



Hamilton College
Self-Study Report

Prepared for the Middle States Commission on
Higher Education

2010-11

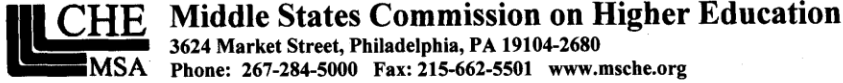
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Institutional profile.....	1
Scope of the Self-Study	2
Goals and objectives	5
Organization of the Self-Study Process	6
CHAPTER 2: MISSION AND GOALS (STANDARD 1)	8
Introduction.....	8
Statement of mission.....	8
Statements of goals	9
Relation to external contexts and constituencies	15
Other goals	17
Diversity.....	19
Conclusions.....	23
Recommendations.....	24
CHAPTER 3: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES (STANDARDS 2 AND 3)	26
Introduction.....	26
Strategic planning and college goals.....	26
Strategic plan development.....	29
Planning implementation	32
Assessment processes	34
Management of college resources: financial, human, and physical.....	37
Conclusions.....	43
Recommendations.....	43
CHAPTER 4: LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION (STANDARDS 4 AND 5).....	45
Introduction.....	45
Board of Trustees.....	46
Communication with the Board of Trustees	50
Faculty governance	51
Senior staff and administration	55

Student involvement in governance.....	59
Conclusions.....	61
Recommendations.....	61
CHAPTER 5: INTEGRITY (STANDARD 6)	63
Introduction.....	63
Academic integrity.....	63
Fair policies and practices.....	70
Institutional transparency and truthful representation.....	75
Conclusions.....	78
Recommendations.....	79
CHAPTER 6: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT (STANDARD 7).....	80
Introduction.....	80
Fundamental elements of institutional assessment	80
Assessing diversity efforts	85
Using assessment data to inform college decision making.....	91
Connecting assessment outcomes, planning, and budget allocations	97
Conclusions.....	106
Recommendations.....	107
CHAPTER 7: STUDENT ADMISSIONS, RETENTION, AND SUPPORT SERVICES (STANDARDS 8 AND 9)	108
Introduction.....	108
Alignment of admissions and support services with mission	108
Relevance of curriculum.....	110
Advising under the open curriculum.....	111
Education for self-direction and support services.....	112
Retention of students.....	115
Admitting, retaining, and serving diverse students.....	119
Balancing budget challenges with priorities of admission and financial aid	125
Athletics	126
Additional compliance documentation	127
Conclusions.....	128
Recommendations.....	128
CHAPTER 8: FACULTY (STANDARD 10)	130
Introduction.....	130
Annual review processes and evaluation of teaching	130
Research and career development support.....	134

Criteria for review of teaching, scholarship, and service.....	136
Hiring and supporting a diverse faculty.....	138
Conclusions.....	140
Recommendations.....	141
CHAPTER 9: EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS, GENERAL EDUCATION, RELATED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING (STANDARDS 11, 12, 13, AND 14)	142
Introduction.....	142
General education	142
Concentration goals and the senior program.....	167
Off-campus programs	172
Assessment of student learning.....	176
Conclusions.....	185
Recommendations.....	186
CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION	188
APPENDIX.....	190
Working Group Members.....	190
DOCUMENT AND HYPERLINK INDEX TABLE	194

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT



**Certification Statement:
 Compliance with MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation and
 Federal Title IV Requirements
 (Effective October 1, 2009)**

An institution seeking **initial accreditation** or **reaffirmation of accreditation** must affirm by completing this certification statement that it meets or continues to meet established MSCHE requirements of affiliation and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 such as those on distance education and transfer of credit.

The signed statement must be attached to the executive summary of the institution's self-study report.


If it is not possible to certify compliance with all such requirements, the institution must attach specific details in a separate memorandum.

Hamilton College
 (Name of Institution)

is seeking (*Check one*): Initial Accreditation Reaffirmation of Accreditation


The undersigned hereby certify that the institution meets all established requirements of affiliation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 such as those on distance education and transfer of credit, and that it has complied with the MSCHE policy, "Related Entities."

Exceptions are noted in the attached memorandum (*Check if applicable*)



 (Chief Executive Officer)

 (Date) 1-31-11



 (Chair, Board of Trustees or Directors)

 (Date) 1-31-11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hamilton College's Self-Study Report was prepared by a Steering Committee of faculty and administrators. A total of eight working groups comprised of sixty-two faculty, staff, administrators, students, and trustees addressed one or more of the Standards outlined in the *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, published by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. One of the co-chairs of each working group also served as a member of the Steering Committee. In their deliberations, the working groups reviewed myriad documentation and sought input and information from a wide range of offices and individuals on campus. The findings represented in this report reflect a serious and thorough examination of the College's practices and programs.

Hamilton is a residential liberal arts college dedicated to academic excellence and the development of students as human beings. This goal of educational and personal development is obtained through study of broad areas of inquiry, self-directed curricular choice through an open curriculum, and close personal interaction with diverse groups of people and ideas. In light of the College's liberal arts mission, the Steering Committee decided to adopt a comprehensive model for the Self-Study, with emphases on diversity, the open curriculum, and resource management. While the Steering Committee paid close attention to the Middle States Standards, these emphases were the focal points of the working group reports.

Throughout the Self-Study report, compliance with the Standards and review of College goals are fully documented with a wide range of assessment results and other data and information derived from institutional sources. Assessment and data-driven decision making have become hallmarks of Hamilton College. Through the Mellon Project for the Assessment of Liberal Arts, led by Sociology Professor Dan Chambliss, Hamilton has become a leader in the

assessment of residential liberal arts education. Hamilton has also participated in, and provided early support for, other national learning outcomes studies, including the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education and a Teagle-funded study of critical thinking and postformal reasoning outcomes in a disciplinary context. Beyond these national studies Hamilton has an active assessment program throughout the College, from assessing learning goals within the departments through senior capstones to cross-campus surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement.

The emphasis on diversity was a common and uniting theme among all of the working group reports and ultimately throughout the final Self-Study report. As affirmed in the most recent Strategic Plan and demonstrated by the statements and actions of College leaders, the encouragement of a diversity of people, beliefs, and ideas is an institutional priority. The wide-ranging and continuous efforts to diversify the Hamilton community and make it more welcoming to all is well documented, although it is recognized that more work needs to be done.

The open curriculum, which is characterized by freedom from course distribution requirements, was instituted in 2001 and continues to be reviewed and evaluated by the faculty. A goal of the curriculum is to foster student self-direction, and advising plays an important role in encouraging students to take an appropriate breadth of courses across disciplinary divisions. There is, however, structure to the general education program. There are competency requirements in writing and quantitative literacy, where students must take a certain number of courses that are designated as writing intensive or as quantitative-symbolic reasoning intensive. Within the departments and programs, all students are required to complete a senior program, either a thesis or a project which serves as an integrating and culminating experience in the

concentration. The current curriculum at Hamilton serves the students and faculty well, and continuous assessment is helping the faculty to discover ways to strengthen it.

Both this Self-Study and the College's recent Strategic Plan were developed during a time of great economic uncertainty. The recent recession and slow recovery have influenced how Hamilton manages its resources. The Self-Study report addresses this issue more discreetly than the other emphases, but it is obvious in areas such as planning, budgeting, and student financial aid that it is a concern for College leadership. In the main, however, the College has adjusted well to the budget-tightening occasioned by the 2008-09 downturn and remains financially strong. A telling sign of this strength is the recent implementation of a need-blind financial aid policy, which commits Hamilton to admitting incoming classes without considering an applicant's ability to pay.

Hamilton College is a robust and vibrant educational community, as reflected throughout this Self-Study report. It attracts top students and the faculty are committed to teaching, scholarship, and giving students the personal attention they need to develop academically and personally. However, there is no reason to become complacent. Those involved with the development of this report took a critical look at the operation of the College, and plenty of opportunities for improvement are identified. A stronger Hamilton will be the result of serious consideration of those opportunities. The year 2012 will be Hamilton's bicentennial year. As the findings presented in this report will show, the College continues to flourish and will confront the challenges of its third century with confidence and lucidity.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Institutional profile

Originally founded in 1793 as the Hamilton-Oneida Academy and chartered in 1812, the third oldest college in New York State, Hamilton College today enrolls just over 1,800 students from nearly all of the 50 states and approximately 40 countries. It is distinguished by a faculty dedicated to teaching and scholarship, innovative academic programs, a commitment to diversity in its broadest sense, outstanding modern facilities, and talented and motivated students. The College is located on a wooded 1,350-acre hilltop campus overlooking the Village of Clinton, New York.

The College offers courses in 30 departments, and provides students the opportunity to select from 40 concentrations (majors) and 37 minors, including 15 interdisciplinary programs. Hamilton also sponsors study-abroad programs in China, France, India and Spain, and domestic study-away programs in Washington, D.C. and New York City.

Hamilton College is chartered by the Regents of the State University of New York. The College's governing Board of Trustees consists of 24 Charter and 12 Alumni Trustees, plus 28 non-voting but active Life Trustees. The President votes as a Charter Trustee. Alumni Trustees are appointed by the Alumni Council to non-renewable four-year terms, with three in rotation each year. Charter Trustees serve six-year renewable terms but must step down from the Board before age 70. The Board addresses broad matters of policy and acts on recommendations from its 11 standing committees: Admission; Audit; Budget and Finance; Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment; Development; Honorary Degrees; Instruction; Investments; Nominations; Planning; and Student Affairs.

Eight senior staff members report directly to the President: Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty; Dean of Students; Vice President and Dean of Admission and Financial Aid; Chief Diversity Officer; Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees; Vice President, Administration and Finance; Vice President for Information Technology; and Vice President, Communications and Development. The Board of Trustees delegates authority for the academic program to the Faculty. All faculty members employed half-time or more have the right to vote at faculty meetings, which normally occur once a month during the academic year.

Scope of the Self-Study

The Hamilton community has devoted considerable effort to strategic planning since our [last accreditation review in 2001](#). The College has developed two five-year strategic plans, the first implemented from [2002 through 2007](#), and the second, [developed in 2008](#) (approved in 2009), currently being implemented. Many of our strategic initiatives were informed by the findings of the 2001 review, but Hamilton has made dramatic changes in many facets of campus life in the last ten years, well beyond the last accreditation review recommendations.

One focus of our efforts has been the diversity of the campus community. The ethnic and racial diversity of our students and faculty members has significantly increased in the last ten years. Examples of programs and policies the College has undertaken to improve and enhance the diversity of the student body and student life include participation in Posse, implementation of a policy of need-blind admissions, and recent establishment of a Cultural Education Center. Faculty recruitment and retention efforts have included more thorough analysis of faculty diversity and retention, increased starting salaries, opportunity hires, more strategic recruitment

procedures, and the creation of a diversity initiatives position in the Dean of Faculty's Office (the forerunner of the current Chief Diversity Officer position).

A second area of notable change has been the new "open" curriculum. Adopted in 2001, it removed disciplinary distribution requirements and placed the responsibility for breadth in the liberal arts on the individual student and academic advising. In conjunction with the new curriculum, and in response to the 2001 review, the College revised pre-concentration advising. New students are now paired with a faculty advisor on the basis of their academic interest, and only with faculty members scheduled to be on campus for the entire, two-year, pre-concentration period. As a result, we have seen a dramatic rise in student satisfaction with first-year advising. Recognized as a critical factor in the success of Hamilton's open curriculum, the Strategic Plan called for an Advising Task Force, which examined the advising system through Spring 2009 with a view to further improvements. Several new degree programs have also been established, including Chinese, Communication, Environmental Science, and a minor in New Media Studies. A cross-discipline sophomore seminar program was initiated, and then eliminated. While many were disappointed with its demise, the decision to end the program was an example of rigorous assessment informing a critical academic decision.

