs based on evidence of impact and effectiveness.

Intentional connections to external best practices in higher education such as the AAC&U’s LEAP initiative further guide institutional prioritization and planning. Whether through high impact practices to influence retention, the Essential Learning Outcomes to guide General Education, or state requirements for certification programs in Education and Nursing, Curry has significantly increased its connectedness to externally-promulgated standards and benchmarked data. Faculty regularly attend higher education conferences outside their disciplines (NEEAN, AAC&U, Teaching Profession, NEFDC, POD, among others) for external referencing; various task force efforts (e.g. First Year Experience, General Education, and Hybrid Course Development) included extensive environmental scans of best practices and relevant higher education research in their reports and recommendations. More importantly, as multiple areas have gained experience and comfort with a data-driven, externally referenced inquiry framework, changes to programs, processes, and perspectives have emerged.
Curry’s next focus will be on increasing the use and systematic integration of data in the ongoing processes of adapting and innovating. With more data available, greater attention is now focused on the nature and evidence of student learning to guide academic planning. Critical next steps will be to elevate such processes to assure ongoing feedback for continuous quality improvement and to develop and enhance more signature programs to attract, retain, and graduate more students. With an appreciation of the need to align resources strategically, Curry has focused on articulating and sustaining academic quality. This emphasis reflects a collective commitment to use evidence to assure that programs meet student needs, adhere to mission principles, and deliver the desired outcomes.
**Standard Five: Faculty**

**Description**

Faculty ranks at Curry College include full-time Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor as well as part-time Senior Lecturer, Lecturer, and Associate Lecturer, pursuant to the College’s Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The College replaced tenure in 1979 with a system of “Rolling Contract” status, which may be sought by faculty at the Associate Professor rank and above after demonstrating exemplary performance over time.

The 122 full-time faculty include 57 Professors, 41 Associate Professors, 22 Assistant Professors, and two Instructors as of Fall 2011. Currently 89 full-time faculty (73%) hold terminal degrees in their fields (74 Doctorates, 15 Other Terminal Degrees, e.g., MLIS, MFA); several more are currently enrolled in doctoral programs. The 297 part-time faculty include 93 Senior Lecturers and 204 Lecturers and Associate Lecturers.

In general, numbers of both full-time and part-time faculty by department correlate with the number of credit hours of instruction generated by the department (see table below). Higher numbers of part-time faculty in Education and Nursing are discussed in the Appraisal section. The number of full-time faculty has increased from 107 in Fall 2006 to 122 in Fall 2011. The distribution of full-time faculty skews toward the senior ranks (47% Professor, 34% Associate Professor, and 18% Assistant Professor). Approximately 50 (41%) current full-time faculty are at or will be at the traditional age of retirement within the next five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2011, Academic Departments</th>
<th>Undergrad (Grad) Credit Hours</th>
<th>Full-time Faculty</th>
<th>Part-time Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLIED COMPUTING &amp; TECH</td>
<td>1804</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>3599</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>1646 (613)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINE &amp; APPLIED ARTS</td>
<td>1732</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMANITIES</td>
<td>4307</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>2393 (582)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATURAL SCIENCE &amp; MATH</td>
<td>4023</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-DEGREE UNITS</td>
<td>2457</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSING</td>
<td>4024 (305)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLITICS &amp; HISTORY</td>
<td>1551</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCHOLOGY</td>
<td>3104</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIOLOGY &amp; CRIMINAL JUST.</td>
<td>3501 (315)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Summary from Data First Forms, Standards 4 and 5)

31.3% of the part-time faculty holds the rank of Senior Lecturers. These faculty members make a significant contribution to the institution in a wide range of areas. Senior Lecturers have the opportunity, but not the obligation, to participate in governance, curriculum, and other faculty
matters, both within their departments and at large. Senior Lecturers are eligible for full benefits, sabbaticals, and release time for curriculum development and other projects. In Fall 2011, 13.3% of department/program leadership roles were filled by Senior Lecturers (see table below).

Full-time faculty staffing needs are evaluated based on the mission, specific goals, and requirements of each program or department. Such evaluation includes faculty, Human Resources, and Academic Affairs. Search committee structures, processes, and procedures are documented both in the CBA and the College’s “Faculty Search Process Guidelines.” Expectations for full-time faculty in the program or department guide the search and selection processes. xcii Expectations of all full-time faculty are delineated in the CBA. Regarding faculty diversity, the College recently investigated faculty hiring practices through the President’s Task Force on Diversity. xcii The overall full-time faculty instructional ratio increased from 51% in Fall 2006 to 55.2% in Fall 2011.

Compensation rates for full-time faculty, including processes for determining base starting salaries and annual percentage increases, are included in the CBA. Mean salaries for full-time faculty at all ranks have increased since FY 2009 (see Data First forms), with total increases over that period of 4.2 to 7.7%. Part-time salaries and annual increases for lecturers and senior lecturers are determined based on three credit hours of instruction and have increased at a similar rate.

Faculty members reassert their commitment to processes and principles of responsibility and ethical action, as well as recognition of specific conditions of employment, with their annual or semi-annual signing of contracts. The College endorses the “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, With 1979 Interpretive Comments” and has adopted an additional statement of policy on Faculty Academic Freedom and Privacy, included in the CBA. xciii

Faculty workloads, evaluation criteria, and evaluation processes, are specified in detail in shared documents that are regularly reviewed and revised by the institution. xciv Full-time faculty teach 12 credit hours in each semester, fall and spring, or 24 credits total (typically a 4/4 course load) and serve as academic advisors. They also review and evaluate the curriculum; participate in the work of their academic program areas, including learning outcomes assessment and planning; participate in student events and recruitment; provide service within their departments and on committees; and carry out professional activities, including scholarship, research, creative endeavors, and/or consulting. They may choose to teach up to three additional courses, one traditional undergraduate and two continuing education or graduate-level, in a given term or semester. Clear limits are set to ensure reasonable workload and delivery of a quality individualized educational experience for students. The advising load for full-time faculty is set at 16-20 students, with additional advisees taken at the discretion of the faculty member (with additional compensation). The maximum total student enrollment for a standard workload of four courses is 100 (or an average of less than 25 students per course).
Part-time faculty teaching loads vary by program, individual and rank. However, all faculty are expected to carry out their assigned teaching with the same integrity and quality as full-time faculty, including availability to students outside of class. Associate Lecturers and Lecturers may teach up to nine credits per semester, 18 per year. Senior Lecturers teach one to four courses (3-12 credit hours) per traditional semester, to a maximum of eight courses per year. An additional eight CE/Grad courses, distributed during intercession, summer, and CE semesters, can be taught as well. Senior Lecturers may also participate in events such as family weekend, open houses, accepted students day, commencement, and orientation. Although not required, some also contribute to curriculum development and other departmental affairs, serve on committees, serve in leadership capacities, and advise students.

Faculty evaluation at Curry College is built on a foundation of collegial peer feedback in all categories of performance, in concert with the mission and purposes of the institution: professional performance (teaching and advising); service; and professional activity (scholarship, research, and creative work). Department Evaluation Committees (DECs) are charged with delivering “developmental and formative” feedback to “improve the performance of the faculty,” as well as with being “specific in summarizing the strengths and weaknesses” of their colleagues, referring to shared standards, quality, and evidence of “actual performance consistent with the criteria,” including the criteria articulated in the CBA and further specified in the Criteria for Promotion and Rolling Contract (CPRC or “Same Standards”). DECs forward their recommendations, along with supporting materials (including the faculty member’s self-evaluation; summaries of student evaluations of teaching; relevant artifacts of teaching such as syllabi, assignments, and student work; and relevant artifacts of service and professional activity) to the CAO, who communicates final decisions back to DECs and the faculty. In general, all full-time faculty, senior lecturers, and lecturers are evaluated every three years and when applying for promotion. Associate and full professors on “rolling contracts” are evaluated every five years.

Grievances regarding the outcome of evaluations may be pursued through the All Faculty Evaluation Committee. During the period of 1998-2011, AFEC heard three grievances related to faculty evaluation procedures. The faculty evaluation process and criteria are regularly reviewed and revised through the work of AFEC and through the collective bargaining process.

Teaching and Advising
Faculty allocate their time to teaching and advising; service on committees and in departments; and scholarship, research, and creative activity differentially according to requirements apportioned by rank. The following chart summarizes teaching and advising loads, as well as faculty membership on committees and in academic leadership positions.
Faculty Ranks | Teaching: # credit hours (max students, course preps) | Advising: # advisees/faculty | Committee Service¹ | Dept./Prog. Leadership²
---|---|---|---|---
Regular | Overload | Regular | Faculty counts, Fall 2011
Full-time | 24 per yr. (100, 3) | ≤ 6 per term (NA) | 16-20 | 89
Senior Lecturer³ | < 24 per yr. (100, 3) | < 24 per yr. (NA) | NA | 5
Lecturer, Assoc. Lecturer | < 18 per year (75, 3) | NA (NA) | NA | NA

¹Positions as filled, Faculty Standing Committees and Institutional Committees.
²Positions as filled, Academic Department/Program Chair, Coordinator, and Director positions.
³For part-time faculty, “regular” load is defined as traditional undergraduate; “overload” may be taught in Continuing Education and/or Graduate Studies. Part-time faculty are not contractually required to carry an advising load, but may do so at the discretion of the chairperson for additional compensation.

Curry faculty accept the responsibility for ensuring that their content and methods meet academic and professional standards, and are increasingly involved in integrating learning outcomes assessment to better inform program improvement. They explore the effectiveness of instructional techniques and delivery methods within the context of the established learning outcomes of the academic programs in which they teach, as well as in cross-disciplinary and institution-wide efforts aimed at meeting student learning needs. Within departments, there is regular follow-up work as part of ongoing self-evaluation and planning. Consistency of multi-section courses is overseen by academic departments. Chairpersons monitor implementation and revision of shared syllabus templates with common learning outcomes. Some multi-section courses also use a common core text, readings, and/or digital materials (e.g., FAA 1000, COM 1010, and Statistics). Individual instructors adjust instruction through additional readings, supplemental materials, and specific assignments in which students practice, receive feedback, and are assessed on shared outcomes. Some multi-section courses (esp. Soc/CJ) also set expectations for amount and kind of student work.

The faculty have consistently devoted time and attention to understanding and improving teaching processes. Academic Affairs, and now the Faculty Center, regularly offer pedagogical and teaching development events and workshops on a variety of topics. The Excellence in Teaching Committee is a faculty standing committee with an annual budget and release time for the chairperson to coordinate activities such as workshops, forums, and lunchtime discussions on teaching and learning. In the last three years Excellence in Teaching has also brought summer institutes to campus, including Dr. Peggy Maki on Learning Outcomes Assessment, Dr. Leah Shopkow on “Decoding the Disciplines,” and Dr. Jeffrey Arnett on “Emerging Adulthood,” which have been oversubscribed in terms of faculty interest and desired
Faculty are also encouraged and supported in innovative teaching efforts through classroom research grants and an award each spring to an outstanding Curry College teacher, based upon nomination, teaching materials, and classroom observation to ascertain the quality and effectiveness of the nominee’s pedagogy and practice.

Systematic curriculum innovation efforts and initiatives include both formal task forces (e.g., General Education, First Year) and newer “Curriculum Innovation Communities,” which are focusing in 2011-12 on the cross-disciplinary curricular areas of Writing Across Curry, Diversity in the Curriculum, and Quantitative Literacy. These groups, which operate through the Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation described below, are organized as Faculty Learning Communities supporting the development and implementation of a revised General Education curriculum and its implementation of best practices and pedagogies across departments and disciplines.

An increased emphasis at Curry has been the thoughtful integration of technology into instruction. The following initiatives have been undertaken within the recent past, based on best practices:

- The Educational Technology Committee developed and disseminated principles of “technology across the curriculum” to faculty, and has advanced and assisted in assessing technology integration initiatives. Examples are the campus-wide adoption of the “Atomic Learning” online tutorial suite, as well as an extended pilot of the “Digication” e-portfolio suite, for 2011-12.

- The Office of Instructional Technology routinely offers well-attended “Blackboard Clinics” workshops on classroom technology, and introductions to new instructional technologies and their effective use to meet teaching and learning goals.

Concurrent with technology integration efforts, Curry has seen a decided increase in the use of Blackboard, the College’s learning management system, as summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blackboard Use</th>
<th>Fall 2009</th>
<th>Fall 2010</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Active Courses</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Login Days*</td>
<td>79,302</td>
<td>98,069</td>
<td>110,611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total distinct days that all users logged in. A person logging in multiple times on the same day is only counted once.

In September 2011, the College opened a new Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation, which brings together offices and services supporting faculty in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of teaching, as well as in other areas such as research and scholarship, leadership, and curriculum development. Instructional technology is integrated
in a state-of-the-art Collaboration Room and a faculty multimedia and technology Innovation Lab, with on-site support from a full-time Administrative and Technology Assistant (a new staff position). The Center consults and coordinates with existing groups, such as the Excellence in Teaching and Educational Technology Committees, and collaborates with the Academic Dean’s Office, Student Affairs, Levin Library, and the Technology Center.\textsuperscript{ciii}

\textit{Faculty Advising} remains a frequently cited strength of the College. Faculty advisors, who typically advise 16-20 students, are supported by the Academic Advising Office, which includes a full-time manager, a three-quarter time faculty director, and an administrative assistant. New faculty are assigned a reduced number of advisees for their first semester and work closely with advising staff to learn the curriculum and advising processes during orientation and through follow-up workshops. The Advising Office supplies all faculty advisors with updated information, and receives feedback on academic issues that emerge through advising as well as broader advising and student concerns from faculty, through regular focus groups, workshops, and information disseminated by e-mail and online. New tools and resources, such as an automated degree audit and an early alert system, contribute to advisors’ abilities to intervene when necessary and to help all students plan and track their academic progress.

Full-time, year-round credentialed professionals with a graduate degree in an appropriate field provide advising services for students enrolled through continuing education, as well as for graduate students pursuing a graduate degree. Advisors are readily available to explain degree requirements and course scheduling options, assess prior transfer credits, and inform students about financing options.\textsuperscript{civ}

The College has been proactive regarding enhanced support for first year students. While measures of student satisfaction (Noel Levitz, NSSE, and internal assessments) yield strong ratings of advisors’ availability and supportiveness, a 2010 survey of first year students indicated that only 43% of first year students had met with their advisors by the 6th week of class. In Fall 2011, all new students were invited to attend meetings with their academic advisors immediately following New Student Convocation. The results were noteworthy: a student poll on the Portal found that 80% of respondents met with the advisors during that period, and advisors subsequently reported increased follow-up engagement with their students than in previous years.\textsuperscript{cv, cw}

Closely related to service through advising, the faculty engage in a myriad of other forms of service that enhance direct interaction with students, thoughtful curriculum planning, and governance that is proactive and ensures quality on behalf of students. The chart that appears under \textit{Teaching and Advising} demonstrates the high level of Curry College faculty involvement in Service.

\textit{Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity}
Curry defines scholarship, research, and creative activity broadly, as appropriate to a teaching-focused institution, with emphasis on integrating teaching and scholarship in ways that are adaptable to the disciplinary and teaching context. Although specific expectations are
articulated only for full-time faculty, Fall 2011 C.V.’s document the active scholarship and research of Senior Lecturers.\textsuperscript{cviii} Beyond disciplinary scholarship, the institution includes research focused on the scholarship of discovery, of application, and of teaching and learning within the professional activities that are systematically supported and evaluated (CPRC). Artistic performance and exhibition related to the faculty member’s discipline are similarly encouraged and supported. In addition, and especially for the professional fields, faculty may pursue and demonstrate their expert professional activity through consultation in which they use their disciplinary expertise in service to a third party entity such as a community or professional organization. Extensive evidence of faculty accomplishments in the area of Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity may be found in the in the Standard Five workroom materials.

In recognition of faculty scholarship and creative endeavors, The Excellence in Teaching Committee regularly sponsors well-attended Researcher and Artist Dinners, in which faculty with active research and creative projects present and discuss work in a cross-disciplinary setting. The committee also gives an award for outstanding Scholarship annually. The Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation has also begun to host informal practice talks, post-conference information sharing sessions, and is planning additional workshops and opportunities to develop scholarship and research, addressing a variety of stages and foci (e.g., developing Scholarship of Teaching and Learning projects; publishing work).

