2.1 Introduction

This section of the Self-Study Report is designed to acquaint the reader with the plans used at SUNY Plattsburgh to guide continuous decision-making, planning, and assessment at both the institutional and the unit levels. What follows is a brief introduction to the main plans used at the institution, description of the planning processes, and identification of the primary committees responsible for designing, assessing, and ultimately improving each plan. The discussion of each particular plan is paired with the respective assessment activities connected with this plan.

No college could continue to function without ongoing institutional renewal in the form of new or continued sources of revenue, opportunities to advance scholarly research and to inspire creative teaching, as well as professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. We include a profile of various kinds of institutional renewal in this chapter, and refer to more sustained discussions of these in later sections of the Self-Study.

Most importantly, we also describe and analyze the depth and scope of institutional assessment used at SUNY Plattsburgh. This includes an overview of the culture of assessment at our institution, as well as examples of the use of assessment to modify and improve the planning processes already in place. In the case of the assessment of academic programs and General Education, we supply an overview here, and also refer the reader to chapter four of the Self-Study Report for further discussion and analysis.

2.2 Planning

Planning at the college in the last decade has involved the development of a Strategic Plan as well as various sector plans including an Academic Plan, Enrollment Management and Recruitment Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Technology Plan, Diversity Plan, and a Resource Allocation or Budget Plan. Additionally, the college has developed an Institutional Effectiveness Plan and an Assessment Plan to measure the institution’s progress towards its mission and goals. Planning is informed by a number of factors including departmental external reviews, consultation with external agencies and invited authorities on assessment and planning, faculty senate and committee actions, accrediting agencies, as well as the economy.

2.2.1 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is the main planning document for SUNY Plattsburgh. All other plans are intended to align with the institutional goals identified in the Strategic Plan.

Primary Documents
- Strategic Plan (2009 – 2012) (SP) (Strategic Plan)
- Strategic Plan Template of goals, objectives, and action plans (Strategic Plan Template)
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) (April 2008) (SWOT Analysis)
- Planning Integration Template

Associated Committees
(See Appendix C: Plans and Planning Committees)
- Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- Strategic Plan Implementation Task Force Committee (SPITFC)
- College Planning Council (CPC)
- Planning Integration Task Force (PITF)

Planning Process

The most recent strategic planning cycle began in 2007–08 with the creation of the College Planning Council Steering Committee (CPCSC) and the Strategic Planning Task Force Committee (SPTF). A similar process to that described below was used in the development of previous strategic plans. Standards 2-B, 2-G

In February 2008, the college adopted a set of seven broad Strategic Plan initiatives (i.e., Program and Professional Development; Faculty and Administrator Recruitment and Retention; Enrollment Management; Facilities; Information Technology; Fiscal Resources; and Student Support Services) which emerged from a Planning Seminar facilitated by Dr. Raymond Haas, a recognized leader in the field of college planning. A campus-wide SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis (SWOT Analysis) in April 2008 served to identify and prioritize critical issues for the college which were then used in the development of strategic goals and objectives for each initiative that emerged from the Planning Seminar. The CPCSC subsequently oversaw the work of task force committees whose charge was to draft goals and objectives for each strategic plan initiative. Each committee also: 1) developed proposed action plans to facilitate specific objectives to accomplish major goals; 2) identified
the individual(s) and committee(s) responsible for addressing the action plans; 3) indicated the impact of the action plans on goal development and the college; 4) defined the time frame over a three-year period (2009-2012) for completion of each action plan; and 5) estimated the costs (financial, human, and/or impact on programs/services) and revenue associated with the action plan. In the process, the goals, objectives, and action plans developed with the seven initiatives in mind were reorganized into five themes (later defined as institutional goals). This strategy allowed the college to clarify what institutional resources were needed (both fiscal and human) to advance strategic initiatives. The Strategic Plan Template documents this information and is publicly available on the strategic planning Web page (Strategic Plan Template). Standards 1-A.1, 1-G, 2-A, 2-D, 2-L, 3-A, 3-B, 3-C

Periodic reports about this planning process were shared with various college constituents, such as the College Planning Council, the Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Resources and Planning Committee, the Student Association, and the faculty and staff at college-wide meetings. In fall 2008, a draft of the Strategic Plan was widely distributed and reviewed and open forums were held to elicit input and feedback. As part of this process, the CPCSC drafted revised college mission and vision statements that were further developed and refined through discussions with several college-wide committees and the faculty and staff at the college’s planning day events. The Strategic Plan was completed in November 2008, endorsed by the administration as well as the Faculty Senate, and presented to the college community in January 2009. Standards 1-A.3, 2-H.1, 2-H.2, 2-B, 2-I.3

In the context of budget reduction, some strategic planning initiatives had to be revised or reevaluated to match reduced available resources. In 2009, the President’s Cabinet and the SPITFC met to identify “high priority” institutional goals and primary strategies. Those identified were:

- Institutional Goal: Enhance the College’s Academic Excellence and Reputation
- Institutional Goal: Promote More Effective Use of Resources.

Reevaluating our institutional goals is a necessary part of assessment and planning in the face of budget reductions. Standards 2-F, 2-H.1, 2-I.3

Associated Assessment Activities

Progress in achieving the institutional goals and more specific objectives and actions plans of the Strategic Plan has been measured in two ways. First, the Deans’ Cabinet annually assesses progress on select objectives and action plans which they directly facilitate. Additionally, at the end of each academic year, every academic and non-academic department must
identify those department or unit achievements that contribute to the success of each institutional goal of the strategic plan, and to also identify the following year’s goals. (See, for example, Arts and Science Strategic Planning Achievements and Arts and Science Strategic Planning Goals.) **Standards 2-I.3, 7-D.2**

Second, the College Assessment Coordinator records these departmental and program responses and incorporates them into the Institutional Effectiveness Plan Template and the Strategic Plan Template (where appropriate) along with the updates provided by the Deans’ Cabinet. Documentation of the college’s progress in meeting its institutional goals can be found on the Strategic Plan Template (Strategic Plan Template), as well as in email updates from the college President. These updates are also posted on our college Web page about Strategic Planning (Strategic Planning). The introductions to the next five chapters of the Self-Study document our progress in meeting each institutional goal through the objectives and action plans of our Strategic Plan. **Standards 1-A.1, 1-A.4, 1-E, 1-G, 2-D, 2-E, 2-G, 7-F**

In August 2011, the Provost formed the Planning Integration Task Force (PITF) composed of faculty, staff, and administrators to analyze the alignment of various college plans under the goals of the Strategic Plan, to assess their progress, and to see how the results might inform the next strategic planning process, as based on recommendations of the Faculty Senate Resource and Planning committee. The results will be used, in part, as a foundation for development of the next strategic plan (see Planning Integration Template).

### 2.2.2 Academic Plan

The Academic Plan guides planning and budgeting in the academic divisions of the college.

**Primary Documents**

- Academic Plan (2003-2006)

**Standard 2-I.1**

**Associated Committees**

(See Appendix C: Plans and Planning Committees)

- Deans’ Cabinet

**Planning Process**

The Academic Plans were developed based on initiatives and ideas under discussion in academic departments and the respective academic divisions. During the last ten years the Deans’ Cabinet created two successive Academic Plans that focused on meeting the following three institutional goals:

- Enhance the academic excellence and reputation of the college;
- Enrich student, faculty, and staff experiences;
- Expand service to our region and beyond.  

**Standard 1-A.2**

A brief overview of each plan is presented below:

**Academic Plan (2003-2006)**

The Academic Plan (2003-2006) was consistent with the first Memorandum of Understanding (2000-2005) with SUNY System Administration. It identified initiatives to strengthen teacher education and business programs and to create, revise, or consolidate majors using a set of assessment criteria to evaluate programs. The five criteria adopted for this purpose were innovativeness, likely student and/or societal demand, fit with the college’s mission and existing facilities, human resources, and expected costs (Academic Plan (2003–2006), p 10).  

**Standards 1-D, 2-K**


There were three major initiatives of the 2006-2010 Academic Plan to meet several institutional goals: 1) establish new majors where demand was identified; 2) strengthen all majors by emphasizing all of the following: academic research and experiential learning, professional ethics specific to disciplines or major, writing and information technology, and critical thinking; and 3) improve enrollment selectivity. Benchmarks were identified to evaluate its success (Academic Plan (2006-2010), p 2). (For more details see section 4.2.) Enrollment selectivity is addressed below and in the Enrollment Management Plan (see section 2.2.3).  