Facility development and improvement has also been a priority at Hamilton over the last ten years. In 2005, a new 209,000 sq-ft Science Center was opened, followed by the Blood Fitness and Dance Center (2006), the Siuda Admissions House (2007), the Kirner-Johnson Building for social sciences (2008), and the Sadove Student Center at Emerson Hall (2010). The College also continued to renovate residential buildings during this period, an effort started in the mid-1990's when a new residential life policy converted fraternity houses into general residential accommodations and other College uses.

Hamilton College has established itself as an assessment leader among liberal arts colleges. Under the guidance of Professor of Sociology Dan Chambliss, the [Hamilton Project for the Assessment of Liberal Arts](#), funded by the Mellon Foundation, has undertaken a series of research initiatives in the assessment of liberal arts education. A central component of the project was a panel of 100 students, randomly selected from the Class of 2005; they were interviewed through their college careers and continue to be interviewed as alumni on a wide range of topics, including dormitory accommodations, social life, advising, classes, programs, professors, co-curricular activities, study abroad, and athletics. The Mellon Project also focused on writing outcomes; over five years, more than 1,100 course writing assignments were collected from panel members and other groups of students. Outside evaluators read the papers and rated them according to a rubric established by the Hamilton College Writing Center. The results demonstrated significant improvement in writing during the first three years of college. These assessments of the residential liberal arts experience at Hamilton have informed decision making across campus and have helped assessment practitioners identify best practices nationwide.

Hamilton prepares for its next accreditation review in this context of significant accomplishment in the recent past while cognizant of challenges ahead. Having just completed a strategic plan, campus leaders and the Hamilton community have a road map for the next five years; however, the paths we choose, and our rate of progress, will be influenced by the global economic downturn and consequent resource constraints. For the next few years, Hamilton will have to balance support for the high quality programs and personal academic experiences we offer against modest endowment growth and greater needs for student financial aid. With this in mind, the Steering Committee selected a “Comprehensive Model with Emphases” for our Self-Study report. We think this will be conducive to furthering the objectives of our Strategic Plan,

examining our priorities in an environment of fiscal constraint, and reviewing the wide range of institutional activities and practices encompassed in the Middle States' publication

Characteristics of Excellence.

Goals and objectives

The overall goal of the self-study process was to evaluate Hamilton College's programs and activities under Middle States accreditation standards, and assess our success in meeting our aims and objectives in the context of institutional priorities. The Steering Committee decided on three areas of emphasis for the Self-Study, integrating into each of them application of the standards, or *Characteristics of Excellence*.

1. Diversity, as expressed in a multitude of ways, was an important priority of the last two strategic plans and is an ongoing commitment at Hamilton. The Self-Study critically reviewed all aspects of diversity in the community, encompassing student, faculty, administration, and staff constituencies, and including issues of access, retention, climate, and curriculum.
2. Our recent strategic planning process confirmed our support of the open curriculum. There is, however, a strong desire for increased review and assessment of its impact on important general education outcomes, such as student course breadth, and of the ways in which related activities, such as advising, are influencing those outcomes. The success of the open curriculum also depends upon the individual department and program curricula, which complement and enhance general education. In order to understand our open curricular outcomes and future curricular path, the Self-Study reviewed both the general education goals and curricular goals within each concentration.

3. As this report is being written, the national economy is suffering the effects of a major recession and is in slow recovery. This challenging environment provided chastening context as we completed our current Strategic Plan, and pervaded our thinking as we completed this Self-Study. While resource management is as important as ever, a sharper focus has been brought to our choices about deployment; we attempted to use the Self-Study to understand better how reduced resources may impact our strategic priorities. While our findings on planning, budgeting, and financial aid policies did take the resource environment into account, this emphasis was as not a pervasive as the others.

Organization of the Self-Study Process

Co-chairing the Self-Study Steering Committee are Dr. Patrick Reynolds, Interim Dean of Faculty and Professor of Biology, and Dr. Gordon Hewitt, Assistant Dean of the Faculty for Institutional Research. Pat Reynolds was appointed to the Hamilton Faculty in 1992, and has served as Associate Dean since July 2007 and Interim Dean since July 2010. Gordon Hewitt has worked at Hamilton since 2001, directing institutional research activities on campus. Members of the Steering Committee are:

- Meredith Bonham, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees
- Jinnie Garrett, Professor of Biology
- Jennifer Irons, Associate Professor of Sociology
- Shoshana Keller, Associate Professor of History
- Timothy Kelly, Associate Professor of Mathematics
- Chaise LaDousa, Associate Professor of Anthropology
- Karen Leach, Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Sam Pellman, Professor of Music

- Dave Smallen, Vice President for Information Technology
- Julio Videras, Associate Professor of Economics

Eight working groups were formed, each with two co-chairs (one of whom is a member of the Steering Committee), to address one or more Middle States standards as outlined in *Characteristics of Excellence* ([see Appendix](#)). Working group membership, through broad invitation and targeted appointment, was determined by balancing broad campus representation with experience appropriate to the working group charge; one of these members co-chaired with the Steering Committee member. Student Assembly selected students to serve on the working groups.

Each working group began its deliberations by addressing a series of pre-determined research questions, but the nature of such inquiry lead to modified or new questions as the groups conducted their work. In developing these research questions, the Steering Committee was asked to pay particular attention to the three emphases we have identified, and to assessment efforts within the standards. The co-chairs of the Steering Committee met with each working group early in the process to give them their charges, and the Steering Committee met regularly to provide updates on the progress of the working groups. The Steering Committee and other working group members also met early on with David Paris, Professor of Government at Hamilton and Executive Director of the New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability, to discuss the national movement in assessment and its implication for accreditation. In January each working group provided a written progress report (some provided actual report drafts), and final reports were submitted in June 2010. A campus report was then compiled from these reports and circulated for review and feedback in January, 2011.

CHAPTER 2: MISSION AND GOALS (STANDARD 1)

Introduction

This chapter begins with a consideration of the mission of Hamilton College, followed by a survey of the goal statements that guide fulfillment of the College's mission, and continues with a series of objectives statements that address how Hamilton currently seeks to meet those goals. In examining the mission of Hamilton College, our foremost questions are How do we expect our students to be prepared by their Hamilton education? What is the evidence that we are successfully achieving that end? Our research focuses on several important concepts including the purpose of a liberal arts education, the role of co-curricular activities, and the legacy of Kirkland College, Hamilton's former sister institution that merged with Hamilton in 1978. The findings reflect a critical review of the objectives of the College and outline ways that Hamilton can improve the clarity and communication of its mission and goals. In the concluding sections of this chapter, we explicitly address the Fundamental Elements for Standard 1, as described in the Middle States' *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education*, and the research emphasis of diversity and the role it plays in the mission and goals of Hamilton College.

Statement of mission

The following formal mission statement is given under "[Purposes and Goals](#)" in the [College Catalogue](#):

In sum, Hamilton's mission is to provide an educational experience that emphasizes academic excellence and the development of students as human beings. This experience centers on ready access to an exceptional faculty and can be shaped to meet each individual student's interests and aspirations. A Hamilton education prepares students to make choices and to accept the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic world of

intellect and diversity. It will be the foundation on which they build a lifetime of personal and professional achievement and satisfaction.

A summary of the mission statement is included in the [Faculty Handbook](#) (p. 1); it states:

In sum, our mission is to provide an educational experience that emphasizes academic excellence and the development of students as human beings, as we prepare them to make choices and accept the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic world of intellect and diversity.

Statements of goals

The [charter of the College](#) defines us as “a College, for the instruction and education of youth, in the learned languages and liberal arts and Sciences” (p.1). While this places us in a tradition that extends back to Boethius and beyond, it does not clearly define for us what we hope to achieve by providing such an education.

Indeed, consensus may be more readily found on what we do not do; for example, although not explicitly acknowledged in our documents, it is well understood internally and abroad that we do not offer vocational or professional training. Seeking an inclusive definition, however, may not be easy nor a useful framework for determining our success, as observed in the [2005 Mellon Assessment Project Report](#):

... the assessment of liberal arts colleges is difficult work for the simple reason that these colleges do not lay out concrete goals in the same way, say, a job training business does. Yes, there are a collection of skills, experiences, and maybe even values colleges hope to bestow upon students, but at the same time, members of the faculty, administration, student body, and alumni all seem to

recognize that Hamilton, like most other liberal arts colleges, derives much of its strength from not explicitly stating, formalizing, and institutionalizing a list of concrete goals. The flexibility and openness of liberal arts is what defines it as liberal arts in the first place (p.42).

Nonetheless, in the course of reviewing significant College documents of purpose—the College Catalogue, Faculty Handbook, and 2009 Strategic Plan—we have identified the following statements of desired outcomes of a Hamilton education:

Graduates of Hamilton

- will have been intellectually and personally developed. [College Catalogue]
- will have had opportunities to realize “their fullest capacities, for their own benefit and that of the world in which they will live.” [College Catalogue]
- will have the “intellectual toughness, creativity and flexibility necessary to excel in a rapidly changing world.” [College Catalogue]
- will “be poised to investigate new avenues of knowledge, to respond creatively to new and unexpected situations and to address problems and challenges in a morally and intellectually courageous manner.” [College Catalogue]
- will be prepared “to make choices and to accept the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic world of intellect and diversity.” [College Catalogue]
- will be prepared to “build a lifetime of personal and professional achievement and satisfaction.” [College Catalogue]
- will be prepared for “a lifetime of continuing learning, intellectual exploration, and personal fulfillment.” [Chapter I, Faculty Handbook]

- will be prepared to “value and seek intellectual and cultural diversity.” [Chapter I, Faculty Handbook].
- will have balanced “the depth of their knowledge in specific disciplines with the breadth of learning necessary for living in the intellectually and culturally diverse world of the 21st century.” [\[2009 Strategic Plan\]](#)
- will have been helped with preparation for “careers and service in the nation and beyond.” [2009 Strategic Plan]
- will have been urged towards “civic engagement through classroom work and co-curricular involvement.” [2009 Strategic Plan].

While the mission statement in the Catalogue is inclusive of most of these, their origin bears examination. We have mentioned above the Faculty Handbook; at Hamilton, this is a document that is frequently modified by faculty vote to reflect current practices and best thinking; a two-year comprehensive review of the document was passed by the Faculty in May 2009 and ratified by the Board of Trustees later that year. The 2009 Strategic Plan was developed with significant input from members of the community, following a process formally recommended by Faculty vote in Fall, 2007. It was discussed on several occasions with the Board of Trustees, and approved by them in its final form in December, 2008, when they encouraged “the entire College community to communicate and collaborate during its implementation and periodic reassessment.” Collectively, these assertions constitute a series of contemporary outcomes goals for the College, stemming from long-standing statements in the College Catalogue, the essence of which faculty and trustee bodies have reaffirmed through

review of the Faculty Handbook and have expanded in a recent College-wide process of strategic planning.

In order to learn more about how the college community interprets and assesses these statements of the College's goals, we administered an online survey to the faculty, administrators, and students involved in the Self-Study working groups, posing [a number of questions](#) directly pertaining to these statements. In general, respondents were thoughtful about the meaning of these goals, and indicate an active engagement and understanding of their meaning for their work at the College.

Institutional objectives or strategies

Statements of objectives or strategies to deliver on the College's mission and goals, principally within the statement of "[Purposes and Goals](#)" in the College Catalogue and the [2009 Strategic Plan](#), relate to the development and maintenance of a curriculum that fosters a balance of breadth and depth, the ability of our graduates to think critically and creatively, their ability to make new connections across disciplines and cultures, their ability to continue to learn new things on their own, and their ability to communicate with clarity and conviction:

- The Faculty expects that students will attain a high level of engagement early in their studies and will develop as creative and critical thinkers, writers and speakers.
[College Catalogue]
- The College expects its students to develop the ability to read, observe and listen with critical perception, and to think, write and speak with clarity, understanding and precision. Students should develop their appreciation for inquiry, combined with the confidence to evaluate arguments and to defend their own positions. They should learn to question creatively, derive information from and analyze data, and formulate hypotheses.