Faculty receive support in the form of time through the “Research Track” program by applying for 28 annual course reductions to pursue scholarly research; others receive support for scholarly and research projects through additional release time available from the Joint Committee on Release Time.\textsuperscript{cviii} Funding for travel to present scholarly work at professional conferences, and other research/publication costs is provided by the Faculty Fund for Professional Advancement, overseen by the Faculty Welfare Committee, and by the Dean’s Fund for Professional Advancement.\textsuperscript{cx} Further, research is supported by a part-time professional Grants Coordinator, hired in 2009, who assists faculty with external grant and fellowship applications.\textsuperscript{cx}

Curry maintains an active Institutional Review Board (IRB) with Federal Wide Assurance from the Office of Human Research Protection, with release time for a faculty Chairperson to administer the IRB and conduct training and outreach to faculty and students on ethical practices for research with human subjects.\textsuperscript{cxii}

\textbf{Appraisal}

With a large proportion of full-time faculty eligible for retirement in the next five-to-ten years, and with the College’s goal of improving the full-time to part-time faculty ratio, succession planning is a significant challenge.
Curry has prioritized hiring credentialed, competitive full-time faculty. The faculty have played a central role in this process by:

- Identifying needs for full-time faculty hires as a regular part of the annual departmental self-evaluation and planning process, connected to delivery of learning outcomes, programmatic, and College goals. An example is the 2010 hiring of a new Mathematics instructor based on the need to increase full-time faculty involvement in early sequence mathematics; similarly, the growing field of multimedia journalism was prioritized through the establishment of a 2010 full-time faculty line in Multimedia Journalism within the Communication Department.

- Improving the hiring process by developing a set of guidelines and standards that have been updated annually. The offices of Human Resources, the Academic Dean, and the Faculty Chairs, Coordinators, and Directors all contributed to authoring these guidelines, which supplement basic procedures and stipulations of criteria for appointment by rank in the CBA, with clear and consistent expectations for statements of criteria, candidate evaluation protocols, handling of applicant materials, interview processes, communications, and follow-up.

Recent searches have increasingly drawn a strong application pool nationally (six of the 12 new full-time faculty hired in fall 2010 and 2011 relocated from another part of the country), and have yielded highly qualified and experienced faculty with impressive credentials. Each has provided evidence of strong commitment to the institutional mission and a strong fit with the College’s identified academic program needs. Successful searches, along with attainment of doctoral degrees by existing faculty, have resulted in an overall increase in the proportion of full-time faculty with terminal degrees; that percentage rose from 64.5% in Fall 2006, to 66.9% in Fall 2009, to 73% in Fall 2011. With additional full-time faculty currently pursuing doctoral degrees, as well as anticipated new hires, the proportion of fully credentialed full-time faculty should continue to rise.

In addition to the focus on full-time hiring, the College has streamlined and made more transparent the processes for part-time faculty hiring. Open part-time positions are now routinely posted online using the College’s Interview Exchange resource. All part-time faculty are initially hired at the Associate Lecturer rank; departments evaluate their performance before they are eligible for promotion to the Lecturer rank.

As of Fall 2011, 32% of part-time faculty teach in the two pre-professional programs where the presence of clinical/field-based faculty is most integral to the curriculum: Nursing (53 part-time) and Education (41 part-time). Through “embedded practitioners,” students in Nursing and Education receive hands-on practical experience, on-site supervision, as well as context-specific mentoring and guidance. External professional accreditation bodies in Nursing and Education maintain their own standards for participation by full- and part-time faculty in clinical and field supervision; in all cases, Curry adheres to such standards.

The faculty at Curry College are dedicated to the College’s mission, committed to academic quality, and highly engaged, both with students on a day-to-day basis and with strategic
initiatives to move the College forward through planned growth and development. In pre-professional programs, generally subject to external accreditation, the offering departments are rigorous in adhering to professional standards. The program planning and assessment process now in place for other programs and departments represents a major step in involving all faculty in the documentation and assessment of course- and program-specific learning outcomes to inform ongoing curricular and instructional improvement. In addition, Curry faculty are heavily engaged in systematic curriculum innovation efforts through service on formal task forces (e.g., General Education, First Year) and newer “Curriculum Innovation Communities” described above, supporting the development and implementation of a revised college wide General Education curriculum and its coordination with related curricular expectations, practices and pedagogies across departments and disciplines. These are ambitious endeavors, and Curry faculty are committed to the work of defining “general education” such that it aligns with values that define the College’s purposes for all students, regardless of majors or fields of study.

Given the challenges of integrating an increasing need for faculty participation in planning, assessment, curriculum renewal, and leadership with the primary teaching functions of the College, enhancing professional development opportunities has been key focus for Academic Affairs, as evidenced in both increased budgeting of funds and time (faculty, staff, and administrative support) for these important efforts. Such investments include:

- Support for faculty time for research, scholarship, curriculum development, major learning outcomes assessment projects, sabbaticals, and academic leadership through course releases and administrative time. The total allocation of funds to these functions has increased by 49% from FY 2007 to FY 2012. Over the same time period, outlays for sabbaticals and course releases for scholarship, research, and other professional projects increased by 133%.
- Funds for conference travel, research support (equipment, materials, undergraduate research assistant time), publication costs, professional development programs, assessment, accreditation, and curriculum development efforts, via the Academic Dean’s Office, Faculty Fund for Professional Advancement, and Excellence in Teaching Committee.
- Expenditures for replacement salaries for faculty leadership, in the form of assigned and release Time to chairs, coordinators, and directors of departments and programs, as well as committee chairs. The College has increased expenditures on faculty leadership in these forms by 36% from FY 2007 to FY 2012.
- Hiring of an Administrative and Technology Assistant (new position as of Fall 2011), housed in the Faculty Center, to enhance instructional technology support for faculty.

Interest and participation in relevant opportunities is clearly on the rise. While funds for release time and sabbaticals have been underutilized (e.g., fewer proposals for Research Track have been submitted than the number available in most of the years since its initiation in FY 2007), faculty are increasingly taking advantage of Assigned/Release Time to support both their own research and scholarship, along with assessment, curriculum development, and other projects benefitting students within academic areas and departments. Excellence in Teaching is
sponsoring more events, which tend to be well attended.\textsuperscript{cxvi} The context for professional development and support is significantly different from that which existed at the time of the College’s last NEASC self-study in 2001 and its five-year interim report in 2005. Curry has enhanced its professional development infrastructure through:

- Availability of information on faculty opportunities, support, and professional development from multiple offices and areas.\textsuperscript{cxvii}
- Coordinated calendar of faculty events, available online at the site above, with export/import functionality for Outlook, Google Calendar, and iCal.
- Funding for conference attendance.
- Optional support available to all faculty (full and part-time) when preparing for teaching: summer syllabus write-ins; “Gear-up for Fall” week before classes begin, academic videography projects.
- Faculty showcases of Innovative Program and pilot ventures.
- In-depth Summer Institutes (generally oversubscribed).
- New methods to assess effectiveness of faculty professional development, including a locally developed, grant-funded, iterative reflective survey.
- A comprehensive New Faculty orientation and mentoring system, with monthly cross-disciplinary follow-up sessions.\textsuperscript{cexviii}
- An ongoing, open Faculty Peer Support program.\textsuperscript{cxix}
- Ongoing support for Advisor development, including faculty participation in NACADA institutes and conferences and ongoing voluntary participation in campus Advising workshops.\textsuperscript{cxx}

While participation and engagement in the work of assessment and planning has increased, resulting in greater transparency and documentation, the institution continues to face the challenge of how best to review, interpret, and make academic planning decisions based on timely and pertinent data. Consequently, Academic Affairs recently increased staff time and expertise devoted to understanding institutional data, disseminating and discussing it with faculty, and academic planning and budgeting is in the process of searching to fill a new position, the Director of Academic Budget, Planning, and Finance.

\textit{Teaching and Advising}

Reflecting the College principle that advising is teaching, Curry faculty make a commitment to individualized advising and a student-centered orientation. Their success is evident in the Benchmark Comparisons of Student-Faculty Interaction for seniors—in particular, the first year student and senior assessment of quality of relationships with faculty members (Please see August 2009 NSSE data).\textsuperscript{cxi} This pattern of positive faculty-student engagement also appears in annual Senior Survey data. When asked “To what extent has each of the following aspects of your Curry experience contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development?” 78\% of Spring 2011 student respondents rated “Relationships with faculty members who taught your classes” “Quite a bit” or “Very much”; 71\% rated “Relationships with faculty advisers” as “Quite a bit” or “Very much”; and 88\% evaluated the “amount of contact with faculty” as “Good” or “Excellent.”
Advisors actively participate in discussions about the differing needs of advisees across the curriculum (e.g., recent workshops on “Advising Conversations” targeting specific checkpoints in students’ progression and how the advisor-advisee relationship changes during each) and have evidence to indicate that their roles are significant in students’ satisfaction and progress. Newly introduced technological tools (e.g. a degree audit and early alert system) have contributed to the advising process as well, allowing for even greater individualization and thoughtful planning. Even with the broad concern about keeping both the teaching and advising personal and individualized as the College grows (Standard One), faculty continue to value and prioritize individualization of students’ experiences through their one-to-one interactions.

With multiple structures contributing to the multifaceted range of activities related to pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment (e.g. Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation, Academic Dean’s Office, Excellence in Teaching Committee, Educational Technology Committee, Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee), there has been an effort to work collaboratively to shape the nature of exploration, work and evaluation carried out by faculty. Examples are the 2009 Summer Institute on Learning Outcomes Assessment and a follow-up Fall Workshop, both co-sponsored by Excellence in Teaching and Academic Affairs. There is a need to ensure similar collaborations that focus on specific sets of issues, needs or skills in order to avoid overlapping or redundant efforts emanating from disparate structures.

In addition, while great progress has been made in introducing, implementing and assessing appropriate educational technologies, there are other challenges facing the College that depend upon expanded support for faculty in the thoughtful use of technology. These include: planning for various combinations of hybrid, online, and face-to-face instruction; changes in mobile technology use and practice; the need for a centralized data base linking concerns expressed by faculty about specific students with appropriate student services; and a comprehensive approach to instructional technology planning, including needs assessments, innovative pilots, appropriate budgeting, and further assessment.

Research/Scholarship/Creative Work
Curry’s faculty are primarily a teaching faculty, but they are expected to be active professionally in scholarship, research, writing, creative production/performance, and/or professional consultation, and many are so engaged. The College supports creative and scholarly endeavors, recognizing such initiative with funding, sabbatical leaves, conference participation, and events, noted in Description, to showcase their accomplishments.

Students are expected to achieve competency in research and creative applications within their fields through a Senior Capstone Project. Efforts are underway to embed capstone experiences into all programs and to increase the consistency and accountability of this requirement for students across all disciplines (the work of Senior Capstone Faculty is further described in Standard Four).

Projection
The College will:
- Continue to increase the number and the percentage of credentialed, high quality full-time faculty who are committed to Curry’s mission and values in traditional undergraduate, continuing education, and graduate programs; improve the yield of successful faculty searches through earlier planning, increasing outreach, and analyzing and responding to barriers to hiring diverse faculty members.
- Increase efforts to improve instruction and student learning, including coordination and assessment of effectiveness, through the Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation.
- Implement research-based results of Curriculum Innovation Communities to improve the effectiveness of instruction in key cross-disciplinary aspects of curriculum, including Writing, Quantification, and Diversity.
- Develop, implement, and assess programs and services targeted to supporting and developing expertise in newer areas of faculty responsibilities: assessment, evaluation, and planning.

Institutional Effectiveness

Curry College evaluates the sufficiency of faculty appointments and allocation of time to core functions through routine analysis of institutional data by the offices of Institutional Research, Enrollment Management, and Academic Affairs. These groups disseminate information to faculty in the academic areas, to Senior Staff, and to relevant standing committees. Annual academic program self-evaluations and plans draw on institutional data, departmental goals and evidence of achievement, student learning through outcomes assessment, and evidence of emerging needs within each discipline to support curricular changes and resource allocations in support of enhanced institutional effectiveness.

Budgetary support for faculty is regularly reviewed within Academic Affairs, through shared governance bodies such as Senior Staff, the Faculty Welfare Committee, and the Joint Committee on Reassigned Time. Time and workload distribution is reviewed and documented both through faculty standing committees (e.g., the Committee on Committees, All Faculty Evaluation Committee, and the Faculty Welfare Committee); it is revised as appropriate and documented through the Collective Bargaining process.

The effectiveness of faculty in teaching and advising, scholarship, service, and research/creative activity is evaluated for each faculty member through a comprehensive peer review process, including student, colleague, and leadership perspectives. With criteria that are specific to the mission and purposes of the institution, these evaluations provide feedback for ongoing improvement. The Departmental Evaluation Committees summarize aggregate information relative to faculty effectiveness to allow the Chief Academic Officer to review and respond to strengths and areas for improvement. In addition, the All Faculty Evaluation Committee (AFEC) reviews and can make recommendations for ongoing improvements to the evaluation criteria and process.
**Standard Six: Students**

With a long history of individualized attention to students and an institutional commitment to their intellectual and personal growth, Curry has recently advanced a more integrated, comprehensive, and data-driven approach to student success. Such efforts have focused on understanding more clearly who enrolls at Curry and why, who succeeds at Curry and why, and how best to align support and resources based on such information.

**Admissions**

Successful recruitment of traditional undergraduate students is a college-wide endeavor that brings together many areas of the campus. Curry’s Office of Admission is led by the Dean of Admission and a team of counselors and staff who follow the professional standards of the National Association of College Admission Counselors. Enrollment goals are established with the input of Enrollment Management, Admissions, Financial Services, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs.

Admission policies and procedures appear on the College website, in the catalog, and in admissions materials. In making decisions, reviewers consider quantitative and qualitative information including essays, transcripts, standardized test scores, recommendations, documented co-curricular achievements, and interviews. Data First forms describe overall new student enrollments (including those of Continuing Education). These and other tables in the workroom describe admission rates, yields, and trends for traditional undergraduates since the last NEASC visit. They reflect steadily increasing application and acceptance rates and a 24% increase in the size of the entering class over the last ten years.

Students seeking admission to the College’s Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL), a comprehensive support program for students with a primary diagnosis of language-based learning disability and/or AD/HD, are required to submit diagnostic testing and to complete a supplemental questionnaire. Application materials are reviewed by qualified faculty who make admissions recommendations based on an assessment of the likelihood of student success. PAL admission requirements are fully explicated on the PAL website. Students in PAL are fully integrated in the college community and persist to graduation at rates comparable to non-PAL students.

Admission decisions for non-PAL students consider the network of academic support services available to all students. The Academic Enrichment Center offers subject matter tutorials, professionally staffed writing and math lab assistance, and study strategy instruction. An electronic Early Academic Alert System, a dedicated Academic Success Coordinator, and a cross-area Student Assistance Team further identify students in need of support and document outreach to both underprepared students and those experiencing difficulty for a wide range of reasons. Finally, placement tests in writing and mathematics assess student skills in these areas prior to matriculation and identify those most in need of additional academic instruction or support.
Charts below describe the academic interest areas of the 2009 entering students and the average distribution of interests over the last ten years:

### Distribution of Intended Majors

#### Ten Year Average (2002-2011) Incoming Major

Students from diverse populations comprise approximately 15% of Curry’s entering class; this percentage has remained largely unchanged since 2000. The geographic distribution has been consistent over the last five years, with 64% of Fall 2011 students coming from Massachusetts and the remaining 36% representing 25 states and 5 countries.

Admissions staff travels throughout the mid-Atlantic, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, and California, supported by a redesigned set of print marketing materials, a newly redesigned website, and increased use of technology, including social marketing.

Over the last 10 years, the volume of admission activity has doubled from 1,806 first year student applications in 2000 to 4791 applications for Fall 2010 (and a similar increase in transfer applications from 237 to 421). Acceptance rates show a modest increase in selectivity, moving from 73% to 70%, with similar modest gains in the average SAT scores and high school GPA (from an average Math and Reading SAT of 918 to 926 and from an average HSGPA of 2.52 to 2.61 over the past 5 years). Deposits resulting from acceptances increased as well, from 524 to 662.