**Standard 2-G**

**Associated Assessment Activities**

SUNY Plattsburgh is engaged in a continuous process of assessing the effectiveness of its academic programs. Each academic program performs a self-study and undergoes an external review every five to seven years. Extensive assessments are performed for programs that must meet national accreditation standards. These reviews typically cover curriculum development, student and faculty characteristics and accomplishments, enrollment patterns, resources devoted to the program, and the results of student learning outcomes assessment. Some programs also make use of a number of indirect measures to evaluate the quality of the program such as retention rates, graduation rates, credit-hour production, job placement rates, the career success of graduates, and faculty scholarly productivity. Most of this data is available through the Office of Institutional Research, and published as part of the SUNY Plattsburgh Fact Book, Departmental Comparative Statistics, or Attrition/ Retention Statistics for Undergraduate Matriculated Students. The self-study and results of the external review are discussed within administrative levels and between the administration and the department and contribute to planned improvements in the academic programs. **Standards 2-K, 7-A, 7-A2, 7-A.3, 7-B**

Student learning outcomes assessment occurs annually. The process involves the development of student learning outcomes at the program level (compatible with and supportive of institutional
student learning outcomes), offering courses that provide students with the opportunity to achieve these outcomes, assessing student achievement, and making use of assessment results to improve academic programs. Program learning outcomes are made public on departmental Web pages. Course learning outcomes (compatible with and supportive of both institutional and program learning outcomes) are required for each course and are included in course syllabi. SUNY Plattsburgh empowers academic units to design assessment tools in keeping with the standards and core practices of their disciplines, while reporting their processes and results to the appropriate Dean. Among the assessment tools used are standardized examinations, portfolios, surveys of alumni and employers, and evaluations by the Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) (The Center for Teaching Excellence). Assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level is conducted by instructors in each course, through examinations, papers, and other means, and expressed through course grades. Standards 7-A, 7-A.1, 7-A.2, 11-C, 11-L, 11-M, 14-A, 14-A.1, 14-A.3, 14-B, 14-B.1, 14-B.2, 14-B.3, 14-B.4, 14-D

At the program level, summaries of the assessments of student learning are included in annual assessment records, and departmental annual reports discuss how these results are used for program improvement. Departmental annual reports and assessment records are reviewed by respective deans. Assessment results are discussed by the Deans’ Cabinet, which includes the five academic deans, the Provost, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Assistant Provost. Particular attention is paid to “closing the loop” initiatives that make use of assessment results to guide curriculum improvements (Academic Department Assessment Outcomes). Standards 1-D, 2-I.3, 2-J, 7-A.3, 7-B, 7-J.2, 14-A, 14-B.2

For a summary of academic program assessment activity see Assessment at SUNY Plattsburgh. This document shows that almost all programs (96%) report utilizing assessment information to refine teaching practices and improve student learning. The most comprehensive assessments of how well students are achieving course learning outcomes involve using a variety of qualitative and quantitative sources from multiple levels. Teacher Education programs, for example, use standardized test scores from State Teacher Examinations, internal competency exams, and feedback from classroom partners (teachers, principals and superintendents) to assess student achievement of learning outcomes. (Inquiry Brief, 2009: Summary of Assessment Activity for TEAC Accreditation.) Standards 7-A, 7-A.2, 7-B, 7-J.1, 11-D, 11-S, 14-B.5, 14-D, 14-I.2, 14-O

In spring 2011, five members of the Deans’ Cabinet completed the MSCHE (2008) “Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Student Learning Assessment Processes” (MSCHE Assessment Rubric). The Deans were in general agreement on the following rubric items:

• Institutional leaders demonstrate sustained support for promoting an ongoing culture of assessment and for efforts to improve teaching;
• Clear statements of expected learning outcomes at the institutional, unit, program, and course levels have been developed and have appropriate interrelationships;
• Multiple measures of student learning, including direct evidence, have been collected and are of sufficient quality that they can be used with confidence to make appropriate decisions;
• The evidence of student learning that has been collected is clearly linked to expected learning outcomes;
• Assessment processes have been reviewed and changes have been made to improve their effectiveness and/or efficiency, as appropriate.

The deans had a range of opinions about the following rubric items:

• Statements of program-level expected learning outcomes are made available to current and prospective students;
• Student learning assessment results have been used to improve teaching and by institutional leaders to inform planning and budgeting decisions;
• In any areas in which the above are not yet happening, concrete, feasible and timely plans are in place.

The results of this survey will be shared with the Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC) for comment in spring 2012. The AAC expects to issue the same rubric annually to establish a trend analysis. Standards 2-J, 7-A.6, 7-D.2, 14-B.1, 14-B.5, 14-C, 14-K.1, 14-K.2

As part of assessing the Academic Plan (2006-2010) a questionnaire was distributed to department chairs in 2007 that focused on the extent to which their programs already included emphasis on experiential opportunities, professional ethics, writing and information technology literacy, and critical thinking. Thirty of the college’s 40 chairs of departments with major and/or graduate programs responded. The same questionnaire is planned in 2012 to determine the success of our efforts to strengthen these particular elements in all academic programs (Deans’ Cabinet Final Report, June 2011). Standards 2-R, 14-J

The Academic Plan (2006-2010) predicted that success in initiating appropriate new academic programs and in strengthening all academic programs would result in increased demand for programs, increased selectivity, increased graduation rates, and increased success and satisfaction among alumni. In fact, the college has experienced success in all those areas over the past five years, as indicated by the following Table 2-1. Student Success Indicators. Standard 2-S

Success in these areas for our graduate programs is more difficult to measure. The number of applications for our graduate programs did grow from 468 in 2006-07
to 511 in 2010-11 and the acceptance rate declined from 73.9% to 61.8% (See Table 2-1).

Since the college does not require standardized exams for entrance into all graduate programs and there are no SUNY selectivity levels for this population, we lack comparative data on selectivity. Many of our graduate students pursue their studies on a part-time basis, and not all remain continuously enrolled. For these reasons, in part, we have not had an adequate measure of graduate graduation rates, with the exception of the Educational Leadership Program (Educational Leadership Program Graduation Rates; Educational Leadership Graduate and Attrition Rates). The Office of Graduate Admissions is beginning to track admission and progress toward degree for all college programs more carefully, however, and we may have more comprehensive measures in the future.

The Undergraduate Alumni Survey showed that 72.3% of respondents from the graduating classes of December 2006 through August 2007 were employed full-time, slightly lower than the 75.9% from the previous class employed full-time when they were surveyed the year before. A record number of 2006-2007 respondents reported continuing their education —16.9% compared to 12.7% the previous year. Data on later classes, when available, will better demonstrate whether changes made during this Academic Plan were correlated with a higher proportion of graduates finding employment in their fields and/or continuing their education. (See Appendix D: Table A-1. Employment Status of Undergraduate Alumni-Comparison.)

While we lack data as yet on improvements in the success of our graduates, there is evidence of increased student satisfaction with SUNY Plattsburgh during the time span of this Academic Plan. For example, 75.4% of respondents in the Student Opinion Survey of spring 2009 said they would choose this college again if they could start over, compared to 62.9% in spring 2006. On the 2009 survey, 59.5% of respondents had a “high” or “very high” impression of the quality of education at the college, compared to 44.6% in 2006 (SOS 2009). Standard 7-H

Currently, the college has not updated the Academic Plan. This delay is attributable to changes in administration in the Provost’s office over the last two years. In preparation for the development of a new academic plan, then-Interim Provost/VPAA Patricia Higgins and the Deans’ Cabinet, prepared a report that summarized activities and initiatives conducted in June 2011 under the expiring Academic Plan (Deans’ Cabinet Final Report, June 2011 - Academic Plan 2006-2010). The report details progress by the Academic Affairs Division in implementing each of the key initiatives identified in the Academic Plan 2006-1010. Since July 2011 the newly hired Provost has been engaged in discussions with departments and programs about their respective goals. This information will inform the new Academic Plan and guide the difficult budget decisions that need to be made about hiring, scheduling courses, and program review, as well as writing and implementing a new Strategic Plan. To better address the coordination of planning, assessment, and budgeting, the Provost’s office in consultation with the Faculty Senate Executive board and the Deans, is working with Institutional Research to develop an Academic Unit Profile for all academic programs. This will involve key indices around demand (majors, applications and yield, student credit hours), productivity (degree awards, student credit hours/FTE), need (faculty to student ratios, IPED benchmarks for degree awards by program), efficiency (instructional cost, graduation rates) centrality of mission, and the like. This is currently in the development and draft stage.