They should recognize the limits of factual information and become attuned to how such information can be used and misused. Above all, students should develop respect for intellectual and cultural diversity because such respect promotes free and open inquiry, independent thought and mutual understanding. [College Catalogue]

- Students will be prepared for citizenship in a global community. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will foster an intellectual atmosphere that reflects our commitment to exploring and acknowledging the significance of different ideas and perspectives. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will provide an academic program that is rigorous, challenging and relevant to a new generation of students. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will maintain the quality of its academic program, with effective advising as a critical component. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will continue planning for facilities (arts, library, humanities), which provide an important part of the educational experience at Hamilton. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will support research as an important component of a liberal arts education. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College is currently planning a major facilities project in support of the arts [2009 Strategic Plan], which demonstrates its support and encouragement of participation in the arts as a valuable component of our students' lives.

Indeed, the strength of the College's programs in the arts is one of the most significant legacies of Kirkland College¹, as cited in the 2009 Strategic Plan:

... some of Hamilton's salient characteristics are relatively new: coeducation, the open curriculum, and emphases on interdisciplinarity, the arts, and hands-on learning. Each of these changes may be traced in some measure to the mission and curriculum of Kirkland College, which redefined College Hill. In fact, one might argue that the Hamilton of today is a place of two interlocking histories, proud, enduring, and complementary. These two histories are definitional, not merely incidental, to Hamilton.

In our consideration of the mission and goals of Hamilton College, we explored the ways in which [the Kirkland experience](#) continues to inform our priorities and values. Although very few college leaders here now have direct memories of Kirkland College, its outlook and achievements continue to inform Hamilton's programs and its image of itself.

Support of scholarly and creative activity

In addition to fulfilling our responsibility to transmit the intellectual and cultural heritages of our civilizations to the young people we are preparing for the work of their lives, we are expected by society to contribute to the continuing development of these heritages. As stated in the 2009 Strategic Plan (p. 12):

Whether a student participates in a research or creative endeavor with a faculty member or benefits from the scholarship of professors, Hamilton views research

¹ Kirkland College opened in 1968 as Hamilton's "sister institution." As an experimental institution, Kirkland offered programs that supplemented and enhanced the traditional liberal arts curriculum. The two colleges merged in 1978.

as an important component of a liberal arts education. That emphasis has guided the design and construction of new academic facilities and places us among a group of research colleges where scholarly and creative productivity are acknowledged as indispensable to a fully engaged pedagogy.

The use of the term “research colleges” triggered some discussion as the Strategic Plan was under development. Some in the community saw this as potentially detracting from the paramount importance of our mission as educators (as expressed in comprehensive terms by the opening line in Chapter One of the Faculty Handbook: “Education in all its forms is the central mission of Hamilton College”). Nonetheless, the contributions of members of the community to the growth of knowledge and creative activity have been sustained and significant. Within the past three years, most of the Hamilton faculty (and a few staff and administrators as well) have [had work selected by peers for publication, presentation, performance, or exhibition](#). Many of them have been engaged as active citizens as well, contributing their perspectives, insights, and expertise to debates in the public sphere.

Relation to external contexts and constituencies

The College itself can serve as a model to other institutions in the community and in society at large. For example, as the College implements sustainable environmental practices or develops strategies for building a truly diverse community, the immediate impact may be small. But this work is leveraged as graduates take these experiences into the world, and as the world observes our success or failure in these efforts.

There is still more that society expects of us, however. We deny at our peril a significant expectation that most students (and presumably their parents) have of the College—that they will

be able to maintain, if not exceed, the socioeconomic level achieved by their parents. Historians of higher education in the United States often remark that, until recently, a liberal arts education has been possible, with very few exceptions, for only the sons of the wealthy; young men from upper-class backgrounds could regard the receipt of a college degree as a rite of passage. But since World War II American society has generally understood college education as youths' principal opportunity for achieving upward mobility. Hamilton has taken some measure of pride in considering itself to be a "school of opportunity" (2009 Strategic Plan, p. 5).

But as the costs of a college education have escalated, debt burdens have increased (according to the 2009-10 Common Data Set, the average debt of a graduate in the class of 2009 who had taken out loans was \$19,466). As a consequence, the long-term value of a liberal arts education may be increasingly obscured by the necessity for graduates to secure an immediate income, particularly in the current economic environment. For the Class of 2007, one year after graduation, 94% of our graduates were employed, in graduate school, or had post-graduate fellowships (according to [Hamilton: Career Outcomes, Class of 2007](#)). For the Class of 2008, 92% of the graduates have reported successful outcomes ([Hamilton: Career Outcomes, Class of 2008](#)).

Intersecting these trends are shifts in attitudes regarding the goals students have now for a college education. In 1980, just 55% of Hamilton's entering students felt that being "financially well off" was a principal goal. According to recent [CIRP data](#), 63% of Hamilton's entering students hope to be "financially well off," while 66% agree it is important to develop "a meaningful philosophy of life." (For comparison, in 1971 the national figures were 37% and 73%, respectively, and the current national figures are 78% and 48%) (Higher Education Research Institute). It will be a challenge for Hamilton to manage these expectations so that the

long-term interests of our graduates and of society continue to be well served. As the president of Harvard, Drew Gilpin Faust, recently wrote (*New York Times*, September 6, 2009):

But even as we as a nation have embraced education as critical to economic growth and opportunity, we should remember that colleges and universities are about a great deal more than measurable utility. Unlike perhaps any other institutions in the world, they embrace the long view and nurture the kind of critical perspectives that look far beyond the present.

Other goals

Residential life and athletics

The experiences students have through extracurricular activities and residential life are recognized as significant components of the education of a Hamilton student, as expressed by these goals:

- The College will provide student services that encourage and support personal development and responsibility. [\[2009 Strategic Plan\]](#)
- The College will provide an athletic program that sufficiently challenges our scholar-athletes. [2009 Strategic Plan]

As a [residential college](#), Hamilton offers its students many opportunities to further their interests, to learn from one another, and to nurture their leadership skills through a variety of residential life programs and the activities of student organizations. Although there is anecdotal evidence that the strength of these programs has contributed to notable successes that Hamilton students have experienced as applicants for post-graduate fellowships and similar opportunities,

there are very few significant measures by which the long-term effectiveness of our student life programs have been assessed. A more comprehensive longitudinal study of Hamilton graduates could enable us to learn more about how participation in residential life activities and student organizations has contributed to the educational enrichment, personal growth, leadership development, and acquisition of effective organizational skills by Hamilton's alumni and alumnae.

Similarly, participation in [athletics at Hamilton](#), a Division III school in the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), provides students with important ways to develop as individuals and as members of teams. A range of leadership, problem-solving, and citizenship skills, among others, is engaged by students who participate in these activities, which often extend over the course of several semesters.

Non-academic goals

We have identified other goals, beyond athletics and residential life, which relate less directly to our academic mission but continue to be worthy of the College's close attention:

- The College will strive to reduce consumption in concert with the worldwide sustainability movement and to encourage individual responsibility toward green initiatives. [\[2009 Strategic Plan\]](#)
- The College is committed to implementing the recommendations of the Green Team, to the extent possible under anticipated economic conditions, and to fulfilling the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment by modifying as appropriate institutional policies and encouraging sustainable practices among students and employees. [\[2009 Strategic Plan\]](#)

- The College will cultivate a sense of community among all our employees, especially those new to campus, by providing professional development opportunities and by communicating effectively so that employees feel invested in Hamilton's purposes and goals. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will cultivate and expand, where appropriate and mutually beneficial, our partnerships with the local and regional communities. [2009 Strategic Plan]

Diversity

For most of its history, Hamilton College served a narrowly defined segment of the population comprised nearly exclusively of young, Anglo-Saxon men. Like most American institutions, the College has endeavored more recently to dismantle the barriers that have impeded or prohibited access for other groups, particularly young women and young people of color. In the 2009 Strategic Plan there are several statements of goals that are relevant to our mission to admit and educate students of diverse backgrounds:

- The student body is undergoing a purposeful transformation as we seek to achieve a demographic mirroring of the coming generation of college-bound students. Hamilton students are increasingly diverse, and we want to continue that trend so that all our students—minority and majority alike—are prepared for citizenship in a global community. Ultimately, we want to foster an intellectual atmosphere that reflects our commitment to exploring and acknowledging the significance of different ideas and perspectives. We expect Hamilton to be transformed, even as it transforms those who come here. [\[2009 Strategic Plan\]](#)

- The College will become an inclusive community whose demographics reflect those of the coming generation of faculty and college-bound students [2008 Strategic Plan]
- Since engaging with diverse views and experiences is an important part of education, the College must foster such interaction through its hiring practices, student recruitment efforts, financial aid programs, curricular offerings, and social and cultural initiatives. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- In order to be a college whose students will be intellectually prepared for the society into which they will graduate, we will ensure that Hamilton has programs and services that foster our commitment to inclusiveness. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will provide appropriate services and an ongoing commitment to inclusiveness so that learning disabled and physically disabled students have the opportunity to pursue a college education. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- The College will provide financial aid that meets the demonstrated need of every student, with a long-term goal of being need-blind in admission. [2009 Strategic Plan]
- Our long-term goal is to become need-blind in admission because it is consistent with our heritage, mission, and purpose. A second emphasis of our diversity efforts is to increase the number of students and employees of color by making access to Hamilton a strategic imperative throughout the College. [2009 Strategic Plan]

Given these goals, Hamilton's priority is clearly to offer the opportunity of a Hamilton education to a more diverse group of prospective students that includes many who have pronounced financial need. Demonstrating the high level we have assigned to this priority, the

College has already met its commitment to become need-blind in acceptance, with the expectation that this will enable the education of many students from historically under-represented groups as well as those from historically well-represented groups.

But it is important that we recognize that diversity in itself does not necessarily further the fundamental mission of the College to educate its students; merely achieving “a demographic mirroring [of] the coming generation of college-bound students” (2009 Strategic Plan, p.3) is not sufficient. The assessment of progress toward such a goal can be fairly easily quantified, to be sure. The enrollment of African-American and Hispanic students has been increasing by approximately 1–1.25% per decade at Hamilton; continuance of this rate will not lead to a distribution of the major ethnic groups in the student body that corresponds to their projected percentages in the national population of college-bound students until sometime in the 22nd century. A preoccupation with such numbers, however, can become a counterproductive exercise in bin-filling. The danger is that “demographic mirroring” can become an end in itself and be accorded more weight than is warranted. As the [2004 Diversity Strategic Plan](#) observes, “representational numbers are only part of the diversity picture, but our students of color consistently relate the challenges and drawbacks of coming from underrepresented groups to join a substantially white and upper-middle class College community.”

At present (2010-11), 23% of students are recognized as “multi-cultural or international” (similarly, 18% of faculty members are recognized as “faculty of color”). For every “multi-cultural or international” student, then, there are approximately four students from traditionally well-represented groups (and likewise with the faculty). It continues to be possible for students (and faculty) from well-represented groups to have a Hamilton experience that incorporates very little meaningful interaction with students (or faculty) from traditionally underrepresented

groups, and vice-versa. These latter students often find themselves drawing support from a much smaller group of their peers. Patterns of self-segregation, in the dining halls, course selections, study groups, and social functions, continue to be chronic (although results of the [CHAS Campus Climate Survey](#) suggest that self-segregation problems are not quite as bad as at peer institutions). This reality demonstrates that we have not yet achieved the true parity of experience that all Hamilton students should be able to realize.

As Hamilton progresses towards a student body that is comprised of a significantly higher percentage of students from traditionally underrepresented groups, it will become increasingly difficult for the patterns describe above to hold, and new issues will present themselves to us. For instance, we might anticipate increasing challenges posed by the resentment of some students, from historically well-represented groups, who come to feel that efforts to promote diversity somehow come at their expense.