Beginning in Fall 2010, a cross-area team representing Admissions, Financial Services, Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management began weekly reviews of a data dashboard to assess and monitor progress toward admission goals. The dashboard identifies potential and entering
class members by cohort, allowing for separate as well as aggregate tracking and monitoring of programs with specific enrollment caps (e.g. Nursing and PAL).

Retention and Graduation
Retention and persistence-to-graduation have been central concerns at the College. First-to-second year retention has averaged 67.2%, with fluctuations of only 2-3%. (A notable exception was Fall 2008, when retention for the entering cohort was 61%). Persistence to graduation follows these same patterns, with an average 6-year graduation rate of 47.6% across the last five cohorts, and only slight variations. In both cases, recent data show a small but downward trend. (For data and trends from 2000 to 2010, please consult workroom). The College has made it a priority to increase its understanding about retention of students by subgroups, migration of students from one major to another, and subsequent student enrollment at other institutions.

Moreover, Curry has been making greater use of its data to inform retention planning. An example is the College’s response to students’ perception that they participate in fewer “Enriching Educational Experiences” than peers at similar institutions as indicated on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Attention and effort have been placed on increasing the depth and breadth of co-curricular academic experiences and facilitating connections with classroom content. Last administered in the Spring of 2009, the NSSE will be administered again in the Spring 2012 to reassess the impact of activities such as:

Student Engagement
- Opened Curry’s new Student Center in Fall 2009, increasing on-campus jobs for students, intramurals, fitness center activities and student events.
- Increased Clubs and Organizations from 15 to 35, including academic clubs such as Pre-Law, Education Club, Information Technology, and Politics and History.
- Increased the overall number and attendance at campus events including many academically-oriented events (e.g., African-American Studies “Fireside Chats,” Politics and History debates, guest speakers, and films with discussion panels).
- Increased communication with students, including a bi-weekly Student Affairs newsletter initiated in Spring 2008 and a student Portal in Spring 2009 providing one-stop access to critical information, news and resources.
- Established a Spring Academic Festival, providing students an opportunity to display, discuss, and gain feedback about their research.
- Increased recognition for high achieving students, including Dean’s List celebrations of achievement, increased honor society events (including recently established chapters of Psychology and Criminal Justice honor societies), and increased activities of the Alexander Graham Bell Honor Society.
- Increased opportunities for students to participate in service-oriented projects and raised the visibility through a Student Activities Civic Engagement through Community Service strategic plan.

First-Year Programs and Initiatives
• Established a New Student Convocation in Summer 2009, a formal academic event to recognize entry of students into the academic culture.
• Initiated Orientation Common Read in Summer 2010 to encourage community-building intellectual discussion beyond the classroom.
• Expanded Summer Orientation program from three to four sessions to provide smaller cohorts of students with a more individualized experience.
• Increased faculty resources devoted to first year curricular activities by hiring a full-time Director of First-Year Studies (2008) and an additional Special Appointment full-time Faculty member for First Year Studies in Fall 2011.
• Increased the participation of full-time faculty teaching First-Year Seminar.
• Increased early contact between first year students and their advisors through a new “meet your advisor” program on opening day of 2011.
• Initiated First-Year Learning Communities in Fall 2009 targeting cohorts of students with common interests. In Fall 2011, Curry housed students enrolled in the First Year Inquiry Groups in the same residence halls to encourage community and extracurricular engagement. A set of faculty-led excursions tied to these inquiry groups include planned outings to Norfolk County Prison and the Boston Food Bank and to on-campus events such as “Sound Culture” musical experiences.

Academic Support
• Created structured program in Spring 2011 to provide targeted assistance for first year students placed on Academic Probation. Students created an educational plan, attended weekly study halls, and completed either an academic skills course or a semester of PAL. The first-to-second year retention rate for these students had previously been between 18-23%; the retention of the Spring 2011 group was 32%.
• Launched a centralized Academic Alert system in Fall 2007 to provide students early notification about academic concerns. Following an assessment of the rate of use of the system and resulting impact on student achievement, in Fall 2011 Academic Alert was redesigned and promoted to faculty as an Early Alert system – encouraging online entry of student concerns earlier in the semester. A goal for 2011-12 is to increase the number of entries to the system (over 700 entries in 2010-2011; however 16% were entries too late in the semester for students to take corrective action).
• Increased peer tutoring usage with additional outreach based on high-risk courses.
• Enhanced Academic and Student Affairs partnerships to increase academic residence hall programming including time management workshops, advising, and tutoring peer support in the residence halls.
• Created a proactive time management program that provided over 300 students with planners and one-to-one time management support in preparation for the Fall.

Student Services
The Student Affairs mission articulates the role of Student Affairs in providing educational experiences for student development and learning in partnership with the academic programs. Pursuant to that commitment, Curry offers a comprehensive array of programs and services designed to support students in their personal development and academic success. Such
programs are described in detail in the Student Handbook, College Catalog, College website and departmental brochures. The extensive resources for academic assistance include the Academic Enrichment Center, Program for the Advancement of Learning (PAL), Speaking Center, Advising Center, Academic Success Coordinator, the Office of Disability Services, and Career Services.

The Academic Enrichment Center (AEC) provides peer and professional content tutorial services to traditional, continuing education, and graduate students, including assistance with writing, organization and time management skills, and study strategy development. Faculty recommend students to serve as peer tutors who then enroll in a structured training course led by AEC faculty. Tutoring is available in most subject areas. Courses identified as “high risk” are targeted for staffing and include those with past histories of requests for supplemental instruction or a high percentage of D/F grades. A summary of recent tutorial support activities is available in the workroom. Student support for developing oral communication literacy includes the Curry Speaking Center, a peer-based and faculty led center that provides individualized instruction, videotaping of oral presentations, and structured feedback for improving oral communication skills.

Beyond academic support, many student services are offered through the Division of Student Affairs. They include Residence Life, Student Activities, Orientation, the Fitness Center, Intramurals, the Student Center, Disability Services, Alcohol/Wellness programming, Spiritual Life, Student Conduct expectations, Public Safety, Counseling, Health Services, and Food Services. Complete descriptions, means of contact with each area, and information about availability of services are provided online, during Accepted Students’ Day and Orientation workshops, and in print.

Curry’s varsity athletics programs, including fourteen intercollegiate teams (Division III) and a cheerleading squad, report directly to the President of the College. The College maintains an extensive website describing each team, as well as the overall philosophy and integrity expectations of student athletes. Academic expectations are clear as well: students who participate in intercollegiate athletics are held to the same standards as non-athletes in both academic and student life matters and must remain in good academic standing. A growing intramural program provides co-curricular activities that connect students with one another and the campus community. With the new space available in the Student Center and the increase in dedicated staff, the intramurals program has grown significantly. Programs including basketball, flag football, floor hockey, golf, indoor soccer, softball, tennis, volleyball, and Zumba drew more than 438 individual participants in the Spring 2011.

Curry students are afforded multiple opportunities for student leadership and participation in campus organizations and governance. These include: Resident Assistants, Orientation Leaders, Student Ambassadors, Student Government Association members, Student-Athlete Captains, Residence Hall Council members, Teaching Assistants, Peer Educators, Peer Tutors, Peer Advisors, and Student Club Executive Board members. Training and preparation for these roles is extensive and, in some cases, supported with credit-bearing course work related to student development theory and educational practice. A new course piloted in Spring 2011 focuses...
explicitly on Peer Leadership and provides an integrated practicum experience. In addition, the Student Activities Office runs leadership trainings and workshops for students and has sponsored a program for Emerging Student Leaders.

Curry also provides valuable leadership skills through student employment opportunities that currently serve more than 400 students. They include: Student Center Information Desk Staff, Fitness Center Staff, Building Manager, Event Set-up Crew, Intramural Referee, Activities Assistant, Bookstore Staff, Athletics Game Staff, Food Service, Shuttle Van Driver, Residence Hall Security, and Student Trip Coordinator.

More than 35 active clubs and organizations, many of which are linked to academic majors and minors, engage 420 students each semester. (The number of clubs represents a 130% increase over the past three years). The Student Center has facilitated more gathering and work spaces for organizations, as well as increased access to resources such as computers, color printer, art supplies, and meeting tables. Student Affairs staff provide extensive support to students, growing the number of campus-wide programs through program planning, organization and leadership development. Community service is an area of growth within campus offerings.

Student services for Continuing Education students at the Plymouth Campus include on-site academic advising and enrollment services. Technology and tutorial assistance are also available. Students enrolled at the Plymouth campus have access to the Levin Library through extensive online resources, and the Library sends research material to Plymouth student to eliminate the need for student travel to the main campus. The Levin Library also offers on-site orientation sessions at the Plymouth Campus.

New Facilities
Changes to the campus facilities since the last accreditation visit include the 2003 opening of the South Campus Residence Hall, a 170 bed suite-style residence hall, and the 886 Brush Hill Road Residence Hall, a 176 bed traditional hall, opened on the north side of campus in 2004. The two new buildings allowed for an increase in residential capacity from 1,077 to 1,423 students. In 2006, the new Academic and Performing Arts Center (AAPC) added a 200-seat auditorium to host student drama productions, cultural events, lectures, and myriad other co-curricular events. In 2009, the Student Center brought an increased quality of living and learning experience through an 84,000 square foot facility, including a 5,500 square foot fitness center, a gymnasium, game room, chapel, dining services (which include a marketplace and a late night snack bar), a quiet study lounge, bookstore, post office, café, fireplace lounge, meeting rooms, and the offices of the Athletics Department and Campus Life.

The College continues to use technology to improve student service including new automated and online processes to streamline housing selection, Summer 2011 implementation of a One Card system, and the Fall 2011 launch of Curry Connect, an online data base for job search and placement offered through Career Services.

Appropriate Staffing
Staffing within Student Services has recently been reviewed with the help of an external consultant. The process and resultant decisions and actions are described within *Appraisal*.

*Financial Aid*

Financial aid and financial affordability information are disseminated by the Student Financial Services (SFS) Team through the College’s website, mailings, group presentations, and individualized student and family counseling appointments. Outreach and communication about financial aid availability begins at the prospective student stage of enrollment and continues through graduation.

The College’s website offers detailed financial aid and loan information to prospective and enrolled Traditional, Continuing Education and Graduate students, targeted to each cohort. In addition, SFS staff members participate annually in Open Houses, Accepted Student, and Orientation events, where they are available to speak one-on-one with prospective students. They offer presentations to students and families about the aid application process, institutional, federal and state financial aid program availability, and locating additional resources through free-of-charge scholarship and additional financing options searches. Additionally, SFS staff members speak with prospective students at Division of Continuing and Graduate student events. Wise borrowing is stressed during all contacts and counseling conversations, and students and families are encouraged to think of the total investment over the student’s college career rather than on an annual or semester basis.

Curry has an agreement with TMS (Tuition Management Systems) to provide a third party monthly payment plan. TMS offers a free tool called *BorrowSmart* which encourages students and families to understand specific details about loan debt and repayment responsibilities prior to securing a loan, and what borrowing specific debt amounts may mean to their future repayment. Use of BorrowSmart is promoted at student events.

Upon application for financial aid, Curry’s traditional students receive financial aid award letters and a personalized Financial Planner. This letter and planner encourage planning and affordability consideration. The process provides time to ask questions of SFS and to plan for future costs/billing. In addition, a detailed Award Guide explaining each aid program is shared along with resources for alternative financing. Continuing education and graduate students award letters are accompanied by an Award Guide and financing materials specifically targeted to this population.

Curry’s Student Handbook documents policies on student rights and responsibilities, including grievance procedures. These statements of the philosophy and ethical standards of the College guide the administration of all student services procedures and activities.

*Appraisal*

*Admissions*
The College has established specific recruitment and enrollment targets, and is using intentional strategies to accomplish them. Enrollment management data provide critical information, allowing for a more targeted approach to meeting Curry’s enrollment goals. One such goal is to increase enrollments of students who have a strong potential for success at Curry. To that end, merit aid awards for the Fall 2011 class were restructured such that a weighted calculation of characteristics found to relate to student persistence now plays an important role. In addition, the College initiated a new Early Action merit award to increase early connection and communication with interested students identified as likely “persisters.” Information from the dashboard provides real-time assessments of the impact of these initiatives as well as for department-specific “conversion” events. Another important goal is to build enrollments in pre-professional programs beyond Nursing, which is heavily enrolled and enjoys a high conversion rate (31%). Building on the success of targeted pilot programs, under development are further strategies to draw potential students toward such programs.

The implemented practices described above, as well as the new cohort programs for high achievers described in Standard Four, appear to have contributed to a 20% increase in the number of non-PAL, non-Nursing students who enrolled in Fall 2011 vs. Fall 2010. In addition, new Early Action awards were associated with a 3% increase in early admits. Although other factors undoubtedly played a role, the newly incentivized structure is believed to have had a positive impact on conversion and will be continued.

In addition to increasing enrollments of those deemed most likely to persist at Curry, the College has made notable progress in reducing the number of students who enter Curry at high risk of attrition. While 31 students with high school GPAs of 2.0 or lower enrolled in Fall 2010, only seven enrolled in Fall 2011. Similarly and significantly, an intentional shift in the proportion of entering PAL students has been accomplished over time. Ten years ago, PAL students constituted 40% of Curry’s enrollments. Following the implementation of a target of 25%, PAL enrollments were controlled. In the 2011 entering class, PAL represented 20% of the total new enrollment. Beyond planning for a 21st century curriculum, the College is applying strategic planning to its recruitment and enrollment efforts to ensure a strong fit between what prospective Curry students want and need and what the College provides.

With a relatively new orientation to the ongoing use of data, the College now has a much clearer profile of the student it seeks to recruit and a better understanding of why that student is likely to succeed. As data is “sliced” by program, it has become clear that student success is highly variable across majors, and that undecided students are particularly vulnerable. This understanding will lead to more targeted recruitment and intervention strategies. In addition, Curry persistence rates shown by specific feeder high schools are now being used to prioritize interactions with high schools that prepare students who are more likely to persist and graduate.

Data has also helped Curry to identify its strongest competitors and to lead the way toward greater differentiation and value in its offerings and strengths. Aware that students who visit the campus and engage in interviews are more likely to choose Curry if it meets their needs, the
College has placed a priority on personal interviews and campus tours. Beyond showcasing what Curry has to offer, close interaction with prospective students encourages questions from students and helps the Admissions staff better assess a student’s fit with the College.

While great progress has been made in the systematic review of data to inform decision making, significant work remains to advance to a fully integrated process of recruitment aligned with student success.

Retention and Graduation

As reported in the 2010 NEASC Progress Report, Curry recognizes that graduation rates serve as the ultimate indicator of the institution’s organizational success. In moving from a period of rapid enrollment growth to more stable enrollment, Curry seeks to develop increased sophistication with a data-driven, systematic approach to student recruitment, retention, and persistence.

The evolution of Curry’s retention efforts over the last decade provides a useful framework for understanding the steps that Curry needs to take to improve its student retention rate. In the early part of the decade, the College’s efforts focused on responding to immediate concerns of students on matters related to their quality of life and concerns about non-responsive campus offices. As campus offices became more professional, and new facilities (e.g. the Student Center and AAPC) came on line to serve increased numbers of students, the quality and vibrancy of campus life improved significantly. Curry now needs to increase its focus on building sustainable structures and implementing systemic efforts to improve retention. In addition, the College needs to provide for ongoing assessment of both short and longer-range initiatives to continually strengthen their actual impact on student persistence.

The most significant transition in Curry’s recent retention efforts has been a shift to a data-driven approach that seeks to target high-risk student sub-groups with appropriate needs-based interventions. An example is the work of the cross-area Student Success Team, which, informed by the results of the Inventory, reaches out to support students in specific sub-groups (e.g. those on Academic Probation, international students, transfer students). Similarly, the academic Early Academic Alert system was developed to provide proactive and early outreach to a segment of the student population, based on a set of identified risk factors. Recent re-branding (it had originally been named Academic Alert) has already demonstrated a positive impact, nearly doubling the number of student contacts.