### Table 2-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Success Indicators</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undergraduate applications</strong></td>
<td>6323</td>
<td>7616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undergraduate Acceptance Rates (%)</strong></td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proportion (%) of First-time, Full-time students in Category 1 or 2 (based on SUNY selectivity levels)</strong></td>
<td>49.4 (in 2007)</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate student applications</strong></td>
<td>468</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate acceptance rates (%)</strong></td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduation rate (%) undergraduates</strong></td>
<td>55.7 (for 1998 cohort)</td>
<td>57.5 (for 2003 cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment data (from 2009 alumni survey)</strong></td>
<td>75.4% respondents full-time</td>
<td>8.7% part-time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Institutional Research)
2.2.3 Enrollment Management Plan (2005–10) and Recruitment Plan (2010–13)

A 2005-2010 Enrollment Management Plan (EMP) and 2010-2013 Recruitment Plan have guided recruitment and retention since 2005. Each plan is directed toward meeting numerical enrollment goals and enhancing the college’s academic reputation, especially in terms of improving selectivity of entering full-time, first-time students. **Standards 2-C, 2-H.1**

Primary Documents

- Enrollment Management Plan (EMP) (2005–10)
- Recruitment Plan (2010 – 13)
- SUNY Enrollment Planning Update (2011/12 – 2015/16); SUNY College at Plattsburgh
  
  **Standard 2-I.1**

Associated Committees (see Appendix C: Plans and Planning Committees)

- Financial Aid Impact Research (FAIR) Workgroup
- Enrollment Management Council
- President’s Cabinet
  
  **Standard 2-I.2**

Planning Process

The Enrollment Management Plan (EMP) 2005-2010 and Recruitment Plan 2010-2013 are directed toward meeting numerical enrollment goals and enhancing the college’s academic reputation, especially in terms of improving selectivity of entering full-time, first-time students. The President’s Cabinet serves as the final decision maker for retention and recruitment issues, including revising annual enrollment targets for different cohorts. **Standards 2-C, 2-H.1**

The EMP 2005-2010 was developed by the College Planning Coordinator in collaboration with Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management/Director of Admissions. Recruitment goals were revisited each year and adjusted based on the assessment of enrollment patterns. The Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management/Director of Admissions, together with the staff of the Admissions Office, drafted the subsequent Recruitment Plan (2010-13) that was approved by the President’s Cabinet in fall 2010. The plan aligns with the college’s institutional goals and key objectives of the Strategic Plan (2009-2012), and is designed to achieve four goals:

- Increase transfer enrollment at main and Branch Campus;
- Enhance quality indicators of the freshmen class;
- Enhance the academic reputation of the college;
- Increase graduation and retention rates.

The plan includes measurable objectives and tactics for each institutional goal, budget implications, timelines, and Point persons are identified for each tactic. **Standards 2-A, 2-B, 2-C, 2-D, 7-A.2, 7-A.3, 7-A.4**

More specifically, one provision of the plan is for a decrease of 25 students in the freshman class each year (for three years), while increasing new transfer enrollments by 25 students each year. The overall headcount will decrease slightly from 6,441 in fall 2010 to approximately 6,100 by fall 2015. The decision to lower targets for freshman enrollment and increase those for transfer enrollment is based on New York State High School Graduate Projections anticipating a decline of 10% between 2010 and 2016, economic projections that suggest that more students will elect to attend less expensive community colleges for their first two years, and a SUNY-wide emphasis on facilitating transfer mobility. **Standards 8-A, 8-I**

The Admissions Office plans each year’s activities based on the Recruitment Plan. Some of the initiatives adopted this past year include:

- Peer recruitment program for high-ability students;
- VIP visitation program for high-ability freshmen and transfer students;
- Comprehensive virtual tour featuring dozens of high-quality videos for prospective students;
- Renewals of approximately 100 transfer articulation agreements with major feeder institutions.

The SUNY Office of Institutional Research requires each institution to annually complete an Enrollment Planning update, which records student projections for the next five years (2011/12-2015/16). Many details are identified such as: AAFTE expectations, enrollment targets by specific student type (first-time, transfer, graduate students, part-time students, continuing/returning students, resident and non-resident student projections). In addition, targets for selectivity groups are identified along with upper division/lower division credit projections. **Standards 2-G, 2-H.1, 2-P, 2-R, 2-S**

Associated Assessment Activities

The college’s Admissions Office regularly tracks applications, acceptances, and deposits and various characteristics of deposit-paid students and shares key figures with members of the Executive Council on a weekly basis. The Office of Institutional Research also maintains data on the characteristics of the student body for each entering class. These data have been used as a basis for policy and procedure changes, as the following example illustrates.

The need to develop an enrollment management plan evolved, in part, as a result of a dramatic decrease in first-time, full-time (FTFT) enrollment between fall 2002 and fall 2004. The number of FTFT students in fall 2004 was 858, the lowest in recent history and also well below the target of 975. To address this outcome, the college hired an enrollment management consulting firm, Noel Levitz, to evaluate enrollment management procedures and to help the college develop strategies to improve enrollment, student selectivity, and retention. Analysis showed that a large number of higher-ability freshmen who were accepted in 2004 but not offered...
a scholarship did not enroll. This analysis led to the conclusion that the college could increase yield rates, enroll more high-ability students, and meet future enrollment goals by offering all accepted students in selectivity groups 1 and 2 a scholarship. (Selectivity Group 1 includes students with high school averages 85-95 percent and composite SAT scores 1100-1300. Selectivity Group 2 includes students with high school averages 80-90 percent and composite SAT scores 1000-1200.) Based on this assessment the college adopted a financial aid leveraging plan in fall 2005.

Assessment results demonstrate the positive effects of this strategy and associated efforts. As Table 2-2 shows, the college increased the number of FTFT students enrolled between 2004 and 2005; the target for this group has been exceeded almost every year since then. The percentage of FTFT students in the highest selectivity groups (SG 1 and SG 2) also increased by 13 percentage points between fall 2005 and fall 2010 (32.5% in fall 2005 to 53% in fall 2010). Conversely, the percentage of FTFT students in SG4 declined from 11% to 0% and those in SG3 from 52% to 48% during these same years. Associated evidence of an increase in freshmen selectivity is the increase in average SAT scores (by 21 points) and in high school grade averages (by 2.2 points) from fall 2005 to fall 2010. Standards 2-F, 2-I, 2-S

The Office of Admissions also developed successful strategies to meet the additional goals of increasing the out-of-state student population, and to increase the number of students from ethnic minority backgrounds. As part of the college’s goal to improve retention, the first-year experience program was established in 2005 (see section 5.3.8d). Additionally, the EMP goal to increase enrollments at the college’s Branch Campus was achieved through the addition of several new academic programs (see section 7.3). Standards 2-B, 2-C

2.2.4 Facilities Master Plan and Capital Plan

The Facilities Master Plan and Capital Plan set priorities for facility development on campus.

Primary Documents
- Residence Hall Master Plan (2008—2018)
The college has two facility master plans (FMP) that guide capital projects for the next ten years or so, one for non-residence hall buildings and one for residence hall buildings. Both documents are comprehensive long-term plans for construction and renovations.

### Table 2-2

**Fall Freshmen Headcount and Selectivity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First-Time Full-Time</strong></td>
<td>858</td>
<td>1029</td>
<td>1104</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>1025</td>
<td>1062</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selectivity Group 1 (%)</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selectivity Group 2 (%)</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selectivity Group 3 (%)</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selectivity Group 4 (%)</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selectivity Group 5 (%)</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average SAT Score</strong></td>
<td>1044</td>
<td>1054</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>1080</td>
<td>1074</td>
<td>1075</td>
<td>1074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High School Average</strong></td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>86.48</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>88.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Institutional Research)
• Capital Plan (2004 – 08; 2009 – 13; 2014 – 18)  
**Campus Capital Plans**. The Capital Plan involves non-residence hall construction and renovation.  
**Standards 2-I.1, 2-G**

### Associated Committees
(see Appendix C: Plans and Planning Committees)
- Capital Planning Committee
- Dormitory Income Fund Reimbursable (DIFR) Committee

### Planning Process
Planning activities related to capital projects have progressed over the last five years from focusing almost exclusively on critical maintenance and immediate needs to long-term comprehensive college-wide planning.