As recent research by Thomas J. Espenshade and Alexandria Walton Radford suggests (*No Longer Separate, Not Yet Equal*, Princeton University Press, 2009), the success of Hamilton's long-term efforts to become more diverse will depend on the quality of the interactions, or what Espenshade refers to as the "relevant issues of mixing or mingling." The [2004 Diversity Strategic Plan](#) calls for the College to "enrich the academic experience to incorporate multiple perspectives and to enhance students' skills at relating to those different from themselves." Recent efforts to establish a Cultural Education Center will also contribute to the realization of another goal of the 2004 Diversity Plan, which is to "enrich the social and cultural experience by creating spaces and promoting activities that affirm difference while fostering greater cross-cultural interaction." It is vital that this center become a truly campus-wide resource and not simply a refuge.

It will be vitally important to assess continually the success of these and related initiatives toward fostering the “mingling and mixing” that is to be desired. The College must continue to ensure that meaningful opportunities exist for students, faculty, and staff of all backgrounds to learn from one another and that the curriculum provides occasions for all students to learn of the diversity of heritages upon which our civilization is built. The College must continue routinely to evaluate its diversity-related programs and initiatives, and the faculty Committee on Academic Policy and academic departments of the faculty must continue to assess the breadth of our curricular offerings (and the associated patterns of enrollment).

It should not be the mission of the College to assimilate. As the [2009 Strategic Plan](#) states, “We expect Hamilton to be transformed, even as it transforms those who come here.” And as President Stewart wrote in her [letter to the community](#) of December 7, 2008, “Before us is an exciting future. The imperative is to shape a community that makes all its members welcome—indeed, that celebrates Hamilton's many voices.”

Conclusions

From our review of College documents, we have found that Hamilton has a variety of expressions of its mission beyond its formal statement of mission. These different expressions represent different perspectives and moments in Hamilton’s recent history. The 2002 and 2009 Strategic Plans, which were developed with broad participation by the college community, have been useful expressions of the College’s priorities and goals, and the 2009 Plan is now a guiding document for the making of decisions at Hamilton. The Plan recognizes the college’s obligations not only to the Hamilton community, including alumni, but also to the neighboring communities that surround us and to the world at large. For our society’s well-being depends upon the preparation of broadly informed, creative, and responsible young men and women who can guide

and sustain it through enormous change and continuing challenges. To assess the success of Hamilton in filling this role, many questions might be considered:

- To what degree does the diversity of our student body (and eventually that of our alumni body as well) reflect the diversity of our society?
- In what important choices and decisions do our alumni, as professionals, as citizens, or as private individuals, participate?
- To what extent are they involved as leaders?
- To what extent do our graduates demonstrate the ability to make new connections across cultural and disciplinary boundaries?
- To what extent do our graduates demonstrate the ability to continue to learn new things?
- How effectively do our alumni communicate their insights, knowledge, and experience?

Public records, alumni publications, news reports, and alumni surveys offer much evidence relevant to these questions. The College would benefit, however, from a more systematic, longitudinal study of its graduates from multiple years, perhaps modeled after the alumni interviews from the Mellon study previously cited. Such a survey could usefully be undertaken with a consortium of similar colleges so as to enable comparisons of Hamilton's graduates to those of our peers.

Recommendations

1. The President and Trustees of the College should constitute a representative panel to update the formal mission statement and develop corresponding goals statements that

would integrate and update the various declarations of purpose we have cited in this chapter. These statements should refer to the basic learning outcomes that Hamilton students should achieve over four years of study and to the means by which the college will evaluate the quality of their educational experience, and should take due note of the College's obligations to society at large. These statements should then be endorsed and ratified by the appropriate bodies that participate in the governance of the College.

2. Using the Mellon Assessment Project's longitudinal study of alumni as a model, embark upon a more comprehensive study of alumni outcomes, including peer data.

CHAPTER 3: PLANNING, RESOURCE ALLOCATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES (STANDARDS 2 AND 3)

Introduction

Since the last accreditation review, Hamilton has completed two strategic planning exercises, in [2002](#) and [2009](#). This first part of this chapter outlines the process in which the second plan (released in January 2009) was developed, and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of both the process and the Plan, with a focus on the community's understanding of the goals and objectives it articulates. The second part of the chapter addresses the management of institutional resources, explaining how the budgeting and planning processes are aligned, how resources are allocated, and how the use of resources is continually assessed.

Strategic planning and college goals

The most recent Strategic Plan establishes priorities for the College that are consistent with the College's mission to promote the "intellectual and personal development of students":

- An academic program that is rigorous, challenging, and relevant to a new generation of students
- Student services that encourage and support personal development and responsibility
- Financial aid that meets the demonstrated need of every student, and a long-term goal of being need-blind in admission
- An inclusive community whose demographics reflect those of the coming generation of faculty and college-bound students

The strategic plan provides a rationale for these priorities and translates them into goals that can be implemented programmatically. For example, a rigorous, challenging and relevant academic program is supported by intermediate goals of providing competitive compensation to faculty and investing in campus facilities, reflected especially in recent improvements to academic facilities. Similarly, high quality student services are supported by competitive compensation for staff and enhancements to non-academic facilities.

Other College communications reinforce these goals; for example, the goal of an inclusive community is pervasive in many college documents, including the [Diversity Strategic Plan](#), while a [February 2009 letter](#) to the community from President Stewart emphasized the need to continue to recruit and enroll the most talented students despite the difficult economic times. Indeed, the Strategic Plan priority of becoming need-blind in admissions can be viewed in large part as a means of achieving socioeconomic diversity of students and as a means of recruiting and retaining the most talented students.

The January 2009 Strategic Plan resulted from a process, described in detail in the Plan and on the [strategic planning web site](#), that sought input from the entire Hamilton community, including faculty, students, staff, Trustees and alumni, and which invited comments from the entire community.

In order to understand how the strategic planning subcommittees reached their recommendations, we solicited feedback from each of the eight subcommittee chairs and read the [final reports](#) of the subcommittees. Several recommendations of the subcommittees were reflected in the final Strategic Plan. For example, the Subcommittee on Academic Programs recommended a task force on advising, and the Subcommittee on Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention recommended that the structures by which the College governs itself be made

more inclusive, that multiple means of communicating with faculty be utilized, and that competitive salaries for all employees be maintained. These recommendations, as well as several others made by these and other subcommittees, appear as action items in the final version of the Strategic Plan.

The evidence from the final reports and from communication with subcommittee chairs indicate that many of these recommendations are supported by assessment of appropriate data. For example, recommendations regarding personnel matters are based on surveys of staff and administrators, reports provided by the Office of Institutional Research on a variety of factors including the demographic composition of employee groups, and reports from outside groups such as the National Coalition on Health Care. Similarly, the recommendation to implement a task force to evaluate advising is based on advising satisfaction surveys by Hamilton students, and the recommendation to study academic standards is based on an analysis of grade inflation. That noted, not all aspects of the Strategic Plan were as well supported; for example, the success of a key element of the current Strategic Plan, the open curriculum, is supported by survey data on the decision of currently enrolled or enrolling students to attend Hamilton, and on student satisfaction with Hamilton in general.² However, other perspectives on the open curriculum's success stem from belief; the final report of one Strategic Plan subcommittee stated that "The Open Curriculum is a student-centered curriculum that entrusts students with the freedom and responsibility for shaping their own educational experiences. We believe this promotes academic achievement and personal growth." While this subcommittee took into account the assessment

² A report by the consulting firm, George Dehne and Associates, found that the majority of current and enrolling students at Hamilton stated that the open curriculum at Hamilton was at least "very important" in their decision to enroll at Hamilton. The preferences of college students who considered but did not apply or enroll at Hamilton were not available. Additionally, the increasing percentage of students who say they would attend Hamilton again is attributed to the success of the open curriculum although students were not asked for the reasons for their satisfaction in this survey.

data that were available to it, it is clear that more empirical study of the impact of the open curriculum on the academic achievement and personal growth of students is needed.

In spite of the transparency in the process and the evidence that several subcommittees relied on assessment data in forming their recommendations, we note that the vast majority of assessment data used in the process was internally focused rather than comparative (with peer institutions) in context. This limited the potential for examining Hamilton's competitive position in the higher education industry, and thus for emphasizing Hamilton's distinctiveness vis-à-vis its immediate peers

Strategic plan development

The College's Strategic Plan, "Foundations for Hamilton's Next 200 Years," was finalized in January 2009. The four-level hierarchy of the plan is as follows:

I. Four Priorities

1. An academic program that is rigorous, challenging, and relevant to a new generation of students
2. Student services that encourage and support personal development and responsibility
3. Financial aid that meets the demonstrated need of every student, and a long-term goal of being need-blind in admission
4. An inclusive community whose demographics reflect those of the coming generation of faculty and college-bound students

II. Four Defining Values or Strategic Themes

1. Education for self-direction
2. Self-governing community

3. Thoughtful dialogue and debate
4. Engagement with the world

III. Action Areas

1. Education for self-direction
 - a. Advising and Curricular Programs, Policies, and Procedures
 - b. Co-Curricular Programming
 - c. Athletics and Physical Education Programs
 - d. Academic Facilities
2. Self-governing community
 - a. Community-Building
 - b. Governance Policy and Procedures
 - c. Co-Curricular Social and Residential Facilities
 - d. Sustainability
3. Thoughtful dialogue and debate
 - a. Effective Communication
 - b. Student Development
 - c. Faculty and Staff Development
4. Engagement with the world
 - a. Diversity and Access
 - b. Scholarship and Creative Activity
 - c. Employee Satisfaction
 - d. Community Service and Outreach

IV. Action Items

There are 29 action items specified within these action areas distilled from the Plan. The [Update](#) on the College's Strategic Plan website notes progress toward carrying out the action items of the plan periodically. The updates indicate that progress has been made toward every goal and in some cases that the stated objectives have been accomplished. However, many of the goals are qualitative in nature. Progress is difficult to measure since benchmarks for success are undefined. Also, the connections among action items, across action areas and strategic themes, and the ways in which distinct aspects of planning within the four priorities can be complementary could be articulated more clearly. At present the interpretation of the priorities is not devoid of ambiguity.

In a [survey of faculty, staff, students, and administrators](#) a large majority of all college constituencies answered "yes" or "somewhat" to the question of whether they understood the College's priorities; however, faculty and students were much more likely than staff and administrators to answer "no" or "not sure." Of those who indicated unambiguously that they knew what the priorities are, both faculty and student responses often indicated that teaching, writing, and speaking were Hamilton priorities, but faculty also mentioned preservation of the endowment and selectivity in admissions. Among students, on the other hand, maintenance of relations with the village of Clinton and diversity were indicated as a College priority more than by any other group. While it should be expected that perceptions and support of institutional priorities differ by group, this analysis points to an opportunity to improve the understanding of College priorities and to emphasize the alignment of decision making with them. To achieve results consistent with the highly collaborative and inclusive strategic planning process, more effective communication of the priorities emerging from the process to different College constituencies will be necessary.

Planning implementation

Members of the senior staff of the College participate in an annual goal setting and review process; focus areas are established at an annual summer retreat and individual senior staff members further refine goals for their areas. These goals are typically related to the larger strategic priorities, themes, and action areas of the college, as articulated in the Strategic Plan. In addition, some College units such as Information Technology Services, and Administration and Finance, hold a yearly retreat to assess progress, or to revise and adjust goals, in light of changes that the institution has made in its strategic direction. Planning and assessment are also conducted at the individual employee level during the annual [performance review process](#), which evaluates personal and departmental progress on established goals and serves to re-focus resources on the departmental initiatives that most directly support the institutional mission and goals. Each employee completes a [self-report](#) and the supervisor completes an [evaluation](#).