Additionally, there has been greater engagement of the entire college community in the process of understanding, utilizing, and responding to data about student retention of particular sub-groups. The Student Services section addresses some of the initiatives that have been piloted. Departments also now have a better understanding of specific enrollment trends as they are informed about learners’ migrations through various majors. Increased partnerships between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, from integrated planning at the Dean’s level to cross-training of RAs, have resulted in more engaging educational experiences and more coordinated student outreach.
The large-scale impact of these efforts on the overall retention rate has not yet been assessed. Some of the very recent changes, including reduction in the number of students with less than a 2.0 high school GPA and earlier invention with at-risk students, are anticipated to have a positive impact on future retention rates. Sustainable improvements are the longer-term goals, and they will be based on analyses of the impact of interventions such as those noted above on student learning, engagement, retention and graduation. The appointment of an institutional research director has provided an important resource for more sophisticated data analyses to better align and direct institutional efforts on retention and student learning.

To further its commitment to data-driven decision-making, the College is also considering ways to best execute and oversee comprehensive and systematically aligned efforts. One possibility may be through changes to the existing organizational structure, which is now configured such that Admissions, Financial Aid, and Enrollment Management report to the President through three separate members of Senior Staff (Dean of Admission, Chief Financial Officer, and Chief Academic Officer). There is recognition of the critical need for integrated oversight and leadership of retention efforts to make significant progress on an issue that is critical to Curry’s success.

**Student Services**

The comprehensive array of services, leadership, athletic/recreational, and co-curricular opportunities provided to Curry students helps the College to meet its goal of supporting Curry students to succeed and flourish within its academic environment. Guided by an assessment-oriented framework, Curry regularly evaluates its student services offerings to determine what improvements can be made to further increase student engagement and success. The following are examples of ways that both formal and informal data have been used to revise and improve student services and inform appraisal of existing activities.

- Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Surveys yield consistently high ratings for Curry as a caring community. However, when responses indicated concerns with public safety, significant attention and resources were brought to bear to improve the professionalism and consistency of the Public Safety Office. Now under new leadership, the Public Safety Office receives praise from students, although not yet as consistently favorable ratings as other college services.

- The College’s strategic planning survey indicates that traditional undergraduates are most satisfied with academic support, academic advising, leadership opportunities and technology in the classroom, and are less satisfied with technology in the residence halls, residential facilities, and campus safety. Supplementing that information are results from a Residence Life and Housing survey, conducted in 2010, to assess satisfaction with First Year Residence Halls; 21% of the population responded, identifying several themes: dissatisfaction with the condition and maintenance of the residence halls, lack of adequate common lounge space, frustrations with damage and vandalism by peers, and lack of adequate wireless internet in the halls. Some action items that came from the process included a review of the damage billing process and practice, requests to update common space appearances, and a commitment to
continue to hear from students on an annual or biannual basis, making ongoing improvements in response.

- Based on the data that show a low first-to-second-year retention rate for students who come to Curry without a declared major, faculty and staff in academic and student affairs have collaborated on ways to engage and support undecided students early in the first year. In 2010 the Explore Program^{cxlili} was piloted as a coordinated series of meetings and events for undecided students. There was little participation in the program and the committee re-launched it in 2011, reframing the programming around goals and activities with the aim of attracting more student participation.

- A Fall 2006 survey was initiated as a result of repeated anecdotal complaints from students about judicial affairs. The Director of Student Conduct increased training with Residence Life staff regarding the goals and purposes of student conduct policies, sanctioning protocols, and guidelines for conducting and documenting meetings. The staff then followed up with their student staff during RA training on similar topics.^{cxliv} A follow-up survey in Fall 2010 indicated a significant increase in the number of students who felt the process was fair and respectful.^{cxlv}

Following a comprehensive self-study and the engagement of a Student Affairs consultant, staffing models were revised in most areas of student services to better meet the needs of Curry students.^{cxlvi} This recent restructuring resulted in the increased professionalization of the requirements for Residence Hall professional staff. A Master’s degree in Student Development or a related field and significant experience in Student Affairs are now required of all Community Directors. Other steps taken to promote student success through sufficient interaction outside of class include the following:

- The College increased the Alcohol Education position from a 10-month part-time position to a full-time 12-month position in 2007.
- The College increased Counseling Center staffing through the addition of a new full-time doctorate level counselor in Fall 2011.
- The College hired a part-time Disability Coordinator in Fall 2010. (This position and the job responsibilities had been held by the Director of Counseling).

**Orientation**

Curry’s Orientation program was developed in 2007 in an effort to provide a more comprehensive acclimation to students transitioning to Curry’s academic community. The College moved from a half-day academic planning day to an overnight June orientation program. The program, now in its fifth year, includes a daylong parent/family component. In 2011, 86% of the incoming class participated in one of the four overnight orientations that were held in June. Evaluations of these sessions were positive overall: students indicated that they were able to connect with other incoming students, understood the expectations for a Curry College student, and felt prepared to return to campus in the Fall. Summary responses from parents and students are used by the Orientation Committee to plan future sessions.^{cxlvii} Based on recent feedback, identified next steps to improve the effectiveness of Orientation will be to increase targeted activities and support for both international students and transfer students.
(two cohorts identified as vulnerable) and to continue to develop academic threads within Orientation to further increase student readiness.

**Enriching Educational Experiences**

Senior Surveys conducted through Career Services provide evidence of student participation in and perceived value of Enriching Educational Experiences. 82% of the respondents indicated that they had participated in at least one experiential learning activity. Of that group, 34% had enrolled in internships for credit, 16% participated in student teaching, 20% were involved in clinical rotations in Nursing, and 12% engaged in non-credited internships. Additionally, the Senior Survey asked students about the extent to which a variety of enriching education experiences contributed to their education. The numbers below reflect the percentages of students who indicated that these experiences contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development. To increase the visibility of these kinds of experiences, Career Services has increased the use of technology in promoting internships, jobs and other opportunities through Facebook, blogs, and Twitter.

Senior responses about Enriching Educational Experiences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Contributed quite a bit</th>
<th>Contributed very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicum, internship, field experience and or clinical assignment</td>
<td>21.85% (71)</td>
<td>43.38% (141)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service or volunteer work</td>
<td>21.34% (70)</td>
<td>23.78% (78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning community</td>
<td>24.14% (77)</td>
<td>31.03% (99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research project with faculty member</td>
<td>21.98% (71)</td>
<td>26.32% (85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study abroad</td>
<td>9.23% (30)</td>
<td>15.38% (50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in a student organization, club, or extracurricular activity</td>
<td>23.1% (76)</td>
<td>37.69% (124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending an art exhibit, play, dance, music, theatre or other performance</td>
<td>18.71% (61)</td>
<td>26.99% (88)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diversity Initiatives**

The College sees diversity and inclusion as a campus-wide responsibility. In the Fall of 2010, President Quigley charged a Diversity and Equality Task Force, comprising faculty, staff and students, in response to an on-campus incident involving hateful graffiti. The Task Force, consisting of three subcommittees, drafted a final report that includes recommendations for immediate actions to create an inclusive community and to encourage an in-depth look at
structures and supports for diversity and equality. While efforts to enhance diversity training and programs have been made, continued work is needed. The College’s Strategic Plan recognizes this need and articulates a visible and clear commitment to future diversity initiatives.

**Challenges of the Student Athlete**
In meeting with the Student Athlete Advisory Committee members, students indicated that their biggest challenge as student athletes is to balance academics and athletics. While efforts are made to minimize scheduling conflicts between classes and scheduled competitions, it is rare to avoid all such conflicts. Student athletes express feeling pressure to choose between their sport and their academics. While the Faculty Athletic Representative and the Student Athlete Recruiting and Welfare Coordinator both serve as resources to assist students in resolving these conflicts, better planning, communication among stakeholders, and timing conflict resolution would improve student success.

**Student Voice**
In 2010 all professionals in Student Affairs departments participated in departmental self-studies. The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS Standards) grounded the self-studies, and the results are informing the work of the Division. One important finding from the self-studies related to student involvement beyond student activities. The College has been proactive in involving students in recent planning processes (i.e., the Strategic Planning, General Education reform). However, expansion of the student voice in governance, organizations and policy was an area identified for improvement. Results from surveys indicate that while basic student needs are being met, more ways are needed to make the student voice more influential and sustainable. Pursuant to this goal, several students now serve on institutional committees, and Student Conduct will be reviewing ways of engaging students in the conduct process, possibly through student conduct boards comprised of students, faculty, and staff.

**Projection**
The College will:

**Admissions**
- Create multi-constituency teams to work with strategic enrollment management data to devise additional strategies for enrolling qualified students with a higher likelihood of persistence to graduation.
- Continue to devise targeted recruitment plans for individual majors, including ongoing evaluation of admission and financial aid strategies.
- Evaluate the possibility of pre-enrollment summer programs for underprepared students and implement if appropriate.

**Retention**
• Increase student retention by developing robust structures to oversee, evaluate and report on the successes and failures of the College’s multiple retention efforts, including heightening college-wide awareness of best practices, the importance of retention and graduation rates to prospective students, and the institution’s overall effectiveness.

• Create an institutional enrollment management plan in alignment with the College’s Strategic Plan that sets short-term and long-term goals and strategies and operationalizes the College’s broad institutional goals.

• Direct resources to ongoing assessment of current retention efforts, determining the consequences of identified actions, plans, policies and procedures.

• Review Curry’s financial aid policies and decisions for returning students through the lens of Curry’s retention goals.

Student Services

• Increase systematic college-wide evaluation and enhancement of student services in alignment with strategic enrollment data and the college budget process.

• Develop and further integrate programs and supports for students identified as “at-risk” prior to entry such as the development of an orientation program for Transfer students.

• Continue to build academic affairs/student affairs partnerships to increase:
  o Connections between internships and community service activities.
  o Residence hall activities tied to curricular programs.
  o Wellness initiatives both inside and outside the classroom.

• Increase opportunities for student voice, including increased participation on campus committees and exploring the potential of student participation in the Student Conduct processes.

• Continue to improve older residence halls to support living-learning environments.

• Review and consider implementation of recommendations from the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce.

• Create closer collaboration among student services, athletics, and academics addressing matters such as communication about potential scheduling conflicts.

Institutional Effectiveness

Overall, Curry’s understanding and work toward greater student engagement and retention are stronger, better documented, and better informed by internal and external data than ever before. The College continues to strive to improve student satisfaction, provide opportunities for student development and to promote student learning inside and outside the classroom. However, Curry has not yet explicitly set institutional numerical goals for specific retention or graduation rates. Though efforts toward increased retention have been incremental and increasingly well coordinated across areas, goal-setting is likely to enhance overall success.

Assessment of student engagement and regular self-study, informed by external benchmarking, provide solid foundations for continuous improvement. As noted above, the College is considering structural review and revision that could provide for more comprehensive and
systematic oversight for what are, too-often, separate, uncoordinated efforts. Greater alignment and focus, coupled with data analysis support from the newly staffed Institutional Research position have the potential to increase planning effectiveness across all areas of student service.
Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources

Description

Since the last NEASC reaccreditation, library and information resources available at Curry College have diversified in form and increased in extent. At the same time, focus has shifted to the importance of assessing the value of available resources, not simply their quantity. This complements an accelerated emphasis on information literacy skills, as detailed in the sections below.

Resources and Access

The Levin Library, available on-campus for 100 or more hours per week, is staffed by full and part-time Library faculty members, all of whom possess the terminal degree in the field (MLS, MLIS, etc.), as specified in the Agreement between Curry College and the Curry College AAUP. As of summer of 2011, Library Faculty comprised 8.5 FTE of the total staff, Library Staff numbered 4.25 FTE, and Student Workers totaled 6.0 FTE, for a total of 18.75 FTE. This number increased to 19.75 with the arrival of a new Library Director in September, 2011.

The Library provides resources for student learning and personal growth in traditional (physical) and electronic formats as well as through Interlibrary Loan, widely used by the community. Borrowing statistics have varied by year since 2006, ranging from 1,483 in that year to 1,824 in 2007. Approximately 1,500 items were borrowed in FY11 via Interlibrary Loan. LibGuides, which combine access to journal articles, background information, and reliable web sites related specifically to specific assignments, courses or disciplines, are a newer form of information resource developed by Library faculty and staff, and others outside the Library.

Library faculty members provide instruction in the use and assessment of information resources, both in person and online. Meetings with individual class sessions take two forms: introductory sessions that familiarize students with basic library resources and services, and course-specific sessions that are frequently, but not exclusively, geared to upper level courses. Faculty requesting the latter sessions generally have specific resources or assignments in mind, and collaboration between teaching and Library faculty is often more evident in these sessions.

Although information literacy is included in the Library’s “Instruction Mission Statement,” this focus gained strength in AY2009. Since then, Library faculty members, working with the academic deans and faculty colleagues across the college, have carried out projects to determine the best set of approaches for implementing information literacy instruction and assessment at the institutional level.

Individual instruction is provided by reference librarians in person and online. Reference desk assistance is available 64.5 hours per week, and e-mail service is available during weekday business hours. Students may also make individual appointments with reference librarians through an additional service introduced in AY2011.
The curriculum and student learning, both within and outside of specific areas that supply and assist students in using Learning Resources, are supported through a broad array of academic and administrative software. These tools are of several types: curriculum-specific (e.g., Aventuras, supporting the foreign language program), administrative (e.g., DeepFreeze), assistive (e.g., Dragon), as well as standard applications (e.g. Microsoft Office, Adobe Reader). Subsets of available software are installed in different campus locations, including at multiple locations in the Library and PAL, the Kennedy labs, the Plymouth campus, the Nursing Division, and the newer lab in the Hafer building.

The Blackboard course management tool, as reviewed in Standard Five, augments the classroom environment and provides opportunities for collaborative learning through the use of social networking functions such as chat and discussion boards. The Curry Web Information System (CWIS) offers students the ability to gain real time access to academic progress reports along with a wide range of administrative information. Google Apps provide students with e-mail and the ability to share documents, while the Portal provides students with communities and single sign-on access to a wide variety of resources.

With regard to Library-specific software applications, there have been many recent developments. As a result of the Library’s major focus on redeveloping an online presence, described in the College’s 2010 Library self-study report and input from two external evaluators, several initiatives were either strengthened or given further impetus. The Library has developed a community on the campus Portal as a component of the campus intranet. In summer 2011, it implemented new components of the Innovative Interfaces library system: Encore, a next-generation discovery environment, and WebBridge, a link resolver product. These serve to improve ease of discovery of learning materials of different types and simpler access to full-text journal articles. In addition, the library’s online catalog was enhanced with features providing more personal information for users. The development of LibGuides, described above, has become a major asset. The overall aim of these developments, considered together, is to knit together access to resources and information previously found in different “silos” via different interfaces. Most components of the Library’s online presence may be linked from Blackboard or otherwise embedded in electronic course materials.

To support technology integration, an Instructional Technologist, working with departments throughout the Institution, offers a range of workshops and one-on-one sessions to assist faculty in appropriately integrating technology in their curricula and instructional practices. This individual also educates faculty and staff when new software applications become available and when upgrades to existing applications warrant additional training. In addition, the Technology Center is able to assist with laptop repairs and connectivity issues and makes use of software that allows for remote diagnosis and resolution of many of the software and hardware issues that impinge on instruction within classrooms, labs, and offices. For additional information about technology instruction, please see Information and Technological Literacy.

Library faculty members, Technology Center staff, and the Instructional Technologist are all involved in the current Strategic Planning process. Library faculty members also play a
significant role in the revision of the General Education curriculum. These involvements affect all areas discussed in this report, from budgeting for learning resources, to information literacy instruction and assessment, the design of virtual environments, and appropriate staffing.

**Information and Technological Literacy**

The Library’s information literacy program is geared toward addressing the need of students to find, evaluate and use appropriate learning resources. Recognizing that generic “library use” sessions, detached from meaningful context, are quickly forgotten, Library faculty are attempting to determine the best means of assessing and meeting the information literacy needs of first-year students. Course-specific sessions, which provide appropriate context, will continue to be promoted by Library faculty members. Longitudinal data for the purpose of assessing the growth of student competencies is now being gathered. The Library faculty’s projects in this area have included:

- Assessment of new student information literacy to inform pilot credit-bearing offerings in information literacy.
- A pilot, stand-alone credit-bearing course in Library Research Methods, offered in Fall 2006.
- A Community of Inquiry investigation involving Levin Library faculty in AY2009, focused on the effectiveness of embedding LibGuides in specific courses to achieve information literacy student outcomes.
- Coordination, as of Fall 2010, of library instruction across First Year Seminar, AC1000, and Writing Workshop sections, to minimize redundant student exposure to the same material offered through a one-credit learning community course linked to a First Year Seminar course.
- A one-credit course offered in Fall 2010, taught as part of a learning community with linked courses in First Year Seminar and Communication.
- Creation of a robust set of department-specific resources to increase information literacy and critical thinking skills.
- Implementation of Project SAILS, administered in the Fall of 2011 to entering members of the class 2015 (A description of the SAILS assessment appears in Standard Two).
- Explicit integration of Information and Computer Literacy in the revised description of AC1000, the introductory Applied Computing class.
- Organization of “Transitioning to Higher Education: A Grade 9-16 Librarian Collaborative,” a group of high school and academic librarians committed to raising competency in all literacies for grade 9-16 students. The group explores strategies, and makes recommendations to help high school students prepare for and adapt to higher education research tasks.
- The ongoing development of a curriculum for teacher educators based on the May 2011 Information Literacy Standards for Teacher Education, published by ACRL.