#### The President’s Cabinet, Capital Planning Committee, State University Construction Fund (SUCF), and affected academic departments have all been involved in the assessment and planning phases of these projects, though the President’s Cabinet serves as the final decision-maker for all capital projects. **Standard 2-C**

While most capital projects do focus on critical maintenance, a comprehensive assessment of building conditions led to decisions to construct two new buildings. The Hudson Annex (a science building) and the rehabilitation of the main science building, Hudson Hall, were recommended and are underway for a total $35 million project. These two projects replace outdated educational facilities with modern laboratories, classrooms, and faculty offices, and are designed to satisfy the pedagogical needs of students and include modern environmental conservation and sustainability technology. The new Hudson Annex Building was available for classes in spring 2011, and interior renovation of old Hudson began in February 2011 with an estimated complete date of early 2013.

An assessment of the costs revealed that new construction for the School of Business and Economics and the Computer Science Department would be less expensive than comprehensive renovations to Redcay Hall to meet the pedagogical needs of students. Construction on this new academic building began in November 2011 and is expected to be completed by November 30, 2012 for a total of $20,400,000. **Standards 2-B, 2-P**

In 2008, the college and the SUCF contracted with Perkins-Eastman to develop a FMP for non-residence hall buildings on campus. The year-long process involved five major phases: campus profile, assessment of conditions, analysis of space needs, concepts and alternatives, and final recommendations. Perkins-Eastman met with all major constituents on campus during the first phase and held open campus meetings during each of the following phases for discussion and input. During the entire process, members of the Capital Planning Committee visited academic departments and other constituents on campus to seek input. The final document was completed in December 2010 and culminated in an all-campus meeting. **Standards 2-H.2, 2-Q, 3-A, 3-D, 3-E, 7-A.1**

In 2008, the college and DIFR Committee contracted with MGT of America, Inc. to develop a Residence Hall Master Plan **(MGT of America, Inc.)**. The planning process involved using student satisfaction data, local housing market research, financial analysis, peer institution review, facility condition analysis and focus group data from a wide constituency base to develop a ten-year plan to renovate one building per year. Since the report was accepted in June 2009, the campus has its first building off-line during the 2011-12 academic year for renovation, is completing the design phase of the second building that will be off-line during 2012-13, and is about to initiate the design of the third project. Campus constituents, including students, continue to be involved in every project for input about how best to spend the limited renovation dollars available. **Standards 2-C, 2-P, 2-Q, 2-S, 7-H, 7-J.4, 7-K**

### Associated Assessment Activities
In preparation for the 2008-2013 round of SUCF funding the college performed a building condition assessment in 2007 for all non-residence halls. Members of the Capital Planning Committee and state representatives from the SUCF visited each non-residence hall on campus to rate the condition of each building. A four-point scale (poor to excellent) was used to rate the status of various components within each building. For instance, the workgroup rated the foundation of the main administrative Kehoe Building as 75% poor and 25% good. A series of meetings were required to finalize the assessment ratings that were used to identify and prioritize major projects in the 2008-2013 Five-Year Capital Plan.

In fall 2007, members of Maintenance and Operations and the DIFR Committees rated the dormitories using the same survey instrument and methodology as the SUCF survey. An assessment of suite utilization revealed that suites are not in high demand. This led to the decision to renovate the suite style buildings earlier in the FMP’s implementation to create demand in those buildings. **Standards 2-C, 2-P, 2-Q, 2-S**

The first three phases of the development of the FMP incorporated a substantial amount of assessment and data analysis for planning purposes. For example, Perkins-Eastman’s analysis of classroom utilization data revealed that while the college has sufficient classroom space in total, large classrooms are substantially underutilized. The plan recommended the creation of smaller classrooms in the range of 20-40 students via new construction or renovations.

The college’s **Director of Facilities and the Vice President for Administration** regularly assess the college’s progress in completing many other smaller facilities’ maintenance and improvement projects. The results are reported to the President’s Cabinet, the Executive Committee, and the college community at least three times a year at town meetings. In addition, major
steps in the implementation of these plans are publicly celebrated and/or announced on the college’s Web site and through press releases. **Standards 2-H.2, 2-Q, 3-A, 3-D, 3-E, 7-A.4, 7-B**

### 2.2.5 Technology Plan

The Technology Plan addresses instructional technology as well as general technology use on campus.

**Primary Documents**
- Technology Plan (LIS Major Initiatives 2010 -11) [LIS Major Initiatives](#)
- **Standard 2-I.1**

**Associated Committees**
- Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC)
- Teaching, Learning and Technology Advisory Group (TLTAG)
- LIS Student Advisory Committee

**Planning Process**

Planning and assessment have taken an increasingly important role as the college prepares to make the most effective use possible of rapidly changing technological resources. The college’s Technology Plan is developed and updated annually by the division of Library and Information Services (LIS). LIS has responded to the rapid growth in electronic resources by implementing various initiatives, including:

- Developing a process to review and recommend campus technology policies, to advise on information technology initiatives, and to communicate to the campus about these issues;
- Increasing access to information resources for faculty, staff and students;
- Adopting new technologies to improve information retrieval;
- Providing services and programs that support teaching excellence and foster the infusion of technology into the curriculum in order to strengthen the campus culture of teaching; and
- Expanding e-learning opportunities and enhancing support structures for e-learning.

Academic departments are also solicited annually to submit educational technology grants to improve and enhance teaching and learning in their discipline. Nine grants were awarded in each year in 2008-09 and 2009-10. **Standards 2-G, 2-S**

**Associated Assessment Activities**

Assessment activities undertaken to help support the goals of successive technology plans may be found in the Institutional Effectiveness Plan Template ([IEP Template](#)). They include periodic surveys of faculty and students (SOS, NSSE, FSSE), which consistently rate the library’s resources and services very highly. (See Appendix O: Table A-8. LIS Student Opinion Survey Comparative Data.) **Standards 2-B, 3-F, 3-G**

The Library and Information Services (LIS) Initiatives status report includes summary assessment results. These are available at ([LIS Strategic Plan and Reports](#)). This report lists the major initiatives and provides detail about the progress made in the past year, as well as the impact these initiatives had on services and operations. For example, one initiative is intended to migrate the college technology based course-management system to a new platform; moving ANGEL users to Moodle. The projected impact is significant since this will change the system on which the college has been offering online, hybrid, and Web-enhanced courses for the last six years; it will replace the system on which Intranet materials have been delivered during the last six years; and it will replace a faculty/research web server presence that has been in place for more than a decade. This project has demanded a considerable effort both from faculty who have reworked course sites for the new system and from the LIS staff who have implemented the Moodle system, offered training and consultation, and provided end-user support. **Standards 2-E, 2-J, 2-P**

### 2.2.6 Diversity Plan

**Primary Documents**
- Comprehensive Diversity Plan (2008-09) ([Comprehensive Diversity Plan (2008-09)](#))

**Associated Committees**
- Diversity Task Force (DTF) ([Diversity Task Force](#))
- Center for Diversity, Pluralism, and Inclusion (CDPI) Advisory Committee

**Planning Process**

Once every two to three years the Comprehensive Diversity Plan (CDP), first developed in 2004-05 by CDPI, is revised to reflect the current state of SUNY Plattsburgh’s diversity initiatives. To accomplish this goal the CDP is sent out to the various “primary diversity practitioners” who are responsible for specific tasks. These practitioners are asked to provide updates to their respective department’s or organization’s activities. Because the campus culture and campus organizational structure changes, the primary diversity practitioners change from one report to the next. Hence, the diversity director, CDPI staff, directors, deans, department chairs, and members of the DTF and Advisory Council all play an active role in deciding who should contribute to diversity initiatives. Currently the Provost’s Office is initiating discussions with CDPI to update a comprehensive diversity plan for 2012. **Standard 2-G**

**Associated Assessment Activities**

CDPI regularly assesses the impact of its activities. For summaries of the assessment of the 2009-2010 CDPI Film Series and WRAP Sessions see section 5.3.5. Based on analyses of these assessment results, CDPI has developed new strategies for obtaining student group sponsorship, involving more faculty in co-facilitation of the WRAP, and bringing community attention to the
The college’s resource allocation planning is necessarily linked to the New York State and SUNY System Administration budgeting. At the state level, the first six months of the current state fiscal year and economic forecasts are melded into financial parameters that each agency, including SUNY, is asked to follow in developing the next year's budget forecasting assumptions. Once SUNY has determined the methodology to be used in allocating funds to each unit, it then becomes the college’s responsibility to set priorities by allocating resources based on requests that best support the institution's mission and strategic needs.