Recent annual goals addressed by the senior staff have included need-blind admissions, diversity of the campus, and the strength of the academic program. The team works collaboratively to accomplish the goals that are set, meeting weekly; the President meets with each senior staff member weekly or bi-weekly during the year to discuss progress and current issues. At the quarterly meeting of the Board of Trustees, there is an executive session to discuss senior-staff performance with the president. In the spring, each senior staff member writes a self-report outlining the accomplishments and challenges of the past year and plans for the next; the President requests input on senior staff performance from the Board of Trustees and prepares an evaluation for discussion with the senior staff member. Finally, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Compensation Committee, was formalized in the spring of 2009 to evaluate performance, competitive position, and appropriate senior-staff compensation packages.

Senior-staff goals and evaluations are shared with members of this committee, which is chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees; the chair solicits feedback about the President's performance from the entire Board in the spring. The feedback is used as the basis for evaluation of progress and goal setting for the future.

Pursuant to the completion and implementation of the latest Strategic Plan, an institutional goal that bears upon the planning process itself is to establish a more consistent approach to addressing strategic issues as they arise and to revising the current Strategic Plan as necessary. (The strategic planning subcommittees were ad hoc groups that were disbanded once the Strategic Plan was finalized.) The standing on-campus Planning Committee ([Faculty Handbook](#), p. 17), with senior staff, faculty, and student representation, has acted in an advisory capacity to the President in the past but only intermittently considered strategic issues; it is increasingly recognized as the primary on-campus venue for ongoing consideration of strategic issues. In the Spring of 2010, this committee has taken up the issue of the appropriate size of the College, and is focusing on student outcomes for the 2010-11 academic year.

The standing Trustee Committee on Planning is dedicated to long-range planning for the College; it reviewed and approved the College's two strategic plans, and has examined a number of long-term issues such as the future size of the College (June 2010), Hamilton's role in the Clinton/Utica community (October 2009), challenges and opportunities presented by changing demographics in the country (September 2007), development of facility master plans (June 2003, October 2005), assessment efforts and strategies (March 2004), and the development of a dashboard of strategic indicators for the College (December 2003). The discussions and feedback by the Trustee Committee on Planning shape future directions and further work by the senior staff and the on-campus Planning Committee.

Assessment processes

Assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan is conducted by individuals who have a primary responsibility in action areas defined by the four strategic themes. For example, in the action area Diversity and Access under the theme Engagement with the World, the Affirmative Action Officer for Faculty (the Associate Dean for Faculty), relies on data on the diversity of Ph.D.s granted in specific academic fields to assess the recruitment and hiring process of every faculty search in relation to the relevant applicant pools. [Comparisons](#) with data of peer institutions on the composition of their faculties provide another important assessment measure. The Chief Diversity Officer and Assistant Dean of Faculty for Institutional Research regularly examine the make-up of the student body through the lenses of the “[Equity Scorecard](#),” a set of performance measures widely used by analysts in examinations of colleges and universities

These ongoing evaluative efforts reflect the Plan’s fourth priority that calls for “an inclusive community whose demographics reflect those of the coming generation of faculty and college-bound students.” This priority is similarly vital in the recruitment and retention activities of the Office of Admission and Financial Aid. The achievement of an increasingly diverse applicant pool is accomplished through a highly individualized admission process that measures quality as reflected by the rigor of the high school attended by the applicant and by test scores while also considering such factors as geography, legacy, development potential and special talent.

Success in student recruitment and retention is measured not only via the credentials that incoming students bring with them or the academic success they achieve on campus, but also by fit; “fitness” for Hamilton is measured by evaluating [retention rates](#) from the first to the second year and by [graduation rates](#). In addition, the Dean of Admission and Financial Aid and her team

meet with the Dean of Students and her team annually to review the performance of students who were not successful at Hamilton for social, academic, disciplinary or other reasons. The Admission team then consults the admissions files of such students to see if anything can be learned to improve the selection process in future years. In examining the records of students who transfer away from Hamilton, it is difficult to determine patterns, although a [retention analysis](#) done in 2004 by the Office of Institutional Research did show geographic origin was a strong predictor of attrition. In general, making personal connections on campus early in the first year is one of the strongest predictors of success, as evidenced in research done by Professor Dan Chambliss for the Mellon Assessment Project. Other strong predictors of success at Hamilton include the admission office's 18-point reader rating scale and SAT II test scores, followed by SAT scores. It is also noteworthy that students who receive financial aid perform better than those who do not. ([Jensen, Wu study](#))

While it is more difficult to evaluate progress on the priority of providing “an academic program that is rigorous, challenging, and relevant to a new generation of students,”, the Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) annually examines enrollment data, grade distributions, number of majors in each program, and other aspects of the academic program as part of its annual process of allocating faculty positions. These data are extracted from the Planning Notebook (published on a continuing basis by the Office of Institutional Research, and are particularly useful when interpreted in the context of a departmental narrative that accompanies allocation requests). There will be further discussion of the resource allocation process in the sections that follow.

Given the options students are able to exercise under the open curriculum, advising is an important element of the academic program. The June 2009 [Advising Task Force Report](#)

relied on a variety of assessment tools, and examined course enrollment data and results from student surveys to assess the effectiveness of advising at Hamilton.

Although “Student services that encourage and support personal development and responsibility” are a priority for many at the College, the Office of the Dean of Students has a central responsibility for these services and oversees a wide range of programs specifically designed to meet students’ personal needs. From the Career Center to the Outdoor Leadership Center to the Campus Activity Board, students are provided opportunities to participate in and indeed to create activities on campus that involve taking responsibility for their decisions and allow them to become engaged in the college and local community. While Hamilton College assesses the success of these programs through surveys, many of the achievements are noted by faculty and staff in their routine contacts with students in these programs. In addition, the Dean of Students Office is proactive in informing parents of incoming freshmen about the importance of allowing their sons or daughters to work through issues as adults. Over many years the drop in the number of parent phone calls, reductions in student-damage charges, and decreases in Judicial Board cases have provided us with reassuring signs about the maturity and personal development of our students.

Finally, with regard to the Priority of providing “Financial aid that meets the demonstrated need of every student, and a long-term goal of being need-blind in admission,” the Office of Admission and Financial Aid takes a personalized approach to creating financial aid packages, based on a rigorous budgeting process conducted in close collaboration with the Vice President for Administration and Finance. Over several years, assessments of the gap between need-sensitive and need-blind admissions were incorporated into near- and long-term budget projection models. In May of 2010, the College announced that it would henceforth be [need-](#)

[blind](#), committed to making admission decisions without considering an applicant's ability to pay³. Hamilton will also continue its long-standing policy of meeting the full demonstrated need of every student it admits. Planning around Admissions and Financial Aid is discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

Management of college resources: financial, human, and physical

Budget process

In its annual budgeting process, the College adopts strategies for utilizing its resources effectively to meet the priorities of the College. Hamilton engages in a transparent budget process leading to a [balanced annual budget](#) and a 5-year budget forecast. The development of the budget is an iterative process involving the campus community, department chairs, the on-campus budget committee, the senior staff, and the Board of Trustees. The Faculty Committee on Budget and Finance meets weekly or biweekly throughout the fall and into March to provide review and advice on possible budget options. Departments are asked to submit resource requests in mid-fall following [budget guidelines](#). These requests are prioritized by senior staff and discussed in the aggregate by the Committee on Budget and Finance. During the budget process, progress on the annual goals identified by senior staff and on key budget drivers is evaluated. Decision making is driven by the overarching priorities of the College's Strategic Plan, with the quality of the academic program and making Hamilton accessible to students (i.e., financial aid) having particular relevance to the budgeting process. In addition, the budget plan ensures support for the maintenance of campus facilities and equipment. The [budget plan is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval in March](#).

³ Does not apply to transfers and international students

The financial health of the College and the efficient use of resources are evaluated in several ways. [Regular financial reports](#) on current operations are prepared for each Board meeting. The annual audit and resulting [financial statements](#) provide a snapshot of the financial picture. The College subscribes to comparative data services and participates in relevant surveys with competitors, including NACUBO's [endowment](#) and [tuition discounting](#) studies, and the [AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey](#). The data and resulting analyses show Hamilton's comparative standing and give an indication of how efficiently and effectively financial resources are being used. The College also prepares a [financial ratio analysis every three to four years](#) to check our financial health using traditional metrics.

An important part of the budget is the endowment draw used to support current operating expenses. The Hamilton endowment is managed by the Committee on Investments, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees, and the College's Investment Office, to provide financial resources to meet the College's current annual goals and to ensure that the College can continue to meet its strategic priorities in the future. The Committee on Investments includes active trustees who are investment professionals and experts in financial markets. Other alumni, who are experts in financial markets but not currently trustees, also attend Committee on Investments meetings and offer advice.

A subgroup of the Committee on Investments, in conjunction with the Investment Office, is responsible for performing [asset allocation studies](#) to evaluate the impact of the existing and alternative asset allocations on the tradeoff between meeting the College's current demands and the need to maintain and increase the real value of the Endowment over time. The subgroup with the Investment Office develops and approves the economic and capital market assumptions used in the studies. These capital market assumptions are then used to calculate an "efficient

frontier”; i.e. the set of alternative asset mixes that have the highest expected return for a given level of risk. Next, Monte Carlo simulations are performed to forecast the impact that the existing and alternative asset mixes would have on the Endowment’s real spending draw and real market value over time and over a wide variety of capital market scenarios, including both best and worst case scenarios. These [results are then presented](#) to the Committee on Investments for review and discussion of the appropriate amount of risk to take. The review focuses on the tradeoff between maintaining and/or increasing the real value of the Endowment and meeting the College’s spending requirements while maintaining adequate liquidity to meet unforeseen circumstances with particular emphasis on worst case scenarios. Based on this review, the Investment Committee then selects and approves the Endowment’s strategic asset mix.

The annual budget-building process begins in October with the distribution to all budget managers of a [booklet](#) describing the operating budget guidelines and specifying the timeline for budget preparation, from the submission of budget requests to the approval of the budget by the Board of Trustees. Requests are generally submitted via an online budget tool in November; senior staff finalizes all requests in December and reviews the overall package. In January and February, requests are reconciled with available funding so as to produce a balanced budget for presentation to the Board of Trustees. The Faculty Committee on Budget and Finance is consulted on tradeoffs in the budget balancing, but the ultimate responsibility for producing a balanced budget for Trustee approval resides with the senior officers. The budget is generally approved at the March Board of Trustees meeting.

Finally, it is necessary to ensure that the College’s resources are used in accordance with its financial plans. Written procedures put the proper controls in place, from Red Flag Rules to cash procedures to specifications of proper signatory authority for all transactions. Many of these

procedures are communicated to the campus community via our Business Office and Human Resources websites. Others are, by necessity, internal policies within departments designed to ensure that duties are separated, assets are secured, and personal information is protected. In addition, management responds to all concerns expressed by the auditor's management letter and describes in detail how we intend to address them.

Faculty and staff positions

Given the dominant roles of people – both individuals and groups – in higher education, the positions occupied by faculty and staff rank among the College's most precious assets. In the budget process, a cap on the budget for faculty salaries is established, but the distribution of positions and the funds budgeted for them are the responsibility of the President and the Dean of Faculty. In making his recommendations regarding the allocation of faculty positions to the President, the Dean of Faculty consults with the faculty Committee on Academic Policy (CAP). When a faculty member resigns or retires, the position is turned over to CAP, which reviews [proposals](#), prepared by academic departments, that outline the need for additional staffing to support the curriculum or enrollments. Based on their determination of the highest priority area of the curriculum, the CAP makes recommendations on the allocation of the position to the Dean of Faculty.

In 2006, the CAP reviewed its allocation procedures and established [guidelines](#) for evaluating departmental requests. These guidelines are communicated to faculty in the [solicitation](#) of proposals, which specifically directs departments to consider how the requested position will help to achieve institutional goals. Since 2006, the College has not added faculty positions except for those funded by grants or created by "opportunity hires," which increase diversity of the faculty. Reallocation can be difficult, but the College has relocated 5 vacated

faculty positions from one department to another since 2006, giving credibility to the allocation process.