As indicated, neither the Library nor individual degree programs have, to date, actually assessed the extent to which students attain levels of proficiency appropriate to their degree, subject or professional field of study. That goal, along with determining measures to assess changes in students’ sophistication in evaluating the quality of information sources, is addressed within
Students at Curry use Information Technology as an integral part of their instruction. Over the past few years, several factors have had an impact on the technology training provided through the Technology Center:

- Students and faculty have become more adept in using technology. The vast majority adapt to changes very quickly;
- Improvements in infrastructure have brought more information to one single place, making it easier to access;
- Online documentation and help utilities now use audio and video to enhance text-based forms of help.

With these factors in mind, the Technology Center provides just-in-time additional resources to assist those in need. In the computer labs, students are able to work in groups, seek help from peers, or consult with the lab manager, who is often familiar with the software products used. The Technology Center also provides services for students, as well as for faculty and staff, to solve laptop problems and connectivity and security issues, as well as to answer basic questions about the College’s software and hardware products.

Students’ acquisition of technology skills is reinforced through:

- An articulation of Technology Literacy Goals by the Educational Technology Committee
- A credited course entitled “Living on the Digital Highway” (a first year learning community integrating information literacy instruction with first year curricula).
- The recent purchase of Atomic Learning to provide “just-in-time” instruction to students to develop technology literacy skills and connect to course curriculum.

Assessment of student proficiency occurs through courses and programs that require particular technological competencies for successful student engagement and achievement.

**Appraisal**

While the number of Library positions has remained stable since 2009, shifts in staffing have strengthened the Library’s capacity in the areas of library systems, infrastructure development, and the Education Resource Center. The arrival of a new Library Director, after three years during which the Head of Technical Services assumed the attendant responsibilities, is expected to energize Library programs and services. While a Circulation staff position remains unfilled, however, support for daily operations is weaker, and that remains a concern for Library personnel. Discussions centering on the roles and functions of Library faculty and staff in relation to the evolving needs of Curry College students and faculty are much-needed at this juncture; planning needs to take into account the multiple impacts of electronic resource development and the current and future alignment of appropriate staffing.

The Technology Center has reduced its staff size as a result of cross-training, utilization of automation and software tools, and mergers of internal staff groups. Since the College’s
previous reaccreditation, the Media Services and Lab Management have merged with the Support Services, resulting in a more effective organization of Help Desk technicians and adult and student workers from other technology support areas.

Mirroring a trend toward technologically-delivered resources, the Library has shown a commitment to highlighting and expanding access to electronic resources, with a modest but continuing growth (3%) in traditional resources (primarily books, DVDs and multimedia materials in the Education Resource Center). This growth, to 98,800 volumes in 2011, is in addition to the acquisition of electronic materials, including EBrary e-books, which now account for the equivalent of more than half (56,000 titles) of the Library’s physical book/media resources. Subscriptions to databases have increased as well, growing by over a third from 2006 to 2011, accompanied by an annual review of the fit between data bases and evolving curricula and instruction. More than 36,000 international, multilingual and cross-disciplinary electronic journals are available as well, manifesting the same pattern as seen for other materials: print periodical subscriptions have declined, while electronic ones have increased.

As noted, LibGuides have been an asset to Library searching. Although there is no baseline data against which to compare its use, individual LibGuides for specific courses or assignments were accessed as many as 1,500 times during the spring 2011 term, with all accesses totaling nearly 15,800 hits. Students and faculty have informally remarked that this tool has been effective in supporting student learning.

The combined budget lines for all types of Library resources increased by approximately 15% between FY2006 and FY2011, with shifts consistent with the patterns reported above. Allocations for electronic resources (primarily databases and electronic books) doubled, while those for traditional resources (books, videos and ERC materials) decreased by 58%, but only in FY2010. This was motivated by a College-wide reduction in operations and capital for FY2010.

An important question is the extent to which the growth of the Library’s collection, in all formats, reflects and supports the College’s academic programs as well as the intellectual development of the individual student. There is at present no measure in place to assess the latter, although Library collection development has always been geared toward both purposes. With regard to academic programs, Library faculty members are involved in plans for new program development and the assessment and revision of existing programs. For example, the January 2004 proposal establishing the MBA program included a 20-page discussion of Library resources required for the program, prepared by the Library director. In preparation for the College’s Clinical Nurse Leader (MSN) program, an external study assessing Library resources resulted in additional funding for databases. Additionally, the 2009 and 2011 external reviews of the College’s Master’s in Criminal Justice program were supported by multiple library documents detailing resource and budgetary support for the program, student access to and use of technology, and instructional support; and support for the Nursing Department’s 2009 reaccreditation was assisted by Library data.

Generally speaking, the Library’s “materials” budget, a capital line, is divided among library
faculty “selectors,” each responsible for purchasing materials in one or more major and/or minor. By contrast, allocation of funds for electronic resources and periodicals, the noncapital lines, is determined by a Library faculty committee in consultation with all selectors. This “silo” structure no longer reflects the reality of some disciplines, for which electronic materials are of greater value than traditional materials. It now seems appropriate for expenditures for materials in all formats to be considered holistically by all selectors. To effectively change these collection policies depends not only on further discussion among Library faculty, but also on greater institutional flexibility to move funds between capital and non-capital lines.

Thoughtful appraisal of Information Resources instruction must relate measurable student competencies to Curry’s Mission Statement. It must also distinguish between expressed demand and implicit, or unexpressed, need. The former can be evaluated via statistics such as the numbers of class sessions requested, reference queries received, and computer workstations usage. As one measure, demand for class instruction has increased: during AY2006, Library faculty met with 134 classes and 1595 students as compared with 155 classes and 2,293 students during AY2011. Although the number of recorded reference transactions declined by approximately 14% between AY2006 and AY2010, the Library instituted regular Saturday reference hours in AY2009 in response to demand. While phone queries declined, the percent of electronic reference queries rose during the same time period. Given this trend, Curry’s librarians are considering instituting “chat” reference services.

A great many information literacy initiatives and programs, listed within Description, have been put in place to ensure that students acquire the skills they need to access and use, with an appropriate level of sophistication, information literacy tools that contribute to their success within their programs/fields of study. While some assessment data is being collected through the listed projects and there is clearly an interest is utilizing the results, there is not as yet an overall approach to assessing students’ proficiency and sophistication in accessing, evaluating, and utilizing information resources.

Another question relates to determining the most appropriate electronic venues for providing instructional materials: the website proper, the College Portal, and/or the Library’s Innovative Interfaces ILS? To begin this inquiry, Library faculty and staff have recently begun usability testing, a deliberate user feedback process, to develop and assess the Library’s Web presence. Among other issues, this will address the need for a clear method for library users to provide comments or ask questions about library resources (physical and electronic) and/or services beyond specific reference queries.

As noted in Description, a great deal of computer software is made available to support the curriculum and student learning. A critical question is how well the software infrastructure accomplishes that goal. Quantitative data is lacking to answer the question with clarity, although it appears that most student needs are met most of the time. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that, despite the ubiquity of a few commonly used software packages across the various campus labs, there remains uncertainty about which applications may be found where. This has most often been referenced with regard to software packages that are
discipline or course-specific and perhaps not licensed campus-wide. A Fall 2010 effort that inventoried the majority of all software packages in use, along with their locations, identified approximately sixty applications.

Library facilities have been strained in some areas. For example, 18 workstations are available in the Honors Research Center, the only space equipped for such instruction, and sometimes larger classes have needed the space. Highlighting this concern is that fact that between Fall 2007 and Fall 2011, approximately 21% of library instruction classes exceeded this size. Adding to this concern is the fact that the same space has been opened up for general student use, as the demand for individual workstations frequently exceeds their availability in public spaces. Librarians recognize the need to systematically track student demand for library facilities to identify and document explicit needs.

With regard to planning, the Library’s alignment with an academic planning template developed in AY2011 highlighted areas for short- to medium-term development. Outcomes included the use of SAILS for information literacy planning and a temporary library staff position for Spring 2011 to support the deployment of permanent Library personnel for higher-level project implementation and data gathering. This experiment with a planning template will be continued and refined. The Library is increasingly making use of data provided by electronic database vendors to assess use and value of the resources provided, and plans to implement Google Analytics to assess the use patterns of the Library catalog and other components of the virtual environment.

Library faculty and staff began to set the stage for current planning initiatives with informal internal discussions, beginning in AY2009 that identified topical “cluster” areas for further investigation. These efforts were accelerated during calendar year 2010 when, on the invitation of the Chief Academic Officer, the Library undertook a self-study, resulting in a formal report, a visit by librarian administrators from CUNY and Assumption College, and their written response. The self-study process helped to focus the 2011 search for the new Library Director as well as administrative support for new Innovative Interfaces modules. It also stimulated ongoing discussions among Library faculty and staff about roles and priorities. It is likely that the resultant reports will continue to inform planning over the next few years.

In general, however, planning is undertaken in response to the annual budget proposal cycle. Items such as projected increases in existing resource lines, as well as requests for new resources and for additional faculty and staff, are typical expressions of undocumented planning priorities derived from internal conversations or informal environmental scans. Budgets also reflect opportunities and/or limitations presented by the external environment, such as mandated budget reductions or gifts/grants.

While the Technology Center has generally operated on medium-range strategic plans that take into account advances in technology, the budget process, as described above, has generally focused the Center on one-year plans coupled with ninety-day progress reports. Short-term plans are reviewed and updated, based on rapid changes in both the economy and the
technological environment.

The College sees itself as transitioning from a somewhat reactive, opportunistic and relatively short-term approach to planning to one grounded in a more deliberate, evidence-based, forward-looking philosophy. It has been recognized that budget commitments that do not support multi-year program planning work against the development of a longer-term vision, and may result in redundant annual proposals that lead to disjointed efforts. This quotation from the conclusion of the Library self-study expresses an essential point for future planning for Library and Information Resources: “We look forward to developing ... a process based less on seizing opportunities as they happen to arise, and more on forward-looking planning combined with multi-year implementation.” The College’s new Strategic Plan will do much to provide a basis for this change. While short-term needs or unexpected, immediate opportunities should not be ignored, the shift toward more comprehensive environmental scanning, medium- to long-term planning, and accelerated gathering of relevant data will better inform planning that supports evidenced-based strategic development of Learning Resources at Curry.

Projection

The College will:

- Create a culture of assessment, increasing the use of data for evaluative and planning purposes; develop an integrated multi-year planning framework for Library and Information Resources, assessing the demand and usage of all materials.
- Examine the roles and functions performed by Library faculty and staff to support sound academic planning as well as current and projected daily operations.
- Conduct regular environmental scans to inform planning and assessment of the Library’s physical and virtual environment, as well as studies of usability of online resources and web analytics, and connect these with evaluations of the use of the Library’s physical space and other learning spaces.
- Develop and assess an institution-wide information literacy program, grounded in the institutional mission and strategic planning, integrated with General Education, department goals, and curricula.
- Implement unified software and support planning on a campus wide scale and assess it in an ongoing manner.
- Draft, implement, and evaluate a strategic plan for instructional and academic technology, aligned with strategic objectives, and informed by campus partners and best practices in employing technology to advance teaching and learning goals.

Institutional Effectiveness

As indicated, the “structures or mechanisms to construct evaluations on an ongoing basis” are in a nascent stage with regard to Library and Information Resources. Among the activities to be implemented are usability testing of the Library’s online and physical presence; learning from the outcomes of program development and implementation, especially those that pertain to information literacy; broad-based assessment of the needs of the Library’s varied user groups.
and the extent to which these are met; and the integration of medium- and long-term planning with the College budget cycle. The outcomes of all of these processes, in addition, need to be considered holistically, through an iterative process dedicated to continuous improvement.
**Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources**

**Description**

**Facilities**
Curry College’s main campus in Milton comprises 49 buildings, including 18 residence halls, and is located on 135 acres. Most buildings are brick, and the campus is attractively landscaped with grass, trees, flowers, and planned walking paths in open and wooded areas, with protected wetlands separating the north and south sides. The residence halls include single, double, and triple rooms, as well as suites, that are equipped with beds, desks and storage space. Each residence hall has lounges for study and leisure. The actual capacity of the residence halls is 1,457 beds, but the preferred capacity is 1,405. Currently, the residence halls are occupied at 95.5% of the preferred capacity.

In all, the Milton site has 39 general-purpose classrooms (or alternative learning spaces used for classes) accommodating 1,294 seats in 26,249 assignable square feet (asf). In addition, there is one large lecture hall with 100 seats. There are five main classroom buildings: Academic and Performance Center (AAPC), Hafer Academic Building, Kennedy Academic Building, Levin Library, and the Science building. In addition, the Gertrude Webb Learning Center, comprising almost 13,000 square feet of mixed-use classroom/office space, houses the Assistive Technology and Accommodations (AT) Center, as well as the Program for Advancement of Learning (PAL). Levin Library also provides teaching, learning and study space, along with additional office and meeting space.

The College opened a modern Student Center in 2009, equipped with a dining hall, student lounges, a bookstore, mail room, copy center, fitness center, chapel, offices for Student Services and Athletics, and a gymnasium to accommodate basketball and volleyball. A second gymnasium accommodates intramurals and other campus functions. In addition to classroom buildings, there are 17 buildings spread throughout the campus buildings that house faculty and staff offices.

Recreational spaces are located throughout the campus. Athletic fields are available for football, soccer, baseball, lacrosse, softball, and other sports, while tennis courts serve students at both ends of the campus. In addition, maintained walking trails and sidewalks traverse the North and South areas of campus.

Curry has improved its parking facilities in the past decade by adding and redesigning several parking areas. Twenty four on-campus parking areas, some of which are designated for specific use/populations, now accommodate a total of 2,029 cars. First-year students are not allowed to park cars on campus and efforts have been made to encourage upper-class students to walk, ride bicycles or take the shuttle around campus to keep traffic at a minimum and cut down on unnecessary emissions.

The Plymouth campus has 10,935 square feet of leased space within a single building situated
on 2.2 acres; it adds nine classrooms, one computer lab, one resource room and an office suite for six staff to support Curry’s instructional programs. The total square footage spread across both campus sites represents an increase of more than 28% in available residence hall space and more than 36% of additional newly-constructed space over the past ten years.

**Technological Resources and Infrastructure**

All of Curry’s classrooms are equipped with technologies designed to optimize the learning environment. A typical classroom has: a computer, for presentations or other course-related functions; a ceiling mounted LCD; a screen, a SMART board; high-speed network access to both on-campus resources and the Internet; DVD and VHS players; a sound system, and a telephone for outbound and inbound emergency calls. Direct hookups are available for personal laptops and use of the overhead LCD and/or SMART board. Many of these devices are managed from a single wall-mounted control panel.

Each residence hall room contains a telephone jack for the room and an Ethernet data jack for each student; and as of Summer 2011, all residence halls have wireless access for data connectivity. Resident students are provided with a voice mailbox that follows them from room to room as they move, with voice mail messages forwarded to their e-mail.

*Offices* are equipped with at least one computer and a telephone. Printers are located in offices or are accessible nearby and wireless access is available throughout the campus in all academic and administrative buildings, residence halls, and specific outside locations. Equipment is replaced regularly depending on its condition and usefulness, as well as available funding; the College does not use a pre-scheduled refreshment program.