In spring 2011 the President provided further guidance in dealing with a drastically reduced budget, asking constituents to:

“...protect as much as possible the basic academic mission of the college. When all is said and done, our fundamental purpose here is to provide a healthy and safe environment for students, working under the conscientious and coordinated instruction of qualified faculty members, to complete academic curriculum leading to degrees.” Standards 1-E, 3-M

State authorization of small annual tuition increases over the next five years provides the institution with some confidence that resource allocation planning can proceed more smoothly and systematically. State appropriations to the college’s core operating funds are expected to remain flat to modest over the next four years. Consequently, the college must rely on College Auxiliary Services, College Foundation funds, sponsored research activity, reallocation of resources, and savings gained through conservative operational and program budgeting and expenditure practices in order to meet core operating needs. (See Appendix E: Planning Template for the Use of Tuition Revenue 2011-12 through 2015-16.)

The college recognizes that the way in which the college planning process is linked to the budget process can be improved. One of the Strategic Plan (2009-12) objectives for the institutional goal “promote more effective use of resources” is to document, evaluate, and assess our current planning and budgeting processes and to make recommendations to integrate these, particularly in relation to funding. Progress in this area has focused more recently on the immediate and potential long-term effects of budget reductions due to a faltering economy. However, with the hiring of a new Provost in summer 2011, a new planning process has been implemented by the formation of the PITF. This is currently in the formative stages but will involve creating a centralized Budget Advisory Council (BAC). The BAC will be composed of representatives from the major units on campus as well as faculty, staff, and administrators. The BAC will review new initiatives for funding and proposed operational budgets for these initiatives in order to make recommendations for funding to the President’s Cabinet. In addition, there will be a separate process by which each major unit will be asked to create
a scenario for a 1-2 percent cut in their current operating budgets. This will be used in case of cuts to the institution’s overall budget, or as a basis for reallocating funds for new initiatives. **Standard 2-C**

**Associated Assessment Activities**

Assessment activities for measuring the effectiveness of the college resource allocation process begins with identifying which goals and objectives are prioritized for the coming fiscal year. In the last four years the college has emphasized the teaching and learning environment (student and faculty) to fulfill the academic mission. This has involved a temporary shift in faculty workload to emphasize teaching, as well as by voluntary separation and retirement incentives. A number of positions (professional, support, and academic) were budgeted at new hire salary levels, and the difference was used to mitigate the multiple budget reductions received over the last four years. In this respect the strategy proved successful. **Standards 1-A.1, 2-A, 2-L, 2-M**

Financial assessment activities are measured by setting targets to generate permanent and temporary savings that have rolled over each of the last four years or have been applied to the budget reductions. The temporary measures allowed the college to take advantage of situational savings accrued in any given year. The largest savings came from holding positions open whenever possible, utility savings due to lower utilization coupled with lower unit costs, general operating expense savings and longer replacement cycles for equipment. **Standards 2-P, 2-Q**

**2.3 Institutional Renewal**

The budget condition for the college over the past few years has been conservative and lean. The college’s approach to “all funds” budgeting has allowed a felling of the funding gap with cash reserves and operating cash from Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR) accounts and State University Tuition Reimbursement Account (SUTRA). In 2008-09, the college took advantage of our enrollment demographics by changing the resident/out-of-state mix within the budgeted Annual Average Full-Time Equivalent (AAFTE) target. In addition, the college experienced an unexpected yield increase in new freshman as a result of Enrollment Management Plan strategies, which has generated additional tuition for the SUTRA account.

Overall, the fiscal impact of the enacted SUNY budget has been addressed through a realistic and pliable budget plan. However, the college is vulnerable to on-going political and economic conditions. To address recurrent reductions in state allocation, a modified hiring freeze was enacted in 2009 that now requires approval by the President’s Cabinet to fill all vacancies. The college continues to fill high priority and critical positions to protect academic quality; to ensure a healthy and safe environment for students, faculty, and staff; and to strengthen and promote fund raising. Temporary actions have included: 1) personal service savings; 2) restrictions on travel support; 3) reducing course-section accessibility by consolidating scheduled offerings and increasing class size; 4) deferring academic and general equipment purchases; 5) restricting or postponing support for strategic initiatives that require sustainable and/or ongoing support; 6) increasing teaching loads; and 7) reducing energy usage to slow down the escalation of energy costs. Long-term strategies include recruiting positions to promote fundraising and philanthropy, developing a campus facilities master plan, increasing enrollment at the Branch Campus, developing a budget model for efficient use and allocation of resources, and advocating for tuition increases and additional state funding for 100% of planned enrollment. Additional proposed plans to help manage the constrained budget are discussed in Chapter Three, sections 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, and 3.10.1. **Standards 2-C, 2-F, 2-L, 2-P, 2-Q, 3-M**

While the state has approved a gradual increase in SUNY tuition for the next five years, state appropriations to the college’s core operating funds are expected to remain stable over the next four years. Consequently, the college must rely on extensive fund raising, reallocation of resources, and savings gained through conservative operational/program budgeting and expenditure practices in order to meet core operating expenses and to insure institutional renewal. College Foundation funds, College Auxiliary Services, and sponsored research activity contribute substantially to institutional renewal. **Standards 2-F, 2-M, 2-Q, 3-S, 7-B**

The Plattsburgh College Foundation (PCF) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation charged with accepting and administering charitable gifts in support of the college. Through the Foundation, the college receives significant support for its enrollment management efforts by funding scholarships to students. Foundation funds also provide modest additional resources to college programs and departments in support of academic and student life enrichment programs. **Standard 2-Q**

The PCF led a seven-year, $15 million, Bright with Promise Campaign, the college’s first ever comprehensive capital campaign. The campaign’s top priorities, unrestricted and endowed scholarship support, were established by the college leadership in order to maximize the impact of philanthropic support through funding enrollment management scholarships. This goal is linked to the college’s use of resources, through the college’s Student Recruitment Plan which uses scholarship leveraging as a tactic to recruit high-ability students. **Standard 3-N**

The SUNY Plattsburgh College Auxiliary Services Corporation (CAS) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation that manages operation of the College Store, food service and vending, and off-campus facilities. Surplus revenues earned through CAS are used to further the college’s mission in ways consistent with the purposes of the corporation. Often the budgetary flexibility provided to the college comes in the form of direct financial support from CAS for Angell College Center activities, admission/enrollment initiatives, the
Center for Teaching Excellence, scholarships through gifts to the Plattsburgh College Foundation, student academic travel, and general service and cultural programs, as well as block grants to the college. CAS also supports the college by maintaining and improving the spaces it uses on campus through both annual and capital investment. The college also uses CAS off-campus properties—the Valcour Conference Center (Valcour Conference Center) and Twin Valleys Outdoor Education Center (Twin Valleys Outdoor Education Center) for programming and other functions.