Non-faculty positions are also examined when they become vacant. The appropriate senior staff member brings a replacement proposal before the entire senior staff team for discussion, prior to consideration by the President. Replacement or reallocation of positions is based on strategic priorities and budget considerations. In 2002, the senior staff undertook a full non-faculty staffing review, resulting in \$1 million in personnel and non-personnel cost reductions. In 2008, five additional staff positions were eliminated during a financially challenging period. In order to identify opportunities for greater efficiency, the College regularly reviews staffing data from peer institutions. The comparisons this exercise makes possible contribute to the ongoing effort to optimize staffing levels. We also engage in process optimization efforts; for example, in 2008, a group of employees in the business office and human resources developed recommendations that led to the streamlining of the payroll process.

Physical resources

Recent annual budgets provide about \$1.4 million for replacement of technology equipment, \$3.5 million for plant renewal, and \$650,000 for educational and other equipment. Our forecast calls for annual increases of approximately 4% for plant renewal, with technology, educational, and other equipment holding flat. Information technology is supported by a fully funded replacement plan for computers, servers, and network equipment. For other equipment, requests are sent to the Controller during the budget process, and allocation decisions are made by the Dean of Faculty, the Controller, and the Vice President for Administration and Finance, after consultation with the senior staff.

An [annual study](#) by Sightlines, a facilities research firm, provides the College with a review of progress on overall facilities renewal, estimates of long-term financial needs for plant renewal, and a comparison of the condition of Hamilton's buildings and grounds and its investments in maintenance and renewal with those of competitive peers. Recent studies show that the College is investing adequate funds in routine plant renewal and upgrades, although this is commonly accomplished by one-time appropriations from sources such as borrowing and gifts, rather than allocations from the operating budget. The budget for plant renewal has grown significantly over the last five years, but is still less than 50% of the minimum allocation recommended by annual studies.

Maintaining both academic and non-academic facilities that contribute to high quality academic programming and student services is an important part of the annual budget, and influences longer-term financial projections significantly. In May 2004, Hamilton College retained the services of Butler, Rogers, and Baskett of New York City to develop an Integrated Facilities Plan. The stated goals of the Facilities Plan were the integration of strategic initiatives from Hamilton's 2002 Strategic Plan and provision of a phased implementation for the Plan to maintain financial flexibility. The scope of this effort included both academic and non-academic facilities, and considered planning for future facilities needs as well as the integration of previous planning initiatives.

The [Integrated Facilities Plan](#) was completed in the fall of 2005, concurrently with the completion of Hamilton's new Science Center. The final document presented a three-phase implementation schedule, which responded to the 2002 Strategic Plan, accounted for the financial capacity of the College to implement the first phase, and provided recommendations for

future project development. These included general purpose classrooms, facilities for the visual and performing arts, the library, math and computer science, and the humanities.

In response to the 2009 Strategic Plan, an [update](#) to the Integrated Facilities Plan was initiated to address reuse of space that became vacant in the summer of 2010 on completion of the Sadove Student Center and renovation of Emerson Hall, and the subsequent move of several functions in Bristol Center to the Sadove Center. In light of the various space necessities identified in the 2005 Facilities Plan, new requirements for a Cultural Education Center, expanding space needs for East Asian Languages and Literatures, and the current economic climate, it is clear that continuing refinement of previous scenarios for using existing resources to meet both interim and long-term needs will be necessary.

Conclusions

Hamilton College is in compliance with Middle States Standards 2 and 3. Planning and resource allocation are consistent with the College's stated mission and strategic priorities, assessment results are used in the formation of the current Strategic Plan, and processes are in place to track progress in the action areas identified in the Plan. Furthermore, our review of the management of the financial, human, and physical resources of the College concluded that the processes used to allocate and manage these resources are rational, transparent, and explicitly linked to the College's priorities.

Recommendations

1. Establish a regular practice of addressing strategic issues as they arise, and revise the Strategic Plan as necessary, through the on-campus Planning Committee.
2. Future strategic planning exercises should include full consideration of the College's competitive position.

3. Improve the communication of the College's priorities and goals.

CHAPTER 4: LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION

(STANDARDS 4 AND 5)

Introduction

Hamilton College operates under a collegial system of shared governance. While the Board of Trustees has legal and fiduciary responsibility and is ultimately accountable for academic quality, fiscal and academic integrity, academic planning, assets, and the financial health of the institution, it delegates governance of academic programs to the faculty and management of the College to the senior administration. Hamilton's mission and goals are thus carried out under a "checks and balances" system, with roles clearly delineated. Numerous documents provide evidence of Hamilton's shared governance policies and practices, including the recently revised [Faculty Handbook](#), the College's [Charter](#) and [By-laws](#), the [2009 Strategic Plan](#), and the Board's [Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities](#). This chapter of the self-study report describes shared governance at Hamilton and also identifies areas where further evaluation and study can enhance the collaborative model that now applies.

The working group addressing Standards 4 and 5 also studied efforts to promote diversity, and procedures for employee review and evaluation. This continues to be an area of focus, although significant efforts have taken place since the 2001 Middle States reaccreditation review. It is doubtless more significant that the College's recent strategic planning process identified involvement of Hamilton community members in college governance as an area of focus. The [2009 Strategic Plan](#) specifically addressed governance in Section 2, entitled "Self-Governing Community":

Education for self-direction demands an inclusive self-governing community. To the extent possible, constituencies ought to be self-regulating—students regulating students,

faculty governing faculty, and staff administering to staff—as well as interlocking, to assure consistent, inclusive, and effective exchange and interaction. Some of this happens already: students regulate themselves through Student Assembly, the Honor Code, and the Judicial Board, and faculty do the same through policies and procedures set forth in the *Faculty Handbook*. Because all employees add an important perspective, new governance policies will incorporate a fuller range of voices and accommodate greater representation among and between campus constituencies.

Board of Trustees

Hamilton College is [chartered](#) by the Regents of the State University of New York. The College's governing [Board of Trustees](#) consists of 24 Charter and 12 Alumni Trustees, plus 28 non-voting but active Life Trustees. The President votes as a Charter Trustee. Alumni Trustees are appointed by the Alumni Council to non-renewable four-year terms; three rotate off each year. Charter Trustees serve six-year renewable terms but must step down from the Board before age 70. A review of comparable liberal arts colleges confirmed that a board of 36 members is typical for an institution of Hamilton's size. There is a widely held consensus that a board of roughly three dozen meets a number of appropriate criteria: it can include members with a sufficient variety of backgrounds and expertise to ensure that the Board's fiduciary responsibilities can be met; it can enlist an adequate complement of members for each of the board's several committees; and it can provide a sufficient corps of major contributors to the college's efforts to preserve its assets and acquire new resources. Hamilton is fortunate to have a dedicated and generous Board of Trustees, whose members are committed to the mission of the institution and the education of its students. The Board consists primarily of alumni who have been active volunteers for the College.

The Board addresses broad matters of policy and acts on recommendations from its eleven standing committees: Admission; Audit; Budget and Finance; Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment; Development; Honorary Degrees; Instruction; Investments; Nominations; Planning; and Student Affairs. Every two years, trustees are asked for their preferences for committee service. The President, Chair and Vice Chair, Secretary to the Board, and the Vice President for Communications and Development review board preferences before assignments are made. Typically, trustees serve on three committees at any one time. There are faculty and student representatives on all trustee committees except Nominations, Audit, and Investments, and they are provided with the same materials as the trustees for their respective committees.

The Board meets four times a year: in late September/early October (Fallcoming Weekend), early December (1812 Leadership Weekend in New York City), early March, and the first weekend in June (Reunions Weekend). For the three meetings on campus, all committee meetings take place on Friday and the full Board meeting occurs on Saturday morning. At the December meeting in NYC, all meetings take place on Friday to allow Board members the opportunity to take advantage of the events planned in conjunction with the 1812 Leadership Weekend. In December 2009, the Trustee meeting was organized as a retreat devoted to major policy issues. Based on the favorable response, this format will continue to be used for December meetings. In recent years, the Board also has taken the opportunity to discuss matters of strategic importance at plenary sessions scheduled on Fridays of Board meeting weekends.

The Board orients new members at the fall meeting. Trustees are provided with materials about college governance, and meet individually with members of the College senior staff. All board members are provided a survey tool at the conclusion of each meeting so they may give feedback about the substance and structure of the meetings. The senior staff reviews the

comments and incorporates the suggestions into the planning of future meetings. To keep abreast of current issues in the world of higher education and philanthropy, trustees are enrolled in the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), which publishes the magazine *Trusteeship*. Through the regular participation of the Secretary to the Board of Trustees in AGB workshops, the administration maintains awareness of current best practices in governance.

In 2009, the Board of Trustees [Bylaws](#) were revised and updated following a thorough review by the College's legal counsel and the executive committee of the Board of Trustees. The Board's role is clearly described in the Bylaws, including the committee structure and purposes. The revised Bylaws also distinguished the officers of the College from the senior staff. The officers of the College are identified as those who hold positions with direct responsibility to the Board—the President, the chief financial officer, and the Secretary to the Board of Trustees—and whose appointments must be approved by the Board. With the Bylaw changes, a standing subcommittee on compensation was also established to review annually the performance of the President and approve the compensation for members of her senior staff.

In 2006, the College instituted a conflict-of-interest policy ([Administration Handbook](#), p.16), which all trustees, senior staff, and key employees are required to sign. Although the College, as a non-profit entity, is not subject to Sarbanes-Oxley regulations, the recent implementation of accountability measures demonstrates the determination of the trustees and administration to clarify governance roles and comply with all relevant federal laws. Any potential conflicts must be disclosed, and are then discussed by the Trustee Audit Committee. The completion of the revised [IRS Form 990](#), which Hamilton submitted in March 2009 after a thorough vetting by the Audit Committee, provided yet another opportunity to review the College's governance and financial policies.

While the Board is responsible for the financial integrity of Hamilton, the members confine themselves, as they do in academic matters, to a basic policy-making role, ensuring strong financial management by holding the chief financial officer accountable for internal operation. According to Article III Section 3(b) of the [Bylaws](#), the “Vice President for Finance shall generally manage the finances of the College and maintain its accounts, books, and financial records, and shall have such other powers, authority, duties and privileges as may be granted or assigned by these Bylaws or by the Board from time to time.” The Board, through the chief financial officer, receives periodic reports of institutional committees and campus constituencies, and reviews from auditors. Quarterly budget updates are provided at each Board meeting and annual financial statements are reviewed by the Audit Committee. In March, copies of the following year’s draft budget are provided to the entire Board following extensive discussions among the senior staff, and with the Faculty Committee on Budget and Finance. The budget is discussed by the Trustee Committee on Budget and Finance, and approved by the full Board. The participation of members of the faculty budget committee in the meeting of the Trustee Committee on Budget and Finance provides for a dialogue between faculty and trustees on the key trade-offs encountered in the annual budget-development process.

The Board assists in generating resources needed to sustain and improve the institution, as outlined in the [“Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities of the members of the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College,”](#) which explicitly asserts that trustees should “make generous financial contributions. The amount of these annual and campaign gifts should be determined by each trustee according to his/her ability to give. However, each trustee should place the College high among the priority organizations of his/her philanthropic giving.”

In addition to being among the principal donors to the College, Hamilton trustees participate in fundraising activities through the direct solicitation of Hamilton alumni, parents, and friends, and by advising the communications and development office about potential donors. They also hold leadership roles in the planning and execution of the College's capital campaigns and other fundraising efforts.

The Committee on Nominations assesses individual charter trustees prior to their election to a subsequent term. Periodic assessment of the overall effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance is a feature of regular Middle States reviews. The appointment or re-appointment of the Board Chair and Vice Chair also provides an opportunity to assess Hamilton's governance and especially Board operations. Consistent with Hamilton's mission, Board members represent different points of view, interests, and experiences as well as diversity in characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, and gender. In recruiting new members, the Committee on Nominations also takes into account the demographics of the student body, recognizing that its increasing diversity should be reflected in the composition of the Board. Progress towards this objective is consistently reinforced by the make-up of the Alumni Trustee cohort. Since Hamilton became fully co-educational in 1978, and the College's efforts to diversify its community have only shown significant progress in the last ten years, identifying qualified women and people of color continues to be a challenge and an area of focus.