The network that provides infrastructure support for Curry’s mission and purposes consists of 50 servers (connected via a fiber optic gigabit backbone), connecting all buildings on campus and supporting over 120 distinct applications. Over the past two years, individual domain servers have been migrated to a virtual environment and a conversion of 15 servers to the virtual environment has been completed. High-speed GB switches with CAT-5 cabling are used for network ports in all residence halls, classrooms, and offices with network authentication managed by a combination of Microsoft’s Active Directory and Open LDAP. An array of network hardware and software is used to manage and monitor traffic and bandwidth, as well as to prevent spam, viruses and malware. A high-speed 100MB FastEthernet Internet link provides access to resources on and off campus, including the Plymouth satellite campus, with redundancy in the event of hardware failure. The uninterruptable power supplies (UPSs) ensure network functionality in case of brief power outages. All of the College’s network policies and procedures comply with FERPA, HIPAA, Massachusetts Identity Theft Laws, and other pertinent requirements.

**Campus Access, Safety, and Security**

The Buildings and Grounds (B&G) office oversees College properties, with staff that includes carpenters, electricians, plumbers, mechanics and groundkeepers. It is the responsibility of B&G to maintain a clean, safe, aesthetically pleasing, and comfortable physical environment.
Facilities are constructed and maintained in accordance with legal requirements to ensure access, safety, and security; and facilities and services promote a healthful environment, with consideration for environmental and ecological concerns. The College’s renovations and new construction comply with the current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and all buildings are equipped with smoke detectors, with residence halls equipped with sprinkler systems as well. There are emergency call boxes at every residence hall as well as at other strategic locations throughout the campus.

Maintaining a regular shuttle service that provides on- and off-campus transportation, Curry also has on-demand service available for individuals during late night hours. For student convenience, bicycle racks are available near all residence halls.

Consistent with its emphasis on safety and responsiveness, the College maintains a strong working relationship with both the Milton Fire and Police Departments.

Appraisal

Facilities
Pursuant to Curry’s intention to remain up-to-date and appealing to new and continuing students, it has made significant facilities improvements, including eight major construction projects since 2002. The new 84,000 square foot Student Center and the 30,000 square foot AAPC are key enhancements, significantly increasing attractive and functional study, learning, social, athletic and fitness space for students, faculty, and staff. Other construction projects range from 300 square feet to 47,000 square feet; each is intended to improve the quality of life for Curry students and enhance the College’s overall appeal. (For a detailed listing of new construction projects since Curry’s 2002 reaccreditation, please see the workroom.)

Classrooms, too, have seen a series of dramatic improvements, with added teaching and learning space, providing greater functionality. The Tech Center and Physical Facilities Committee are continually evaluating equipment, space and facilities based on feedback from campus constituencies, and upgrades and/or replacements are made to meet the needs and expectations of faculty and students whenever possible.

While the availability of classroom space is not a significant issue for the College at this point in time, the configuration and modernization of specific teaching and learning spaces is. Faculty feedback from both campuses, for example, indicates the need for more seminar-style classrooms to promote student engagement in learning, and to more fully actualize the personalized education aspect of Curry’s mission. In addition, the rapid changes in pedagogy and curriculum increasingly blur the lines between classroom, computer, and traditional laboratories. Wireless laptops meet the need for occasional computer usage in class, providing flexibility for both faculty and student learning modalities and research needs. However, some departments are heavy users of specialized equipment for research in their disciplines. The Biology, Chemistry and Physics departments currently offer instruction in three labs that are
outdated; in response, faculty and administrators have been collaborating on the most efficient ways to use college resources to create updated and fully functional labs for teaching and research.

The Levin Library, too, is challenged by evolving student needs. Student demand for workstations frequently exceeds the number available, particularly during peak times. The Library’s meeting spaces and classrooms cannot accommodate class sizes greater than 18, and faculty and students often seek appropriately-differentiated spaces for differing needs. Although the 2009 redevelopment of first-floor Library space has had an impact on the problem, it also emphasized the inflexibility of the study spaces that have not been redesigned.

Similarly, The Gertrude Webb Learning Center and the Faculty Office Building, now more than 75 years old, are both in need of significant modernization as well. More departmental meeting space, as well as increased and redesigned office space for an expanding faculty, would greatly enhance the teaching, advising, and research environment for faculty. With increased enrollment and a need to engage students where and how they are most accessible, faculty have, in addition, identified the need for increased and/or enhanced space on campus for other activities, such as 24/7 group conference space, and appropriate music practice and performance space.

Assistive technology is available at PAL and in the Levin Library. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the physical space available at Levin Library does not provide the privacy and quiet for students to use assistive technology effectively.

As indicated within Description, increased residence hall capacity allows for increased enrollment, in keeping with Curry’s strategic directions. However, with the new residence halls providing enhanced living environments for upper-class students, more consideration must be given to modernizing older, more outdated residence halls that typically house first year students.

The Buildings and Grounds Department operates an annual maintenance program that has made considerable progress in maintaining, updating, repairing and enhancing campus facilities. In 2011, the College appropriated approximately $3 million to upgrade various buildings to provide enhanced teaching/learning environments.

Technology and Infrastructure
For the past few years, Curry has been focusing on Portal and cloud-based applications. In April 2009, the Technology Center implemented a web-based Portal accessible to faculty, staff, students, alumni, and guests. With single sign-on to all student applications, and most staff/faculty applications, the Portal has dramatically improved both accessibility and access to data, and is continually evolving as functions are added and refined.

Applications are supported throughout the community to support the teaching and learning environment as well as the College’s administrative needs. Expanded use of cloud-based
technology through hosted applications (e.g., Portal, Student E-Mail, College Web Site, Emergency Notification System, Judicial Management, Library Research Databases, Trouble and Ticketing Systems,) has provided the community with a comfortable mix of in-house and cloud-based applications.

Technology planning and budgeting is very much tied to the College’s strategic planning process. Information is gathered from a variety of sources including the Ed Tech Committee, the Technology Governance Committee, and feedback provided to the Tech Center by students, faculty and staff, who are queried regularly to identify areas of need and improvement. Each requested project is reviewed and given careful consideration by the TGC to determine funding priorities. In general, technology budgets have been adequate to meet the teaching and learning needs of Curry’s faculty and students, but the rapidly increasing demands at all levels for more hardware, software, training, and support indicate a need to reassess the budgeting needs for both undergraduate and continuing education programs as requests for additional facilities and new computer software, hardware, and training are reviewed in light of any hybrid and online educational programs, as noted in the Appraisal section of Standard Four.

To maintain quality and make sound decisions relative to technology, Curry staff evaluates products in tests environments with select groups before purchasing and or implementing new technologies. To ensure that college-wide needs are met on a continuing basis, assessment takes place in a variety of ways. Several committees that meet throughout the year, including the Educational Technology Committee (Ed Tech) and the Technology Governance Committee (TGC) are in constant communication about existing networks/applications. Due to scheduling conflicts, maintaining a regular meeting schedule has been challenging; but the members are committed to having representatives at each meeting to identify issues and better coordinate initiatives. In addition, there is an administrative group of Banner support specialists who meet weekly to initiate innovative technologies to improve workflow or provide more direct access to information.

Multiple sources of feedback are used to measure success. For example, the Portal has a feedback option, and all questions or comments are typically responded to within 24 hours. The Tech Center sends out weekly surveys to randomly selected people who have sought assistance to empirically measure the Center’s support performance. In addition, online surveys are posted on the Portal to obtain specific feedback as needed. Finally, use of the Educause CIO List Serve reliably benchmarks Curry’s technology against other institutions.

There is a process of continual review and appraisal through which usage of the network, classroom equipment, and software applications is monitored and proactive planning can be used to increase needed resources. In addition, classroom media equipment is checked weekly, often through use of remote tracking. Computers are turned off each night and back on in the morning, saving energy and ensuring continuity from the previous day. The Tech Center, according to annual audit reports, complies with the various laws regarding data integrity and security, often exceeding the legal requirements.
Projection

Key to mission fulfillment are maintenance and management of learning resources to enrich Curry’s academic offerings and provide the community with a safe, secure, and stable living and learning environment.

The College, regarding Physical Facilities, will:
- Develop short-term and long-term plans for more systematic and formalized evaluation of institutional physical facilities in alignment with strategic, budget, and academic planning processes, including studies of existing spaces, most prominently academic, faculty and learning spaces, and exploration of possibility of increasing or upgrading other spaces, in alignment with priorities developed through Strategic Planning.

The College, regarding Technology, will:
- Develop short- and long-term plans for more systematic and formalized implementation and evaluation of institutional technologies in alignment with strategic, budget and academic planning.
- Review adequacy of technical staff and support of rapidly growing needs of the campus as well as the increasing demands for technology support from faculty, staff and students.
- Evaluate, promote and coordinate initiatives to remain current with technology and to maintain a stable and secure infrastructure through upgrades and additions, with focus on wireless, Cloud and mobile functions.

Institutional Effectiveness

Additions, improvements, upgrades and enhancements to physical facilities and technologies have been guided by previous strategic plans, college-wide surveys, budgets, and the previous NEASC self-study. The Technology Center, Buildings and Grounds, and faculty/staff committees have put processes and systems in place to develop, assess, propose, prioritize, and implement designated technology and physical facility projects. These systems provide the College and the Board of Trustees most of the data necessary to adjust or modify priorities and to operate within budget constraints. However, there is still a need to develop more extensive and systematic evaluation processes.
Standard Nine: Financial Resources

Curry College has made enormous gains in financial resources since its last comprehensive evaluation in 2002. It is financially healthy but faces narrowing operating margins, a moderately high debt level, and an unprecedented array of external challenges. The College is equipped to address these challenges successfully, but it must do so with the same discipline to operational and financial planning that have been fundamental to its successes over the past 15 years.

Description

The Board of Trustees’ stewardship over all financial matters of the College includes review and approval of the College’s annual budget and all significant financial transactions in advance of commitments. The Board’s Finance and Physical Facilities Committee also serves as both the audit committee and a senior management compensation committee for the College. The College’s President and Chief Financial Officer regularly make reports to the Board, including submission of the annual budget for approval each May and updated financial forecasts each October and February. In addition, discussions between the Board and Administration occur regularly regarding other significant financial matters, as they become known. Multi-year prospective financial analyses have primarily been utilized in connection with debt offerings and in managing the College’s awarding of financial aid.

The budget process is iterative, involving all constituencies of the College, including Senior Staff responsible for each administrative area, members of the faculty, and faculty representatives of the College’s chapter of the AAUP. It includes, as well, information generated through the enrollment management process, which involves the offices of Admission, Academic Affairs, Finance, and others in considering both enrollment and retention, arriving at enrollment targets, benchmarks, and specific interventions to meet identified targets.

The annual budgeting process begins each winter with Senior Staff meetings that include elected faculty representatives; strategic issues are reviewed, and fundamental budgeting approaches and assumptions are discussed within the context of the College’s Strategic Plan and relevant updates. Budget assumptions include cost of attendance rates and enrollment levels, the targeted surplus of revenue over expenses, and the level of budgetary reserves. The budget includes expenses on a generally accepted accounting principles basis, including depreciation. Budgeted revenues include no endowment earnings draw/spending.

Each department utilizes this information in compiling a draft of its operating and capital budgets, on an account-by-account basis. Adjustments are then made by Senior Staff through a series of individual and group meetings with the President and Chief Financial Officer.

Once finalized, the institutional Budget Committee, which includes elected faculty members, an AAUP representative, and a sub-set of Senior Staff, reviews the results and provides further input for consideration. In April of each year, the Budget is presented to the Board of Trustees’ Finance and Physical Facilities Committee for review and potential approval (the April, 25 2011
Finance and Physical Facilities Board Book is provided in the workroom. Once approved by this Committee, it is presented to the full Board for action in May. A detailed financial forecast is compiled and analyzed after fall enrollments are known; this is presented to the Board of Trustees at its meeting the following February.

Routine facilities capital expenditures are evaluated on an item-by-item basis. Major capital expenditures, such as a new building, are generally funded by means of a debt offering after such debt is deemed appropriate and effective, on terms acceptable to the College and only after review of comprehensive multi-year prospective financial models.

Traditional student tuition rates are determined after an analysis of the College’s top 25 crossover schools on both a gross cost of attendance and net cost after financial aid basis. These rates, including benchmark information, are presented for discussion and approval to the Board of Trustees at its February meeting. Supplementing the formal annual budgeting and forecasting processes are ongoing management of key variables including enrollments, financial aid, operating expense spending, and revenues. All unbudgeted spending, including both operating expenses and capital expenditures, requires approval by the President.

Since Curry’s 2002 re-accreditation, the College’s balance sheet has grown from $40 million to $181 million in total assets, with net assets increasing from $9 million to $89 million. Cash, cash equivalents and readily marketable securities, net of any outstanding working capital line of credit balances, have grown from $6 million to $76 million. (The College’s audited financial statements for the last three years are provided in the workroom. Also provided is the College’s historical schedule showing the calculation of the Department of Education’s Financial Responsibility Composite Score.) Additionally, the College now has an investment-grade rating of BBB from Standard & Poor’s.

Since 2002, the College has had three debt offerings, totaling approximately $64 million, to fund capital expenditures related to expanding student capacity and upgrading physical facilities and, among other things, to improve retention and persistence. These have included an academic building, a student center, two residence halls, and athletic facilities. Curry currently has $79 million of outstanding bonds, all of which have fixed rates with a weighted average interest rate of approximately 5%. In addition to these debt-funded capital expenditures, approximately $2-3 million has been expended annually on routine departmental capital items and campus-wide physical facilities in support of the College’s mission.

The College has budgeted approximately $73 million of expenses in FY2012. Approximately $23 million, or one-third, represents faculty salaries and fringe benefits, with total faculty and staff salaries and benefits representing nearly 60% of total expenses. Substantially all of the College’s faculty are covered by a collective bargaining agreement. The most recent CBA, a five-year agreement, scheduled to expire in 2010, has been extended by mutual consent while negotiations continue.

Curry had $49.6 million of endowments as of May 31, 2010 and approximately $62.5 million as
of May 31, 2011 with the majority resulting from retained unrestricted surpluses. While the College expends restricted funds in accordance with the donors’ intentions, it, has not spent any of its internally restricted quasi-endowments or any of the earnings thereon. Curry utilizes an investment management firm with whom it meets quarterly to review investment objectives, performance, asset allocation, and other related matters, and follows a Board-approved Endowment Investment Policy. (This policy is provided in workroom.) For the past five years, the College’s endowments have had an annualized return of 4.13%, putting it in the top decile of peer comparators. (The Loomis Sayles most recent quarterly review presentation is provided in the workroom). In addition, the College has a $3.0 million line of credit with the largest independent and mutually owned bank in New England, with $7.6 billion in assets. Though the line is renewed annually, Curry has not utilized it for several years.

With a fiscal year that ends May 31, the College prepares monthly interim financial statements with an accompanying management Discussion and Analysis of Operations narrative. The annual financial statements, including footnotes, are prepared under generally accepted accounting principles and are audited by a nationally-recognized firm with an extensive higher education practice. The Finance and Physical Facilities Committee of the Board meets with the College’s independent accountants to review the results of the audit prior to the issuance of the financial statements; this meeting includes an executive session, with no College employees present.

College finances are led by a Chief Financial Officer with 31 years of experience, including ten in higher education. The Chief Financial Officer and the Controller are both Certified Public Accountants. The Director of Finance has 27 years of experience, including 17 in higher education. The Office of Student Financial Services, formed in 2003 and comprising the offices of Financial Aid and Student Accounts, is led by a Director with 24 years of experience. Risk management is the direct responsibility of the Director of Finance with active involvement of the Chief Financial Officer. The College reviews its insurance coverages in detail annually, and all significant contracts are reviewed by the Finance Office as well to ensure that risks are minimized. Substantial progress has been made over the past several years in documenting the College’s financial policies and procedures, and further effort is planned.

Appraisal

While Curry has greatly improved its financial position, detailed below, it faces significant challenges, including an economy still in recession, narrowing operating margins, an intensely competitive marketplace with extremely aggressive financial aid awards by competitor schools, lower cost public higher education alternatives, and disappointing student persistence rates. In the face of such challenges, the College is placing emphasis on building its enrollment in a manner that reflects improved retention and persistence while maintaining the College’s core values.