The SUNY Plattsburgh Sponsored Research and Programs Office works with and utilizes the resources of the SUNY Research Foundation (RF), a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit corporation that supports research efforts of many SUNY campuses including Plattsburgh. Research and grant activity provides resources to the college in several ways including: leveraging equipment replacement funds to purchase equipment for use by the college; strengthening the academic quality of participating faculty and keeping them current in their field; providing experiential learning opportunities to students through participation in research with faculty; allowing for the use of grant funds to “buy out” faculty salaries for the time spent working on research programs; and supporting faculty, staff, and student outreach and community service projects. In FY 2010, the college received $5.7 million in sponsored research grant funding by faculty and staff, and in FY 2011, the college received $6 million in grant funding (Sponsored Program Activity Report, Research Foundation of SUNY). Standards 2-Q, 3-N, 3-T

2.4 Institutional Assessment

Primary Documents
- Institutional Effectiveness Plan Institutional Effectiveness Plan (January 2012)
- Assessment Plan (fall 2010) Assessment Plan
- Institutional Effectiveness Template Institutional Effectiveness Template
  Standard 2-I.1

The Assessment Plan (approved 2008-09; updated fall 2010) describes the institution’s assessment procedures for all college units. The Institutional Effectiveness Plan describes the institutional planning process for fulfilling the college’s mission and institutional goals. The Institutional Effectiveness Template (approved November 2010) is a comprehensive document that records the assessment activities at our institution in the following areas:
- Use of assessment results to improve student learning outcomes and/or programs within each major;
- Assessment of the General Education program;
- Assessment of the quality of services provided by academic support programs;
- Use of assessment results to inform and evaluate planning activities and, as appropriate, resource allocation; and
- Use of assessment to formulate institutional goals of the strategic plan.
  Standards 2-E, 3-J, 7-A, 7-C, 14-B, 14-B.5

Associated Committees
(see Appendix C: Plans and Planning Committees)
- Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC)
- Office of Institutional Research (OIR)
  Standards 2-D, 7-A, 7-E.3, 14-F.3

Planning Process
The institution has developed and implemented an assessment process that evaluates its overall effectiveness in achieving its mission and goals and its compliance with accreditation standards and ensures that reports are completed in a timely manner. At the institutional level, the college regularly collects data required by state, federal, and/or accrediting agencies. The college has also long participated in a variety of surveys (see College-Wide Opinion Surveys below). The vice presidents and the President’s Cabinet and Executive Council regularly confirm continued participation in these surveys through approval of the expenditure of college funds and staff time and through encouragement of participation by the relevant population or sample. Detailed planning is undertaken by the Office of Institutional Research and other college-wide and divisional offices. In addition, the college’s successive strategic plans have included the expectation that the results of these plans will be documented and their effectiveness assessed by particular committees charged with these tasks. Similarly, the Provost’s Office regularly documents the college’s progress in achieving the goals of the two successive SUNY/SUNY Plattsburgh Memoranda of Understanding (2000-2005, 2006-2010). Standards 2-C, 2-D, 2-E, 2-F, 2-G, 2-I.3, 2-N, 6-Q, 7-A, 7-A.4

The AAC, the Executive Council, and the Faculty Senate have all been involved in planning institutional assessment, through the adoption in 2002 of a policy that requires all departments and units to undertake regular assessment activities, and through review of the assessment record forms designed for annual assessment reporting (Faculty Senate Policies on Assessment). Many other offices and committees participate in the planning for these college-wide institutional assessment activities.
  Standards 2-B, 7-A.3, 7-D.2, 7-E.1

At the program level, the college has a long tradition of conducting periodic self-studies and external reviews of academic programs (as described earlier in section 2.2.2). Educational and administrative support units have also undertaken self-studies and/or external reviews or have been subject to audit by external agencies. These self-studies and external reviews now commonly include outcomes assessment data and the results of previous rounds of outcome assessment. Vice presidents confirm the college’s continuation of this tradition of self-studies and outside program reviews by requiring such reviews in some cases, and by authorizing the expenditures in
time and money needed for reviews. Vice presidents may also supervise the more detailed planning of such institutional assessment activities which is primarily the responsibility of the unit being assessed. **Standards 2-B, 2-C, 5-G, 7-A, 7-A.1, 7-A.4, 7-D.3, 7-E.2**

All academic and non-academic departments’ annual assessment records include a description of how assessment results contribute to planning. These efforts are documented in the annual reports submitted to academic deans and vice presidents. The college’s Assessment Plan (**Assessment Plan**) provides an overview of assessment processes used within each division as well as the college as a whole, and the Institutional Effectiveness Template provides examples of the use of assessment results to directly influence planning and the distribution of resources (**Institutional Effectiveness Template**). **Standards 2-A, 2-B, 2-E, 5-G, 7-A.5**

**Associated Assessment Activities**

**Program Review**

As indicated above, each academic program performs a self-study and undergoes an external review every five to seven years. Some administrative and educational support units do so as well, but usually less regularly (see also 2.2.2.). The deans individually and the Deans’ Cabinet collectively periodically review all academic programs comparatively, using prior self-studies and external reviews, the annual reports and assessment records, and data compiled more regularly. Vice presidents review all programs and units reporting to them using similar data. **Standards 2-G, 2-J, 5-G, 7-A, 7-A.3, 7-A.4, 7-A.5, 7-B**

In a January 2011 survey, department chairs were asked if departmental annual reports (including assessment records) were used for departmental planning. Of the 18 department chair responses, 15 were in the affirmative. The following are examples of their responses: “we use assessment reports to tweak our teaching methods;” “assessment results inform course and program change proposals and priorities;” “past assessment identified the need to include more technology in our statistics sequence, which resulted in the department adopting a common textbook for this sequence and adding several Excel homework assignments;” and “our annual reports and assessments have led and continue to lead to curricular changes, new co-curricular offerings, and modifications of some specific courses” (Department Chair Survey, January 2011). Most responses demonstrate how assessment contributes to fulfilling the mission and goals of the college. One department shared how assessment results led to an additional faculty line being requested, funded, and then subsequently withdrawn due to budget cuts. Overall, the results of this survey demonstrate that assessment results are used at the departmental level and influence decisions about course offerings, and that they sometimes affect how human resources are allocated. Results from this survey do not clearly tie assessment to the allocation of financial resources, however. **Standards 7-B, 14-B.5, 14-D**

A recent example of the use of program review to improve institutional effectiveness is the administration’s decision to look for opportunities to adjust and revise programs and activities in ways that lower cost and/or enhance revenue in response to declining state support for the college. As part of this process, particular attention was given to the key variables of centrality to the college’s mission, need, quality, and effective use of resources. These criteria were subsequently revised to include centrality to mission, contribution to the Strategic Plan (quality, cost-effectiveness, potential for program growth), demand, societal need, connectedness, and uniqueness. (See Criteria for Program Review, approved by President’s Cabinet, 3/9/11.) Thus, a process of college-wide program review to help ensure that our current academic and support programs are as much as possible up to date, support the mission and goals of the college, are delivered effectively to the students, and make the best use of the college’s faculty, staff, and other resources was instituted in 2009-2010. Total cost savings of these efforts were approximately $1,465,000, and total new income identified was approximately $280,000. **Standards 2-A, 2-B, 2-C, 2-D, 2-F, 2-J, 2-K, 7-A, 7-A.3, 7-B, 7-D.3, 7-J.5**

**Outcomes Assessment**

The college has adopted college-wide student learning outcomes for both undergraduate and graduate programs, and all instructional programs (including the General Education program) have also developed and adopted program-level student learning outcomes. This information is available on the college’s assessment Web site (**Academic Department Assessment Outcomes**). In addition, co-curricular programs have developed and adopted program-level student learning outcomes (**Non-Academic Assessment Outcomes**). Almost all departments and units articulate mission statements and overall program goals and objectives that can be found on their respective Web pages. Thus, learning outcomes assessment includes the major, General Education (including basic skills), and personal and social development. **Standards 7-A, 7-A.1, 7-A.2, 14-A**

General Education Program assessment follows guidelines and standards that are consistent with SUNY General Education student learning outcomes and assessment expectations as defined by the SUNY Provost’s Office based on policies set by the SUNY Board of Trustees. Faculty assess learning outcomes in 12 General Education subject/skill areas (four per year) usually by evaluating samples of student performance using a rubric system. General Education assessment is coordinated by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs who prepares an assessment report of General Education student learning outcomes each year. More detail about the assessment of the college’s General Education Program can be found below and in section 4.4.2 of the Self-Study Report. (See also Appendix I: Summaries of Recent General Education Reports.) **Standards 7-A, 7-A.2, 7-A.3, 7-A.4, 14-B, 14-B.2, 14-B.3**
Responsibility for ensuring ongoing assessment of academic programs and student learning outcomes is assumed by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Responsibility for assessment of the overall effectiveness and efficiency of each department or unit rests with that department or unit. In each department/program, chairpersons, and directors, in consultation with their respective dean or vice president, are responsible for conducting assessment activities on an annual basis. This information is documented on the assessment record forms modeled after K. Nichols and J. Nichols (2000) for all departments/units to follow. Standards 7-A.1, 7-A.2, 7-A.3, 7-B, 7-D.3, 14-B

College-Wide Opinion Surveys

The college engages in an active survey research program that provides a rich source of primary data on students’ assessment of their academic and student life experiences. The Office of Institutional Research regularly administers the ACT/SUNY Student Opinion Survey (SOS), SUNY Plattsburgh Alumni Survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), National Survey of Faculty Engagement (FSSE), and the Cultural, Environmental, Structural, and Technical Assistance (CESTA) survey. Standards 7-A.2, 7-A.4

For example, a Task Force of the Assessment Advisory Committee was formed in 2009 to review and make recommendations on the large data sets related to student and faculty perceptions that had emerged from various assessment projects at the college. The aim of this study was to integrate and place the FSSE-NSSE data into a framework that offers practical insight about the college mission, particularly with respect to the pledge adopted in 2008: You will be challenged to learn, think, and excel through close interaction with outstanding faculty and staff.