Communication with the Board of Trustees

There are numerous vehicles for enabling effective communication between the trustees and other members of the Hamilton community. Currently, the Board shares information and interacts with members of the Hamilton community through (a) membership of faculty and students on most Trustee committees, (b) regular [reports to the community](#) by President Stewart,

summarizing proceedings of Board meetings and actions taken, (c) service by Trustees on college committees, such as the 2006-07 Athletic Director Search Committee and committees involved in the preparation of the recent Strategic Plan, and (d) presentations by faculty before committees of the Board or, in some cases, before the entire Board, along with ensuing discussions. Examples of the latter are presentations by faculty members of the arts departments concerning the adequacy of our facilities, and discussion between the faculty Pre-Law Committee and the Trustee Committee on Instruction in 2009. The Board also has numerous regular opportunities for social interactions with faculty and students. At the March meeting, Trustees host the senior class at a cocktail party, after which they are hosted for dinner in faculty members' homes. Regularly scheduled lunches with student groups around a theme, such as Student Assembly, the Posse program, or community service, provide Board members with the opportunity to get to know students better.

Thus, there are significant mechanisms to ensure communication between the Board and the Faculty, as well as between the Board and other segments of the college community. It may be worthwhile for the College to consider expansion of these opportunities, further enhancing a strength of governance at the College. For example, the College might consider organizing the faculty-trustee dinners around discussion themes, so that they serve as forums for informal exchanges on topics pertinent to the College. In addition, faculty may be of greater help than at present in identifying former students, particularly those from groups not already well represented, for membership on the Board.

Faculty governance

The Board delegates governance of the academic program to the faculty. Consistent with Middle States standards, the faculty demonstrates sufficient independence to assure the academic

integrity of Hamilton. The role of the faculty in the College's educational policies and programs is outlined in Hamilton's [*Faculty Handbook*](#):

With authority delegated by the Board of Trustees, the Faculty formulates educational policies and programs; supervises teaching resources and procedures; advises on matters of appointment and promotion of faculty members and on other concerns relating to faculty personnel; administers the curriculum; certifies that students have fulfilled the requirements of the curriculum; exercises general supervision over various aspects of student life; organizes its own activities and internal affairs; and takes such other actions as may be appropriate to further the educational objectives of Hamilton College. (Faculty Handbook, p.7)

One example of the faculty's control over the curriculum and curricular planning is the Committee on Academic Policy's oversight of the faculty allocation process for departmental positions. The Hamilton Faculty, in addition to primary responsibility for the curriculum, also shares responsibility with members of the administration for various aspects of student life. This role is illustrated by faculty participation on the Honor Court and Judiciary Board. The primary means through which faculty members participate in College governance is through the committee system, the monthly general meetings of the Faculty, and within departments and programs as described in the *Faculty Handbook* and [*The Red Book*](#). All members of the faculty with appointments over 50% time (i.e., all ranks except Lecturers) have the right to vote at faculty meetings, which normally occur once a month during the academic year. Hamilton also continues its long-standing practice of considering as members of the faculty coaches of athletic teams who also have physical education teaching duties; this promotes the integration of

academics and athletics, and encourages involvement of academic faculty in an important co-curricular aspect of our educational program as specified in the [2009 Strategic Plan](#) (p.9).

examples of recent or ongoing faculty governance decisions include approving the academic calendar; overseeing the implementation of a new 4.3 grading system; determining course offerings each semester; and participating in faculty allocation deliberations. Faculty chairs are appointed by the Dean of Faculty on the recommendation of the department, and meet monthly to consider an agenda set by the Dean.

At Hamilton, the President and Dean of Faculty hold faculty appointments, teach classes, and are active scholars in their disciplines. This testifies to the centrality of the academic program at the highest levels of the College. Faculty participation is critical to effective shared governance at any small liberal arts college; this understanding seems especially pertinent at Hamilton, where the degree of faculty engagement has historically been exceptional. Faculty involvement in the life of the College is highly encouraged, and generally understood to be appropriate for a college of Hamilton's stature and a significant strength in its governance procedures.

Beginning in 2007, the faculty began the process of revising the *Faculty Handbook* in an effort to clarify procedures and provide an internally consistent structure for faculty deliberations. This process, although laborious for the members of Academic Council, resulted in a more informative and useful *Handbook*. Schedules for reappointment, tenure, and promotion procedures were coordinated and clarified. Inconsistencies in language across sections were eliminated, and procedures for handling personnel procedures in small departments were reviewed and revised.

While faculty involvement in governance is integral to Hamilton's self-identity, it also can lead to significant costs from the standpoint of time and effort expended in this domain. Accordingly, it seems appropriate to ask whether a major faculty committee, such as the Academic Council, should not consider ways to enhance the efficiency of faculty governance without losing the essential advantages of faculty oversight. Some faculty committees appear to be overburdened while the work of others is much less time-consuming. For example, the Committee on Academic Policy is charged with overseeing curricular policy but spends a good deal of its time on managerial tasks such as approving catalog copy. Perhaps the size of the committee could be increased in order to spread the workload and allow members to reflect on broad issues of educational interest. The composition and function of other committees could doubtless be reviewed with similar objectives (equitable workload and operational efficiencies).

A second enhancement of governance might be to devise ways of encouraging more faculty members to participate in meetings of the Faculty, so that discussions would be more representative of the Faculty as a whole. This would result in a more efficient use of faculty time, which is desirable given all the professional responsibilities faculty members have today. Suggestions include limiting the time available for reports, and encouraging committees to hold special meetings to discuss proposed legislation in advance, to identify and resolve major issues before discussion by the full faculty (an effective strategy for the recent *Faculty Handbook* revision). A disincentive to faculty attendance is the tendency to discuss minor matters at length; greater review of legislation outside of committee might help focus discussion in formal faculty meetings and better guide the development and passage of new legislation.

Senior staff and administration

The senior staff of the College is composed of the President and her eight direct reports: Dean of Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs; Vice President, Administration and Finance; Dean of Students; Vice President and Dean of Admission and Financial Aid; Vice President, Communications and Development, Vice President for Information Technology; Chief Diversity Officer, and Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees ([see College organization chart](#)). The group is characterized by a high degree of collegiality and understanding of colleagues' roles and responsibilities. Meeting weekly, the senior staff reviews policy matters and discusses issues of importance to the College. Staff members also work directly with faculty committees such as the Committee on Budget and Finance (Dean of Faculty and Vice President for Administration and Finance) and the Committee on Student Affairs (Dean of Students). The position of Chief Diversity Officer, appointed from the faculty for a limited term and recently elevated from the Associate Dean of Faculty for Diversity Initiatives, was established to bring matters concerning diversity to the forefront of institutional decision making. Members of the senior staff attend those committees of the Board of Trustees directly related to their areas of responsibility. These relationships— of senior staff with faculty and with trustees—help to ensure that information is shared appropriately and that different perspectives are considered.

The President is appointed by the Board of Trustees and has primary responsibility for leading Hamilton toward the achievement of its goals. The President gives a formal report to the Board at every meeting, and is in regular communication with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board. According to Article III of the Bylaws, the Board also appoints a vice president for finance (the role held by the Vice President for Administration and Finance), and a Secretary to

the Board of Trustees (a role held by the Chief of Staff). Final authority for all faculty and staff appointments lies with the President, according to the terms of the [Charter](#) and [Bylaws of the Board of Trustees](#); appointments to tenure require approval of the Board (Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, Feb 2009 Article III, Section 3 [a]). Hamilton's President is evaluated every year by the compensation subcommittee of the Board, the composition of which is listed in Articles IV and V of the Board Bylaws. Senior staff goals and performance also are reviewed annually by the Board's compensation subcommittee; senior staff job descriptions were revised in 2009, and shared with the compensation subcommittee for reference purposes and to give greater clarity to the evaluation process. The committee reviews the goals and accomplishments of the President and senior staff before finalizing salary decisions.

Although faculty and senior staff have a variety of means to participate in the governance of the College, the involvement of non-faculty employees occurs on a more ad hoc basis (e.g., service on search committees). The President schedules all-employee meetings once per semester, generally in the week following the fall and spring Board of Trustees meetings. The meetings are well attended and provide an opportunity to introduce new employees and have the senior staff discuss information about the budget, construction projects, etc.. A Staff Advisory Committee has been established since the last Middle States accreditation review to represent non-exempt employees in College governance, but there is no formal representation mechanism for exempt administrators in College governance structures. The maintenance and operations employees are represented by Local 200 of the Service Employees International Union, with negotiations handled by the Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Director of Human Resources.

The [2009 Strategic Plan](#) recommends the creation of a task force to explore the formation of a Staff Assembly. This task force was convened in October 2009 by the Director of Human Resources, who also chairs it. The task force created a process whereby an election will be held for non-faculty employees to serve on the Staff Assembly beginning with the Fall 2010 semester. The mission of the Staff Assembly will be to “promote, strengthen, and facilitate a sense of community and mutual respect” and “provide a forum where the interests, concerns, needs, and ideas of non-faculty employees can be shared.” ([Email communicating Staff Assembly Mission and Goals](#)). The Staff Assembly will represent all College non-faculty personnel, although it is important to note that it is not a labor organization and therefore will not negotiate employee grievances and labor disputes. The creation of the group also expresses a desire to enhance collegiality by blurring the lines of the three employee categories, often referred to as “staff, administrators, and maintenance & operations.”

One of the goals of the proposed Staff Assembly is to develop programs that will ensure that new employees feel welcome and invested in the College’s mission. Currently, Hamilton orients new group members to the mission, organization, and academic environment of the institution in the following ways:

- New faculty orientation is held during two days immediately prior to the Fall semester, led by three or four faculty members of various ranks; presentations on various policies and procedures introduce the group to many offices and employees at the College. The group then meets monthly for dinner discussions about a range of topics.
- The orientation of new non-faculty employees is handled by their immediate supervisor after an initial meeting with the Office of Human Resources.

Orientation is an area where the Staff Assembly can provide greater consistency across departments and promote a sense of College pride among Hamilton's newest employees. With respect to employee evaluation and review, all employees take part in a regular performance evaluation process, whether for faculty as part of their annual reports, or for non-faculty employees through annual self-assessments and meetings with supervisors. For the latter, the Human Resources Office provides materials outlining the assessment process to supervisors in the spring. Employees submit self-evaluations to the supervisors, who in turn write an evaluation of the employee; both evaluations are then shared and signed by the supervisor, employee, and the supervisor's supervisor. Following a meeting with the employee to discuss the previous year's performance and goals for the future, the supervisor submits the completed materials to the Human Resources Office for placement in the employee's file. Depending on the available salary pool for the year, raises are then determined by the senior staff member overseeing each division. Opportunities for improvement in this process include providing attention to problems before the actual employee review and creation of "performance action plans," as a way to use the review process as a motivational, goal-setting tool rather than a form of discipline.

Recently, the College implemented a management development program to help improve supervision and communication skills among mid-level managers. The Hamilton Management Roundtable (HMR) is a facilitated group activity designed to provide managers with a professional development experience that enables them to explore strategies to realize the potential of the people they supervise and provides them with effective workplace communication tools. The Roundtable is based on readings from three core books and incorporates discussions among the participants facilitated by experienced managers. Among the themes of the HMR are identifying employee talents, defining outcomes, focusing on strengths,

and providing for on-going conversations in the work environment. An important element of the HMR is affording the opportunity to learn from peers who face similar challenges and share the same institutional goals. Roundtable participants are nominated by their division head.