Since the last comprehensive evaluation in 2002, the College’s financial management strategies have included:
• Increased Cash and Investments, net of any outstanding balance under the working capital line of credit, by $70 million.
• Increased net Fixed Assets by $64 million. The principal additions were an academic building, a student center, and two residence halls.
• Increased Debt, net of the related Debt Service Reserve Fund, by $50 million.
• Increased net Fund Balances by $79 million.
• Increased traditional student enrollments by 583 students, or 47%, from 1,233 to 1,816 (as measured in full-time paying equivalent students). Residential students accounted for most of the increase; putting Curry at 94% of its residential capacity.

These results demonstrate the success of the College’s strategy of incurring debt responsibly to further its core mission by simultaneously increasing enrollments and generating institutional resources. The College’s debt service burden was 4.8% in 2001, and 7.5% in 2010 (considered moderately high by Standard & Poor’s); it decreased to 7.2% in 2011 and is budgeted at 7.0% in FY12. The College’s debt service coverage ratio was 1.64 times in 2001, 3.49 times in 2010, 3.93 times in 2011, and is budgeted at 1.61 times in 2012. (The 2012 budget does not include any endowment income and includes a 3% expense contingency.) The College has not incurred debt for five years, but has budgeted in 2012 for a $3 million capital expenditures financing for academic and faculty space improvements.

The College has both budgeted and realized a surplus of revenues over expense each year since its last full evaluation in 2002. The composition of the College’s surpluses of revenue over expenses has changed in recent years, with increasing endowment earnings offsetting a negative trend in income from operations. The most significant factor affecting operations has been an increasing discount rate, from 26.7% in 2008 to an anticipated 32.8% in 2012, during a period (FY2008 to the present) when traditional student enrollments have not increased. This higher level of institutional aid reflects the change in the economy, changing demographics with students of increasing need, and the intensely competitive marketplace with increasing non-need-based financial aid awards. (Historical schedules of traditional student enrollments and costs of attendance are provided in the workroom.)

An additional factor that impacts income from the College’s core operations is the fringe benefit rate which, as a percentage of total faculty and staff salaries, was 24.6% in 2001, 31.0% in 2008 when traditional enrollments peaked, and expected to be 32.1% in 2012.

The College’s five-year financial institutional aid model shows the discount rate increasing to approximately 37% by 2015. (This model is provided in the workroom along with the College’s multi-year financial model.). Although the discount rate is increasing, it is currently moderate to low by industry standards, thereby providing some flexibility in responding to the intense competition for students as well as supporting potential retention and persistence initiatives.

Curry has been successful in managing its balance sheet to minimize the need for borrowing. In 2001, the College had student accounts receivable of $841,000 and a bad debts provision of $275,000 on student revenue of $29.2 million. Over the past ten years, the College has
Curry College 2012 Self-Study

Standard Nine

gradually developed a culture of timelier student payments; in 2011, student accounts receivable was $754,000 with a bad debts provision of $410,000 on $69.6 million of student revenue, which is considered low by industry standards.

Standard & Poor’s has rated the College’s debt since May 2003 when the College received an investment grade SPUR rating (S&P underlying rating before consideration of bond insurance) of BBB-. In August 2007, the College’s rating was upgraded to BBB and has maintained it since, with a “stable” outlook affirmed in February 2011. (These reports are provided in the workroom).

In assuring continuing revenue streams, Curry has focused on and achieved diversification of revenue in the following areas:

• Increased investment income. The College’s Board of Trustees has followed a policy of transferring annually a portion of the surplus of revenues over expenses to internally-restricted or quasi-endowments. Intended for the long-term benefit of the College, any use of these funds, including the earnings thereon, must be specifically approved by the Board.

• Increased philanthropy. In 2008, before the economic recession, private gifts and grants had increased from $697,000 in 2001 to $1.5 million, $765,000 of which was unrestricted. As a result of the economy, private contributions had dropped to $867,000 by 2010. In 2011, private gifts and grants rebounded to $1.4 million, $792,000 of which was unrestricted. The College exceeds industry norms for parent giving. The Office of Institutional Advancement follows a Board-approved Gift Acceptance Policy, which provides guidance regarding the solicitation, acceptance and use of gifts.

• Additional Master’s programs. In 2001, the College had two graduate degree programs, in Education and in Criminal Justice. In 2005, the College added a Master of Business Administration Program and in 2008, a Master of Science in Nursing program. The added programs have budgeted revenue of $1.7 million in 2012, accounting for 2.3% of core College revenues.

• Increased Conference Center revenue. In 2001, Conference Center revenue was $282,000 or less than 1.0% of core College revenues. From 2003 through 2009, these revenues aggregated to $10.6 million and were equal to 2.9% of core revenues for the seven-year period. However, this revenue dropped to $472,000 in 2010 reflecting the loss of a major customer, but increased to $594,000 in 2011 and is budgeted for $663,000 or just under 1.0% of core College revenues in 2012.

From 2002 to 2011, the College has increased its gross fixed assets by $92 million and net fixed assets by $64 million which reflected the construction of new buildings described above. The College has approximately 670,000 square feet of building space, approximately half of which has been constructed since 1999. Paying particular attention to costs associated with maintenance of its buildings during its annual budget process, Curry officials anticipate no significant amount of deferred maintenance.

The College’s audited financial statements are issued within 90 days of year end. There has
been no formal management letter issued for the past several years; and, since the formation of the Office of Student Financial Services in FY2004, there have been no “findings” as a result of the annual A-133 audit. The College is currently considered a low-risk auditee.

**Projection**

Curry is in the process of updating its strategic plan, which will inform the detailed planning and management of the Institution, including the creation of strategic links between planning and resource allocation over multi-year timeframes. Multi-year prospective financial analysis will become more formalized with routine reporting to the College’s governing body.

The College will continue to utilize strategic planning and its annual budgeting process to ensure financial resources are utilized in a manner reflecting the College’s mission and purpose.

The College must address the issue of its narrowing operating margins and do what is necessary to maintain a reasonable level of budgeted and actual surpluses of operating revenues over operating expenses. This may necessitate modest enrollment growth while maintaining the College’s core values. The College is currently operating at or near full capacity of its classrooms, residence halls, faculty offices and other administrative space, and parking. Further, to be competitive and to meet its educational objectives and to support improved retention and persistence rates, the College needs to make gains on the quality of the portion of its physical facilities that was not constructed or renovated during the past 12 years.

The College’s enrollment management processes will continue to address recruitment and retention in an intensely competitive environment. Enrollment management will focus on students best able to succeed at Curry College; namely those who persist to graduation. Financial aid strategies covering need and non-need-based aid will continue to support these efforts strategically and will likely increase to predetermined levels.

The College will continue to raise and diversify revenue in the following ways:

- Prioritize endowment growth, implementing additional transfers of retained surpluses to quasi-endowment funds.
- Continue fundraising efforts, with a focus on realizing gains in alumni giving and major gift contributions.
- Evaluate the need and market for additional graduate programs, including the exploration and implementation of online and hybrid delivery methods for new and existing offerings.
- Increase summer Conference Center revenue, in accord with physical capacity and constraints.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Financial planning and control is a core process inherent in the College’s planning and operations, broadly defined. This process is effective in ensuring sound financial decision-
making that provides for sufficient financial resources to pursue the Institution’s mission and the detailed strategies underlying it. The planning and control process includes:

• A detailed annual budget with extensive input from campus-wide constituencies;
• A comprehensive fall semester re-forecasting of the anticipated full year results;
• An array of enrollment management reports;
• Daily reconciliations of operating cash activity and balances;
• Weekly detailed reporting of student account receivables;
• Monthly analyses of actual results (as compared to budgeted and forecast and as compared to corresponding period of the prior year);
• Quarterly reviews of endowment performance and related considerations such as asset allocation;
• Periodic use of the College’s 5-year aid model to evaluate, plan, and assess financial aid strategies and decisions;
• A detailed 10-year model to review financial implications of contemplated transactions and operating variables;
• Real-time engagement of the Board of Trustees on all major financial matters and transactions in addition to the annual budget, forecast and audit processes;
• Annual rating reviews by Standard & Poor’s;
• Benchmarking of various operating and financial metrics.

Information gleaned from these processes and information sources inform long- and short-range planning and provide data for formative evaluation and adjustments, as needed.
Standard Ten: Public Disclosure

Description

Curry College continuously and consistently presents information about itself to a wide variety of internal and external constituencies, including current and prospective students, alumni, employees, parents, and the general public. The College communicates with these various constituencies through a wide range of digital communication channels, including its public website, www.curry.edu; the Portal; social media networks, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube; and email announcements and newsletters.

Curry continues to produce a wide array of print publications each year. Significant publications of the College include undergraduate and graduate course catalogues, course schedules, admissions view book, orientation materials, and the student handbook. The institution supports a number of student publications and campus media channels, including: The Currier Times (student newspaper); CC8 (campus television station); WMLN FM-91.5 (campus radio station); Curry Arts Journal; and The Currier (yearbook).

Press releases are regularly sent to external media outlets on numerous topics, including: Dean’s List membership, academic honor society memberships, and other academic achievements up to and including graduation; student athletic achievements; campus lectures; art exhibits and theatre and musical events; and other activities that are open to the public. Curry is also committed to being responsive and responsible in providing public comment to incoming queries from external media on emerging topics or matters involving the college or its constituents.

The College has committed appropriate human and financial resources over the last ten years to increase and improve its communication efforts and outcomes. During this time frame, it has moved from a decentralized to a collaborative communication model, in which the institutional communication office is responsible for central editorial and publishing. Key managers from academic and administrative departments oversee their respective components of digital and print communications and publications, and liaisons and project managers assigned at the department level work collaboratively with the institutional communication team to ensure the accuracy, consistency and timeliness of public information.

Appraisal

Through the website, as well as other digital and print publications, students and parents have substantial information available to them on which to base an informed choice, and the workroom contains examples of all. Admissions requirements, academic program descriptions and the institutional mission are prominent, and published material is accurate and consistent. Academic requirements and supports are clearly explained, and costs, including tuition, room and board, and mandatory fees, are explicitly defined. In addition, financial aid is explained thoroughly in print and on the website, with website links to financial aid...
requirements.

As described within Standard Four, the College has developed a comprehensive structure to support the delineation and use of learning outcomes at course, program and institutional levels. As it continues to support and institutionalize this effort, program objectives are and will be included on the website along with other program information. The display of these program-related learning outcomes was completed by the end of 2011.\textsuperscript{clxiii}

The College has appropriately and thoroughly reviewed recent revisions to the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). The review has been reassuring, with College staff noting only a few areas for improvement or where new initiatives were necessary to ensure compliance with changes to the regulations. An important example of how Curry responded efficiently and effectively to HEOA revisions is the development and launch of a cost calculator to allow families to compare costs. Curry allocated significant resources to the cost calculator project, which commenced in June 2010 and concluded in September 2011, when the cost calculator became available on the College’s website.\textsuperscript{clxiv}

Website navigation and catalog design were intended to make information of interest to students and parents (e.g. academic programs, services, costs, faculty members, the student body, and non-academic student opportunities) readily available. The College has been systematically adding other data disclosure elements required by NEASC and by the HEA such as financial statements, graduation rates, etc. To better meet HEA obligations, the College implemented a Consumer Information page in early January 2012 through which visitors to the website are able to access all such information, or information about how to obtain it, in three clicks of the mouse or less.

Curry’s publications are heavily reliant on individual, qualitative success stories to demonstrate program excellence and student success. While, the College has made great strides in offering information previously not available and in taking steps to collect missing data, there is a need to quantify and make available more data regarding student achievements and outcomes. With increasing capacity in Institutional Research, the institutional communication office seeks to improve its publications by including additional statistical and other quantitative data relative to student and alumni success.

Another area for further development relates to obtaining feedback from constituent groups about the effectiveness of Curry’s publications. Currently, there is no systematic methodology (e.g. polls, surveys, focus groups, and/or usability testing) for gathering feedback from target audiences. The feedback would help College officials gain greater insight into perceptions about Curry’s programs and services, and to make judgments about the nature, availability, and timeliness of materials currently distributed to constituent populations.

In the post-Virginia Tech world of colleges and universities, public safety and crisis communication needs have become increasingly important. Curry College believes it has no more fundamental obligation than to ensure a safe and secure learning and living environment
for students, faculty and staff. To this end, the College has not only implemented new safety and communication protocols and tools that are consistent with best practices in higher education, but has become a leader in the application and testing of such tools. In 2007, the College began implementation of a multi-modal Emergency Alert System (EAS), including voice, text, and email alerts, and the installation of two outdoor emergency sirens. Curry conducts routine tests of its EAS.

The College has made a commitment to transparency—and in the case of an emergency safety concern, immediacy— in publically disclosing matters of importance to its community.

Projection

Curry College will remain on the path of continuous improvements in ensuring that it meets or exceeds the standards of Public Disclosure, and will:

• Establish oversight mechanism(s) to ensure continued compliance with NEASC standards, HEOA regulations, and other governing bodies and policies.
• Expand and enhance collaborative methodologies for the generation and management of content across campus and across communication channels.
• Pursue greater capacity for gathering, analyzing and publishing additional data, including feedback from alumni and current students and student learning outcomes, to evaluate and improve institutional effectiveness.

Institutional Effectiveness

Though the effort to ensure that print and electronic publications are complete, accurate, available and current is ongoing on the part of the institutional communication office, the College lacks a formal, systematic process of periodic review. In the near future, Curry plans to establish such a process, either to be carried out internally or through a third-party communication audit.
Standard Eleven: Integrity

Description

Curry College is committed to the highest ethical standards in pursuit of its mission. With “Examining Value Systems” as one of seven goals enumerated within its Mission statement, the College strives to provide students with the tools “to formulate and apply standards for behavior, to make informed choices with awareness of responsibilities and consequences, to increase tolerance and appreciation for diversity.” Curry is in full compliance with all laws and regulations that pertain to the integrity of the educational experience as well as with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The College’s Department of Public Safety complies with all the United States Department of Education mandates under the Clery Act. Crime statistics are included in annual security reports, published on the website, and available to anyone upon request.

Standards of integrity are embedded in the by-laws of the Board of Trustees, and membership, voting rights, and notice of meetings are all clearly defined. A Conflict of Interest policy was adopted by the Board in 2007; members individually agreed to abide by its principles, signing statements to that effect that are held by the College. Information on the College’s policy on unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment is updated and distributed annually to all employees, as is Curry’s Drug-Free Workplace policy. A clear accounting of the financial and other benefits that benefit-eligible employees receive during the year is provided on an annual basis.

The Employee Handbook, available online and in print, includes information for College staff on performance expectations, grievance procedures, employment policies, and employee benefits. A Conflict of Interest policy and a Whistleblower policy have been added to the most recent edition. To introduce this information early on, the Handbook is provided to and reviewed with all new employees at orientation. Staff members receive annual performance evaluations that include a self-appraisal and a supervisor appraisal; the appraisal process includes a face-to-face meeting in which the employee’s performance and future goals are discussed.

Faculty responsibilities are outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the College and the Curry’s chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Various articles pertain to different aspects of Integrity: Article III, Academic Freedom, reflects the College’s commitment to industry standards, and incorporates the “1940 Statement on Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments” into the Agreement; Article IV includes provisions against discrimination and harassment; and Article XIV stipulates the process for faculty evaluation, including procedures for providing security for relevant files. A document has been developed jointly by the AAUP and administration and is now used to determine whether the scholarly and service activities of faculty are appropriate for promotion. A new policy on Intellectual Property, developed by a joint College-AAUP committee, will be included in the next Agreement. The CBA that expired on May 31, 2010, has...
been regularly extended while the Agreement is being renegotiated.

Open communication helps to foster comprehensive efforts to promote integrity in the administrative, academic, and co-curricular activities of the College community. Faculty meetings, held monthly, are run by faculty for faculty. They are open forums for discussion, where divergent views are encouraged. Concerns related to academic or business integrity are openly discussed.

Staff members meet two or three times each academic year for a State of the College update from the President that briefs staff on College-wide initiatives and challenges. Although the format of State of the College meetings does not lend itself to open discussion, the meetings encourage staff to consider the welfare of the College as a whole. Questions are welcomed and encouraged. A similar opportunity is provided each year at the Staff Retreat, which includes a keynote speaker and breakout sessions on topics selected by a broad-based Staff committee.