The Task Force complied and analyzed the results from three studies: The Student Opinion Survey (SOS), the FSSE-NSSE survey, and the Focus Groups on Teaching conducted by the CTE and Institutional Resources (2007-2008). Five elements of the mission were identified: academic excellence, diversity, career preparation, ethics, and responsible citizenship. The Task Force then matched FSSE-NSSE/SOS/Focus Group questions to those elements. The Task Force made a number of preliminary recommendations including the need to administer the surveys again this year, and then to use the data sets from different years to create a trend analysis of changes over the last few years. In the meantime, the Task Force has made the final report available to the Assessment Advisory Committee (Final Report of the Task Force on FSSE/NSSE Data Analysis, June 15, 2011). Standards 1-F, 7-H

The college’s response to the results of a CESTA survey conducted in 2000 as part of our previous self-study provides another example of the use of survey data to help direct efforts toward improvement. For example, the 2000 survey showed low levels of faculty and staff satisfaction with the budget and resource allocation process. Subsequently, a revised budget request process helped department chairs make cogent budget requests based on department needs and plans, and a budget calendar, campus priorities, and planning assumptions have better guided the timing and development of budget requests. Additionally, managers are now trained on strategic and operational budget processes. These improvements may account, at least in part, for the greater confidence and satisfaction expressed by faculty and staff in the budget process. The 2010 CESTA modified survey results exceeded the 2000 CESTA results for 7 of 9 items under “Resource Development”. Some topics on which faculty opinion had improved were “the extent to which the budget allocation reflects the college’s mission and priorities,” “broad-based employee involvement in budget preparation,” “effectiveness of the process for monitoring the budget,” and “effectiveness of the budget revision process.” (see Appendix F: Table A-2. CESTA 2000 and 2010 Results-Faculty and Staff Satisfaction-Budget Process.) Standards 2-F, 2-M, 3-S, 7-A, 7-A.4, 7-H

The Undergraduate Alumni Survey (2006 and 2007 graduates) also shows increased satisfaction with SUNY Plattsburgh in some areas as compared to 2002 graduates. For example, a larger percentage of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with SUNY Plattsburgh’s contribution to their skill development in some areas, in particular, those skills connected to “thinking clearly and critically” and “developing civic responsibility/public service.” (See Appendix G: Table A-3. Undergraduate Alumni Survey Results.) Standard 7-H

Student Characteristics

The college regularly collects data on student characteristics and makes these data widely available through the Office of Admissions and the Office of Institutional Research. These data show that the student body has continued to become stronger in its academic profile and more diverse in terms of its ethnic makeup. (See Table 2-2 and section 4.6 for details on changes in academic profile; see Appendix L: Undergraduate Headcounts by Race/Ethnicity 2007-2010 for data on changes in ethnic makeup.) Standards 2-A, 2-D, 2-E, 2-R, 2-S, 7-A.2, 7-J.5, 8-A

Data on student characteristics are also used for planning purposes. For example, recognition that the college is enrolling a larger number of high ability students has allowed us to anticipate increased demand for spots in the Honors Program and for opportunities to participate in research projects. The increase in students from ethnic minority and international backgrounds can be used to justify increased multicultural programming. As a third example, graduate admissions and specific graduate programs use the knowledge that over 50% of the college’s graduate students are alumni of our undergraduate programs in program planning and recruitment. Standards 2-B, 7-J.2, 7-J.6, 9-A

Retention and Graduation

The college uses a variety of measures to monitor...
undergraduates’ persistence toward graduation, including first-year retention rates, overall retention rates, and four- and six-year graduation rates. The Office of Institutional Research monitors these measures for all undergraduates and for many sub-populations. These data are reviewed annually and by appropriate administrators upon request and are used to inform admissions strategies and to make programmatic decisions that aim to support student academic success. (See section 4.7, Tables 4-1 and 4-2: Retention Analysis for a summary of recent data on retention and graduation rates.)

Standards 2-A, 2-E, 2-R, 2-S, 7-A, 7-A.2, 7-B, 7-J.1, 8-H

One use of retention data for program improvement has been in connection with the first-year experience program introduced in 2005 to enhance retention and student success. Retention data suggest that this program contributed to the increase in overall retention rates for full-time, first-time undergraduates. Additionally, an Early Alert System was developed during the fall 2004 semester as a way of improving retention. Faculty and staff are now encouraged to help identify students who may be having difficulty by submitting their concern electronically on Student Early Alert in the college’s Banner Web portal. Relevant offices then attempt to contact each student who is referred in order to assess how best the college can assist. In addition, an Academic Advisement “Preview” and Orientation for New Faculty Advisors has been initiated to help prepare new faculty for their advisement responsibilities. These two programs may also have contributed to the increase in retention. Graduation data will also be used to judge the success of these initiatives when it becomes available for appropriate years.

Standards 7-B, 7-F, 7-I, 7-J.1, 7-J.2, 7-J.3, 9-A, 9-C

2.5 Creating a Culture of Assessment

Since the 2002 MSCH decennial review the college has developed additional assessment policies and procedures and has made better use of assessment results to help fulfill our mission and goals, as well as to facilitate the outcomes of academic departments (i.e., improve student learning, teaching, and the curriculum) and administrative and educational support departments/units. Programs and services have improved as a result of assessment activities. Much of this progress is documented in the Assessment Plan, the Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) Template, and the Strategic Plan Template. This information may be found for all academic programs and all administrative or educational support departments/units on the college’s assessment Web page (Assessment at SUNY Plattsburgh). The documentation of the use of assessment results helps to illustrate our commitment to build a culture of assessment.

Standards 2-I.1, 7-A, 7-A.1, 7-A.2, 7-C, 7-D.3, 7-E.1, 7-E.2, 14-B, 14-E

The college has devoted considerable resources to the support of assessment activities, including a large proportion of the time and efforts of the Office of Institutional Research, dedication of a half faculty line to the college-wide Assessment Coordinator position, hiring a full-time assessment/data manager for the Division of Education, Health, and Human Services, and countless hours of faculty, staff, and administrative time. In order to continually improve the use of assessment, the college has periodically sent faculty and administrators to meetings and workshops on assessment, sponsored Webinars and similar forms of continuing education, organized on-campus panels highlighting successful assessment efforts, and added to the assessment activities expected of various units.

Standards 2-I.4, 7-A.4, 7-E.4, 14-B.2

In 2002, the Faculty Senate adopted the following policy in support of the campus-wide assessment efforts:

All departments and units of the college, academic and non-academic, will undertake annual assessment of their programs. Plans for undertaking assessment and the results of assessment activities will be reviewed periodically by the dean and/or vice president responsible for each unit and reported to the Faculty Senate and Executive Council.

Faculty Senate action in March 2007 stipulated that the intended outcomes of a course be included in the syllabus.

Standards 2-I.3, 7-D.3, 7-E.2

Most recently, in fall 2010 the Deans’ Cabinet endorsed the Assessment Advisory Committee’s recommendation to require all academic programs to perform curriculum mapping to better align student learning outcomes for each course with program student learning outcomes, General Education student learning outcomes, and all-college student learning outcomes. All academic programs initiated this process in spring 2011 as part of their assessment record. In preparation for this activity, the Office of the Provost invited Dr. Michael Heel, Coordinator of Academic Assessment and Program Review at Monroe Community College, to conduct a two-day workshop on curriculum mapping to all department chairpersons, administrators, and members of key committees on assessment and planning.

Standards 2-I.4, 7-A.3, 7-D.3, 7-E.4, 12-F, 14-A.1, 14-B.1, 14-B.5, 14-F.4

Below we provide some illustrative examples of how our institution is creating a culture of assessment.

2.5.1 General Education

General Education program assessment follows guidelines and standards that are consistent with SUNY Student Learning Outcomes and assessment procedures, and is coordinated by the Provost’s Office in conjunction with the General Education Committee of the Faculty Senate. This committee is responsible for leadership in developing the General Education curriculum, implementing policies, monitoring the administration of the General Education curriculum, periodically assessing the General Education program, and recommending policies on General Education.

Since 2003-2004, each year the college has assessed four to five categories of General Education program
by evaluating samples of student performance using a rubric system to determine how well students have achieved the SUNY and SUNY Plattsburgh student learning outcomes for that category. An assessment report of General Education student learning outcomes is prepared each year by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. Summary reports in each category are distributed to the Provost’s Office, the Deans’ Cabinet, the General Education committee, and the faculty in departments that teach courses in the category assessed. Meetings may be held between the Provost, deans, and department faculty to discuss ways of improving the level of student achievement in General Education courses. Open forums on this topic are held from time to time for the same purpose.

This continuous and sustained General Education assessment process has involved a large number of faculty and departments, as well as students and staff, and it has brought student outcomes assessment to the attention of many faculty. Some departments have modeled aspects of their program assessment procedures on General Education program assessment.

2.5.2 Division of Student Affairs

Since the 2002 Middle States visit each department within Student Affairs developed a seven-year plan for assessing its programs across a range of measures including Utilization Review, Satisfaction Analysis, Needs Analysis, Program Outcomes, Student Learning/Growth Outcomes, and Overall Program Review. Until recently each department was working on its second seven-year plan. Departments identified intended outcomes for their programs, including student learning outcomes, and developed multiple methods of evaluation for these outcomes as well as specific criteria for success. These outcomes were connected to the mission statement of each department. Departments choose to assess outcomes in a few of these areas each year, and assess from each category at least once during each seven-year plan period.

Each year annual reports and assessment records are submitted to the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Division’s Assessment Coordinator for review and feedback. Directors receive feedback along with a synthesized summary of the reports submitted by each department describing how each has contributed to the seven overall goals of the division. Since the last decennial Middle States review, Student Affairs has revised their mission statement and divisional goals, asked departments to review and revise their mission statements, and to identify areas of expected student growth and learning for those students who have interaction with these programs.

On June 6, 2011, the Vice President for Student Affairs attended a SUNY Chief Student Affairs Officers’ meeting where Dr. Steve Tyrell, Vice President for Student Affairs at Alfred State College, gave a presentation about assessment for accreditation purposes. Based on the lessons learned at this presentation and under the Vice President’s direction, the Division has reconsidered its approach to assessment. On July 19, 2011 Dr. Tyrell facilitated a day long assessment workshop for all department directors to help the division prepare for the upcoming Middle States visit. As a result of this workshop and continued guidance from Dr. Tyrell, the Division of Student Affairs has focused on ways to improve the documentation of how assessment data leads to changes to programs and services, emphasis on conducting the same assessment efforts over multiple years to demonstrate how actual outcomes change programs and services, and using both indirect measures as well as direct measures of student learning outcomes. Dr. Tyrell was brought back to campus on November 7th and 8th, 2011 to meet individually with each department to provide feedback and direction on each new assessment plan. Where possible, the Division will create one-page summaries of past examples of good assessment projects that can document clear outcome statements, allocation of resources, implementation of programs and services, assessment, and the use of data to make appropriate future changes. Standards 2-B, 2-C, 2-G, 2-S, 7-A.1, 7-A.5, 7-B, 9-J

2.5.3 Division of Institutional Advancement

A Division of Institutional Advancement planning team sets goals, coincident to broader institutional goals, in three main areas: outreach, marketing and communications, and resource development. The goals are set each year through a planning process that includes a review of the prior year results, discussions about what went right and wrong, and a series of goal-setting meetings including an annual retreat of the heads of the four departments in the division (Alumni Relations, Marketing and Communications, Development, and Advancement Services) and the Vice President for Institutional Advancement.

Measurable goals include building a stronger culture of alumni and student engagement, increasing applications for admission and assisting the college in achieving enrollment management and retention goals, improving the college’s reputation and visibility, and increasing philanthropic investment. A series of “dashboard indicators” is used to assess progress on these goals at any point in time. Some examples of goals achieved in 2008-2009 are: 1) strengthen bonds with alumni and friends of the college by organizing 27 regional events and Homecoming 2009; 2) increase student awareness of Alumni Association and Foundation support and build a stronger culture of engagement by connecting with 1,500 students; 3) improve college visibility by implementing a new Web content management policy and developing a campaign marketing and communication plan. Standards 2-C, 2-G, 2-S, 3-N, 7-A, 7-A.1, 7-B

2.5.4 Division of Business Affairs

Each year departments in Business Affairs describe
major achievements in the previous year and how those achievements support the strategic objectives of the division and the college. Departments describe the projects they plan to undertake in the upcoming year, stipulate the intended outcomes, identify evidence-based criteria for success, and indicate how results of the assessment will be used to improve performance. Department directors meet to discuss the proposed projects and those with the highest institutional impact rise to the top of the priority list. Simple metrics such as success in enrollment management, financial management, and institutional advancement are utilized to assess program outcomes. Departments also review their mission statement on an annual basis. Standards 2-G, 7-J.4, 7-L

2.6 Conclusions

Since the last decennial review, the college’s established policies, methods, and use of assessment results, at all levels, have helped to instill the importance of assessment among members of the college community, and to establish priorities for and integration among planning, resource allocation, and budgeting. Central to this improvement has been the college’s heightened commitment to enhance the teaching/learning environment and the quality of services to our students, staff, and faculty. Support for institutional assessment and planning is evidenced by the following:

- Appointment of a half-time assessment coordinator in 2008-09 and continuation of this position to the present;
- Establishment of the College Planning Council in 2005 and the Strategic Planning Implementation Task Force in 2009;
- Hiring of external organizations/consultants (e.g., Noel Levitz, STAMATS, Perkins-Eastman, among others) to help inform planning, resource allocation and budgeting;
- Inviting noted speakers on assessment and planning (e.g., Ray Haas, Michael Heel) to help educate faculty/staff/administrators and key committees involved in assessment and planning;
- Endorsement of the college’s Assessment Plan and Institutional Effectiveness Plan;
- Hiring a data assessment specialist to help secure and maintain accreditation (TEAC) for the Teacher Education program;
- Development opportunities for In-House Grants to support assessment activities;
- Sponsoring professional development opportunities for faculty and staff (travel to conferences, Webinars, etc.). Standard 7-A.4

Despite the many successes of our institutional assessment programs, we can always strive to do better. The Assessment Advisory Committee regularly reviews and discusses the progress the college is making in institutional assessment and suggests ways to improve the process. The committee also periodically reviews the assessment record forms and recommends changes designed to enhance assessment activities and make the process more useful to the college and its departments and units. Based on this decennial self-study, we have concluded that more attention could be paid to distributing the results of assessment data and analyses to constituency groups including faculty, staff, and students. Faculty and administrative staff who work closely with assessment efforts are familiar with results. Yet more people could be brought into the process of closing the loop by holding all-college meetings or workshops to disseminate results more widely and to involve more people in the feedback process. Additionally, the newly formed Planning Integration Task Force Committee is the beginning of an ongoing and sustainable process of planning that links the major college plans to resources and budgeting. Standards 7-A.6, 14-B.5

One challenge to the already existing planning process will be to integrate the recommendations put forward from this Self-Study Report. The next strategic planning cycle beginning in 2012 is perfectly positioned to make use of the analyses that emerge from our reaccreditation process. The particular impetus for doing so must come from administrators serving on the President’s Cabinet, Deans’ Cabinet, and College Planning Council, as well as the strategic planning committees that oversee the implementation of strategic planning. Close consideration of our self-study recommendations is important for ensuring that institutional planning is a shared activity open to all constituents at the college who wish to participate.