Curry College strives to portray the institution accurately to prospective students in person, in print and on the College web site. Information about faculty/student ratios and campus life are included on the web site, and the physical facilities are authentically portrayed through photographs. Open houses, held in the fall, provide prospective students with opportunities to meet faculty and administrators, to view the facilities, and to ask questions related to academic and student life. Current students are available at these events, providing a students’ perspective to questions and/or concerns.

All admissions material includes a statement attesting to the College’s commitment to “a policy of equal opportunity in every aspect of its operation.” The statement continues: “The College values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty, and staff from a variety of backgrounds.” Curry is a member of the National Association of College Admission Counselors and also adheres to their Statement of Principles of Good Practice.

Each year, an Open Forum, orchestrated by the Student Government Association, allows and encourages students to ask direct questions to the President and Senior Staff members about issues that concern them. Questions are submitted in advance; those that are not answered on the floor of the meeting are answered in writing after the meeting.

Standards for student behavior are outlined in both the Student Handbook in an extensive Policy section, and in the Course Catalogue under Academic Policies; both are available to current and prospective students. First-year students are introduced to the importance of integrity at Convocation, where they recite the convocation oath. Current students receive communication of this and other college policies by individual email as well as on the Portal, where there is a provision for students to confirm that they have read the relevant information. Academic expectations of integrity are also included in the catalogues for Continuing and Graduate studies. Standards of integrity and behavior in athletics are communicated to all student athletes through the published Student Athlete Code of Conduct, which all athletes sign annually. The NCAA Fans Code of Conduct is read at all home games when a speaker system is
available; it also appears in game programs. A Student Athlete Advisory Committee, comprising a student from each team, is constituted to review any concerns about the treatment of student athletes.

Integrity in residential life is an important dimension of the college. Policies that address the responsibilities inherent in residing in campus housing are clearly outlined in the Housing Agreement. These include processes for disciplinary actions and appeals. In an attempt to assure that the students are well aware of the rules, meetings held with resident students at the beginning of the academic year include a review of this aspect of campus life and clarify any misconceptions about appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

The faculty grievance process is outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Grievances are heard by the All Faculty Evaluation Committee (AFEC), consisting of faculty elected by their peers. No administrators sit on the Committee. Recommendations by AFEC may be accepted in their entirety or in a modified version by the College. If the College and AFEC do not agree, the College’s decisions may be appealed through arbitration. Staff members also have a grievance process, outlined in the Employee Handbook. This process includes a final appeal to the President of the College.

Fiscal integrity is maintained through the preparation of the appropriate financial statements, which are reviewed by the Board of Trustees and audited by Grant Thornton LLP. The College budget process includes a review by a joint committee that includes elected faculty members.

**Appraisal**

Curry College evidences its strong support for the ethical behavior of all of the components and individuals that are part of the organization. Institutional support for the exercise of integrity goes beyond written policies. An atmosphere of respect for diversity and honesty is pervasive on the campus. Small class size and a low student-to-faculty ratio help to make for more personal interactions and shared behavioral expectations among members of the Curry community.

Productive communication between various staff and faculty departments is more limited than it should be. While there are a variety of opportunities for faculty collaboration between and among academic departments, there is limited collaboration between faculty and staff. The Office of Academic Affairs has worked with the Office of Student Affairs more regularly over the last few years and a number of joint initiatives have resulted. Some recent cross-functional efforts, including the Task Force on Diversity and Equality, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the NEASC Steering Committee, have highlighted how useful and important such collaboration is. Given the holistic educational values to which Curry subscribes, there is a need for a more holistic and collaborative approach in maximizing the student experience.

Administrative handling of a hate speech incident in 2010 made the College community aware of the need for more transparency and communication regarding such issues. Several campus-
wide meetings were subsequently held to solicit input, resulting in the formation of a Task Force on Diversity and Equality that continues to work on three areas: crisis response, building an inclusive community, and building diversity. In addition, a policy of clear and timely communication to the Curry community regarding incidents that might threaten campus safety has been instituted. To support continued work in this area, the Strategic Planning process has identified “An inclusive campus community that respects, supports and attracts diversity in all its multiple forms” as one of four strategic directions for Curry, going forward.

Integrity has also been strengthened since the last self-study through the institution of a Board of Directors Conflict of Interest Statement and the inclusion of a Whistleblower policy in the Employee Handbook. Progress has also been made on the issue of intellectual property, which has been an ongoing concern of the faculty, primarily as a result of challenges introduced through newer technologies. While the new Collective Bargaining Agreement will include a policy on this issue, the adequacy of the newly-developed policy has yet to be tested.

As the College has increased its research activity and profile (faculty, staff, and students) at the undergraduate and graduate levels, there has been an increased need for Institutional Review Board (IRB) review of research involving human subjects. A task force was convened in 2009 to make recommendations for revitalizing and updating the IRB; recommendations went into effect in 2010. The IRB has also provided educational outreach to assure that all members of the College community are equipped to proceed in an ethical manner when conducting research. This action typifies Curry’s commitment to embed ethical principles throughout the educational experience and to be proactive in developing policies that encourage high ethical standards.

With that said, dealing with student infractions of academic honesty is an issue with which the College still struggles. Of particular concern to the faculty is the issue of subsequent offenses by the same student. The current policy allows for the reporting of the offense to the Chief Academic Officer, but does not require it; as a result, it is not always possible to know if a student has a history of academic dishonesty. This issue is being considered by the Undergraduate Academic Policy Committee, as they review the current Honesty Statement.

Beyond the academic enterprise, Athletics and Residential Life have continued to strengthen their commitment to ethical action. Utilizing the Fans Code of Conduct at Athletic events, and holding regular meetings between Resident Advisors (RAs) and students that include discussions of integrity and civility in the Residence Halls send a clear message to students that integrity and honesty are important in all aspects of College life.

Projection

The College’s commitment to act with integrity and to provide an environment where students can learn to value integrity will remain central to the mission of the College. To that end, College faculty and staff will:

- Review the College’s current statement and policy regarding Academic Honesty and
consider developing and implementing new policy to ensure greater awareness and compliance.

- Explore the relationship and consistency of undergraduate and graduate policies and the mechanisms for their development and evaluation.
- Continue the work of cross-constituency teams as the strategic planning process unfolds and initiate new cross-functional collaborations.
- Increase institutional focus on strengthening a diverse and inclusive campus community.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

Ongoing structures and mechanisms to evaluate and improve the ethical functioning of the College are in place and function well; these include:

- Undergraduate Academic Policy Committee receives and reviews suggestions from the faculty related to academic honesty concerns; it then makes recommendations to the faculty for any necessary policy changes. At the graduate level, the Graduate Council performs the same function.
- Regularly scheduled meetings between the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and the Chair of the Faculty and between the CAO and the AAUP President serve as ongoing opportunities for discussion of any current problems as well as for ongoing assessment of the overall environment. These relationships maintain an important balance between administrative and faulty agendas.
- In light of the College’s commitment to providing students with a safe living environment, the annual safety report published by the Public Safety Department is another important mechanism to evaluate the campus. It is used to provide a clear picture of the extent to which this commitment is met.
- The IRB is an ongoing structure that assures compliance with federal regulations and ethical guidelines concerning research with human subjects.

Perhaps the most important structure in place to assure the integrity of the College is a committed faculty and administration. A long history of high ethical standards characterizes the College and is a mainstay of the institution.
Curry College NEASC Self-Study Steering Committee included:

Sally Buckley, Registrar and Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management (Standard Two)
Carrie Cokely, Professor First Year Studies (Standard Six)
Dorria DiManno, Professor, Communication (Standard One)
Mary Dunn, Director of Human Resources (Standard Eleven)
Donald Gratz, Professor, Education (Standard Ten)
Larry Hartenian, Professor, Politics and History (Standard Five)
Cassandra Horii, Dean of Faculty (Standard Five)
Lisa Ijiri, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (Standard Four)
Fran Jackson, Director of Communications (Standard Ten)
Susan James, Professor, Nursing (Standard Nine)
Jack Kahn, Professor, Psychology (Standard Four)
Maryellen Kiley, Dean of Students (Standard Nine)
Susan LaRocco, Professor, Nursing (Standard Eleven)
Jane Lawless, Professor, Library (Standard Two)
David Miller, Professor, Library (Standard Seven)
Patricia Mytkowicz, Professor, Program for the Advancement of Learning (Standard Three)
David Potash, Chief Academic Officer (Standard One)
Joanne Seltzer, Professor, Education (Standard Four)
Heather Shaw, Professor, Fine and Applied Art (Standard Four)
Ruth Sherman, Dean of Continuing Education and Graduate Studies (Standard Three)
Richard Sullivan, Chief Financial Officer (Standard Nine)
Dennis Thibeault, Chief Information Officer (Standard Seven and Eight)
Diane Webber, Professor, Program for the Advancement of Learning (Standard Eight)

Staff to Steering Committee:
Marjorie Belizaire, Senior Administrative Assistant, Dean’s Office,
Michael Donohoe, Director of MIS Finance
Ezekiel Kimball, Director of Institutional Research
Edward Tallent, Director of Levin Library

References

1 Curry College Employee Handbook
2 Curry College Student Handbook
3 New faculty orientation materials in workroom
4 Copy of folder given to all finalists for new full-time faculty positions in workroom
5 Charge to General Education Task Force (GETF 1 and GETF 2).
6 GETF recommendations for General Education principles, presented and adopted by the faculty
7 NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement)
8 Strategic Planning Interim Report
Curry College 2012 Self-Study

References

ix Mission Statement Survey in workroom; all faculty, staff and students were invited to complete the survey.
x Curry's second Strategic Plan, A Call to Action
xi Updates to Strategic Plan
xii Curry Campus Development Plan (master plan)
xiii See workroom for budget process documents
xiv Enrollment Management Summary Report, April 2011
xv NSSE documents
xvi Noel Levitz survey results
xvii Senior Survey
xviii General Education Task Force charges
xix Self-Studies for PAL, Library and Psychology Departments
xx Technology Governance Committee recommendations for budget
xxi Mission Statement Survey
xxii Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee charge, https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/assessment
xxiii 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 Academic Program self-assessments and plans
xxiv Accreditation for Criminal Justice, Education and Nursing Departments
xxv Rubric used by Writing Program
xxvi Project SAILS, https://www.projectsails.org/
xxvii NSSE, Noel-Levitz, Senior Surveys
xxviii Senior Survey
xxix Strategic Planning discussion sessions
xxx Strategic Plan
xxxi Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee http://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/assessment
xxxii Curriculum By-laws
xxxiii Board of Trustees Membership
xxxiv Organizational Chart
xxxv AAUP Curry College Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)
xxxvi AAUP Curry College Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)
xxxvii Organizational Chart
xxxviii Information/summary of HR orientation for staff and administration
xxxix College Employee Handbook
xl CBA, Appendix A for list of responsibilities
xli Faculty Committee By-laws
xlii Summary of Curry College’s committees at http://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/all-committees
xliii SGA Constitution and By-laws: https://my.curry.edu/group/mycampus/clubs-and-organizations
xl Board of Trustees Conflict of Interest Policy
xlii Portal listing of committees: https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/all-committees
xliii Enrollment Management Report on Majors and student persistence to graduation
xliv See Data First
xlv Academic Affairs Organizational Chart
l 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 academic program self-assessment, plans and priorities
li Self-studies for PAL, Library and Psychology
lii Orientation Resource Book on CLAC
liii General Education Task Force 1 & 2 - charges and documentation
liv Link to General Education Task Force Blackboard sites
lv Hybrid Learning Task Force report
lvi Catalogs (electronic and hard copy)
lvii UCC - approval process and sample course approval forms: https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/ucc
lviii Hybrid Learning Task Force report
lix Credit approval process - in catalog and at
References

https://banweb2.curry.edu:9012/banprod_prod/cc1278.p_1278
http://www.curry.edu/resources-and-services/academic-resources/registrar/academic-credit-hour-policy.html
http://curry.edu/resources-and-services/academic-resources/registrar/articulation-agreement.html
Learning Outcomes Assessment Timeline
Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary Table
Faculty Support, Summary of Expenditures
Work of Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee - electronic and paper - in workroom
Information about April, 2011, LOAC workshops
http://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/assessment
Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary Table
See Table 4-1 academic affairs
Faculty hiring requests and program planning in workroom
First Year Learning Goals
Report of First Year Task Force
EXPLOR program
See http://tinyurl.com/6uvfuz2
Summary chart/table on internships
Senior Seminar report
Technical Literacy Goals proposed by Ed Tech Committee
Atomic Learning at http://www.atomiclearning.com/highed/; a quick launch icon in the myCurry Portal: https://my.curry.edu
Approved recommendations of General Education Task Force One
General Education Task Force Two presentation at January 2011 faculty retreat
General Education Task Force Two document
2010-2011 and 2011-2012 Academic Program self-assessments and plans (Academic Chairs, Coordinators, Directors Drive)
Charge and report of UCC Subcommittee on academic credit of non-traditional curricula (Kean)
Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary Table
Project TRAILS report
Project SAILS report
Collective Bargaining Agreement
Full-time Faculty Search Process Guidelines
President’s Task Force on Diversity
CBA, Article XIII, Governance
CBA and “Criteria for Promotion and Rolling Contract” (Same Standards)
CBA and “Criteria for Promotion and Rolling Contract” (Same Standards)
Teaching Development activities offered by Academic Affairs and the Faculty Center
Excellence in Teaching summary report of September 1, 2011
Curriculum Innovation Communities, https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/curriculum-innovation
Educational Technology Committee’s Blackboard Site for Technology Across the Curriculum document, interactive modules, and supporting information
Link to Educational Technology Committee 2010-11 summary
Instructional Technology: https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/instructional-technology (additional sample professional development materials available in the workroom)
Report from CIO on Blackboard usage
Faculty Center for Professional Development and Curriculum Innovation: http://curry.edu/about-curry/academic-excellence/faculty-center.html.
See workroom for summary of Advising surveys, assessment of activities, and planning linked to advising outcomes
Advising Report
First Year activities in workroom
See workroom for faculty CVs
Research Track and Joint Committee on Release Time recent course release summaries
Summary Documents on use of Professional Advancement Funds: Dean’s and Faculty Funds
Grants Materials: https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/grants.
Annual reports from the Grants Coordinator
IRB Information and Processes: https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/irb
Full-time Faculty Search Process Guidelines
Interview Exchange: http://curry.interviewexchange.com
See Faculty Support and Professional Development Funds Summary, FY 2007 to FY 2012
Excellence in Teaching summary report, September 1, 2011
https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty
New Faculty Orientation program overview and sample schedules
Report by Professor Fox, Faculty Peer Support Program
Advising Report
NSSE data
Admissions Materials
Admissions trends - summary spreadsheets in workroom
See admissions/enrollment data (geographic origin of students)
See admissions/enrollment data (admissions funnel)
Sample dashboard report
See enrollment data - persistence
Summary/data on Academic Festival
Dean’s List information (LI); AGB information
https://my.curry.edu/group/mycampus/fy-studies1
Benoit Peer Tutoring Report
Student Affairs mission statement
Benoit peer tutoring report
Workroom material on Speaking Center
See Student Booklet
Data on intramural activity
Peer Leadership course from AEC
Curry Student Handbook, hard copy and URL
Feeder high school report
Student Success Team: membership, meeting summaries
Academic Early Alert data
https://my.curry.edu/group/mycampus/explore-program
Judicial Affairs survey to students
RA training materials
See workroom for student affairs organizational charts
Orientation Committee material, including surveys
Diversity task force recommendations
ACRL FY2008, Word doc, FY2010 statistics
ILL Annual Report 2011
http://curry.libguides.com/browse.php
http://www.curry.edu/resources-and-services/academic-resources/levin-library/about-the-library/library-mission-statement.html
Levin Library self-study
https://my.curry.edu/web/library
http://crln.acrl.org/content/72/7/420.full
Libguide statistics
Office Inventory
Applications
Detailed list of construction projects for workroom
Technology Center survey
See Data First forms
http://curry.edu/about-curry/academic-excellence/learning-outcomes-and-assessment.html
The cost calculator is at https://curry.studentaidcalculator.com/survey.aspx; it is located at:
Link to crime statistics URL
Board of Trustees Conflict of Interest policy
Employee Handbook
Employee Handbook
CBA “Same Standards”
Summary/materials on Staff Retreat
President’s Task Force on Diversity
IRB Taskforce Report, information and processes: https://my.curry.edu/web/faculty/irb