Student involvement in governance

According to the [Student Assembly Constitution](#), “Every person enrolled as an undergraduate of the Student Body shall be vested in the Student Assembly of Hamilton College. The Student Assembly of Hamilton College shall be composed of two branches: the Judicial Branch, consisting of the Judicial board, Honor Court, and Appeals Board; and the Executive Branch, consisting of the Central Council, which shall be responsible for coordinating the activities of the student organizations falling under the auspices of this constitution, and for performing all duties not falling under the jurisdiction of the aforementioned branches.” The Student Assembly’s role in the shared governance of the College is articulated in the description of its function, which is “to provide the governing bodies of the College with the best possible understanding of the sentiment and opinions of the student body, and to foster the serious consideration of these opinions.”

Hamilton College’s [2009 Strategic Plan](#) outlines how Hamilton assigns authority and accountability for policy development and decision making, including how appropriate institutional constituencies are involved in policy development and decision making. At Hamilton, “serious consideration” is given to the opinion of students regarding decisions that affect them. Former Student Assembly President Amy Goldstein ’11 provided the following examples of student involvement in policy decisions:

- Online Course Evaluations Deadline Extension Resolution. Students expressed concern that the last day of class deadline for course evaluations did not allow sufficient

time for thoughtful responses. The Student Assembly brought a recommendation to the Faculty Committee on Appointments, which ultimately extended the online course evaluation deadline by at least two days.

- Discussion regarding ELS Renovation. During thoughtful discussion about the advisability of proceeding with a major renovation and expansion of ELS into a new student center, many Assembly members articulated the positive message of stability that construction would send to current and incoming students. Assembly members unanimously supported the construction and presented their recommendation at the February 2009 Board of Trustee meeting. At the June 2009 Board meeting, the Trustees approved the renovation project.
- Resolution opposing campus-wide hard alcohol ban. The Alcohol Coalition, composed of administrators, faculty, and students, discussed the possibility of a ban on hard alcohol on campus. Students Assembly passed a resolution expressing opposition to a campus-wide hard alcohol ban. The Resolution was presented to the Alcohol Coalition and the Coalition ultimately made the recommendation to the President of the College NOT to establish a campus-wide ban on hard alcohol but instead to adjust the College's policies on hard alcohol through the school's disciplinary points system.

As recommended by the 2009 Strategic Plan, the Campus Planning Committee explored the possibility of adding students to certain faculty committees to enhance student participation in governance. Student representatives were added to the Faculty Committee on Budget and Finance and the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid. Although this has been a

new initiative this year, and therefore more time is needed to analyze its effectiveness, initial feedback has been positive.

Conclusions

Hamilton is in full compliance with Standards 4 and 5, and overall the College's system of governance is inclusive, collegial, and transparent. In addition, regular assessment processes are in place relative to these standards, including annual performance reviews, faculty and staff surveys, and policy and procedure reviews. There are, however, areas for improvement, most notably in diversifying the Board, senior leadership, and non-faculty staff, and in assessing necessary levels of service commitment and its equitable distribution among committees and individual participants.

Recommendations

1. Continue efforts to increase the diversity of the Board of Trustees, especially with respect to women and people of color, in light of the increasing diversity of Hamilton's student body. Seek the assistance of faculty members in identifying alumni of color.
2. Develop governance structures that conciliate a high degree of faculty participation with optimal efficiency (e.g., consider reducing the number of faculty committees, discussing legislative matters in open sessions prior to faculty meetings).
3. Establish a standard, formal orientation process for non-faculty employees across departments.
4. To enhance the employee appraisal process, provide for attention to problems before the annual employee review and create "performance action plans" as part of a move away from using the review process as a disciplinary rather than motivational, goal-setting tool.

5. Improve communication between employees and supervisors on employee expectations.

CHAPTER 5: INTEGRITY (STANDARD 6)

Introduction

Integrity requires a commitment to core values, policies, and practices that promote and sustain the principles of honesty and transparency, trust and respect, and fairness and responsibility. In this chapter, we examine these fundamental elements of integrity and describe, to the extent that is possible given data availability, campus views and experiences.

We examine two sets of questions: (a) How effectively do Hamilton College's institutional policies and practices promote an inclusive community of shared values and trust, personal integrity, and dialogue and debate? (b) How successfully does Hamilton College communicate its goals and expectations? How does the institution ensure the availability, clarity, and transparency of its policies and practices? In what ways does Hamilton College ensure the dissemination of factual information about the institution to its community, alumni, and the general public? In what follows, we address these issues in three sections: academic integrity, fair policies and practices, and institutional transparency.

Academic integrity

In this section we examine how effectively Hamilton College's institutional policies and practices promote an inclusive community of shared values and trust, personal integrity, and dialogue and debate. We analyze survey data to explore attitudes and experiences of students and employees, and document policies and practices that promote ethical professional behavior in the workplace.

Students

Students are expected to behave in a way consistent with the values of Hamilton College. In addition, students are expected to hold their peers accountable for their behavior. Hamilton's [Code of Student Conduct](#), a code under which falls all student behavior, both social and academic, is rooted in personal integrity.

Hamilton College's goals and expectations are communicated to students in a variety of ways: printed materials (usually distributed to prospective students and families), via the College's web site, and through the College's mission statement and the mission statements of various offices and departments. Students are introduced to these expectations prior to their arrival through publications, e-mail, and letters, and through the various on-line tours all new students are required to complete prior to Orientation. Once new students arrive on campus, the College's goals and expectations are reinforced through various presentations, workshops, and meetings with academic advisors. In addition, in 2009–10, various campus committees engaged in discussions of how to make Hamilton a more inclusive community and the Student Assembly formulated a *Statement of Community* with the intention of introducing this statement to all new students during Orientation. The Statement reads as follows:

The Hamilton College community gains strength from the diversity of its members. The expression and consideration of differing viewpoints represent education at its best. In our efforts to cultivate an inclusive environment, it is essential that we seek to respect the unique perspectives of individuals on our campus. Students are encouraged to consider the implications of their words and actions. It is a reality that in any diverse community, misunderstandings and conflicts might arise. To work through these disagreements, we as a student body promote engagement in dialogue to create mutual understanding and

expanded knowledge. With this in mind, we urge each student to help promote a welcoming community for all.

To explore the views and experiences of students regarding these issues, we have examined the [National Survey of Student Engagement items](#) that ask respondents questions about the quality of relationships with students, faculty, and personnel. For the graduating class of 2008, on a scale from one to seven (1 = Unfriendly, Unsupportive, Sense of alienation to 7 = Friendly, Supportive, Sense of belonging), the median of the quality of relationships with other students is six (the 25th percentile is five and the 75th percentile is seven). Regarding the quality of relationships with faculty, the median is also six (the 25th percentile is five and the 75th percentile is seven).

Among non-white students, the distribution of responses for the quality of relationships with faculty is similar to the distribution for the full sample (although the 75th percentile for non-white students is six). However, non-white students report lower levels for quality of relationships with other students. For 2008, the median is five, the 25th percentile is four and the 75th percentile is six.

How effectively does Hamilton College promote and support dialogue and debate in and outside the classroom? The NSSE also includes two questions about the frequency with which students have had “serious conversations” with (1) students of a different race or ethnicity, and (2) students with very different beliefs, political opinions, and personal values, on a scale from one to four (1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very often). For both questions, the median is “Often” and the 75th percentile is “Very often.” The median and percentiles are the same for non-white students. These values are similar to those of direct peer institutions.

The NSSE survey also asks to what extent the institution emphasizes “encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial ethnic backgrounds” (response categories: Very little, Some, Quite a bit, and Very much). For the graduating class of 2008, the median response was “Some” (the 25th percentile was also “Some,” and the 75th percentile was “Quite a bit”). On average, the response of Hamilton seniors is 2.42, for direct peers 2.70, and for all institutions 2.50. The distribution of responses of non-white students differs from the distribution of the full sample in that the 25th percentile was “Very little” rather than “Some.”

For all these questions the distribution of responses in 2004 and 2002 are virtually identical, and the responses to these questions by Hamilton College seniors are comparable to the responses by seniors in direct peer institutions.

Employees

In academic year 2004-05, Hamilton faced two high-profile challenges to its practices of free speech and intellectual freedom. During that year, the Kirkland Project planned to focus on issues having to do with prisons and issued two invitations to speakers that turned out to be very controversial. Susan Rosenberg, a former affiliate of the Weather Underground and, at the time of the invitation, instructor in Creative Writing at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, was invited by the Kirkland Project to teach a month-long course in creative writing. The plan to bring her to campus was met by protests from police officers, parents of current and former students, alumni and faculty members, and brought national attention to the college. In the face of the protests, [Rosenberg withdrew](#) from the position.

Shortly thereafter, an invitation to Ward Churchill, an ethnic studies professor at the University of Colorado, prompted similar protests. While Churchill was also invited to the

college by the Kirkland Project to address the topic of prisons, the protests focused on an article written by Churchill, published shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, in which he implied that the attacks were a result of American foreign policy and violation of principles of warfare. The Hamilton faculty member who discovered this article urged the college to withdraw the invitation in light of the comments it contained. The college refused, but urged the Kirkland Project to adopt a panel format for the event, with two Hamilton faculty members, critical of Churchill's comments, to join in the discussion. In the face of escalating threats of violence and safety concerns, President Joan Hinde Stewart cancelled the event shortly before it was scheduled to occur. Following its commitment to transparency and dialogue, the college's official responses to these events, as well as positive and negative feedback from members of the Hamilton community and the national media, have been made available [on the web](#). In the last five years, faculty members have discussed other issues with possible relevance to academic freedom, including the proposed [founding of an academic center](#) that raised questions about governance and the [role of confidentiality in search procedures](#).

In the context of these events, we analyzed [responses to questions about academic freedom in the Higher Education Research Institute \(HERI\) Faculty Survey](#). From 1998 to 2008, fewer than 21% of Hamilton faculty respondents agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement "College officials have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus." For the 2007-08 academic year, the proportion was 11.6%. This number contrasts sharply with those from comparable institutions; for the same year, HERI data indicate an average of 35% of respondents in all private 4-years colleges agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement. Furthermore, [results from the 2008-09 COACHE](#) (The Collaborative on Academic Careers in

Higher Education) survey of tenure-track faculty show that academic freedom appears among the four most frequently cited best aspects of working at Hamilton College.

Similarly, HERI data indicate that, from 1998 to 2008, over 90% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the level of autonomy and independence in their jobs. Data for the 2007-08 academic year also indicate that 97% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with how much freedom they have to determine course content. These numbers are a few percentage points higher than the average proportions for all private 4-years colleges (86% and 93%, respectively). In the past, HERI data showed that 86–90% of respondents have been satisfied or very satisfied with the opportunity to develop new ideas.

Hamilton College promotes dialogue and freedom of expression among staff through several committees. The Human Resources office coordinates the Staff Advisory Committee, which encourages and promotes community spirit at Hamilton College by providing staff representation and opinion on issues involving staff personnel and the College community generally. The Staff Advisory Committee has [a link](#) on the Hamilton site where it describes its mission and posts minutes and action items.

The College has also created a Staff Assembly Committee that will represent all non-faculty employees, as indicated in the recent Strategic Plan. The Staff Advisory Committee will be absorbed into the Staff Assembly Committee.

The President's regular open hour provides an opportunity for employees and students to communicate their thoughts and concerns regarding the College. In addition, there is a process in place for union members at Physical Plant whereby once-a-month meetings are held to discuss concerns, and union members and management discuss policy and procedures as outlined in the union contract.

Policies and practices that promote ethical professional behavior in the workplace are publicized and easily accessible to employees, including those concerning:

- Conflict of Interest
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/pdf/ConflictOfInterest.pdf>
- Intellectual property, copyright, and fair use
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/hillgroup/copyright.html>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/hillgroup/fairuse.html>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/hillgroup/publicdomain.html>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/hillgroup/mediacontent.html>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/hillgroup/beinformed.html>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/hillgroup/facultyresources.html>
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) documents concerning welfare of research subjects
 - <http://academics.hamilton.edu/psychology/home/default.html>

Strengths and challenges

The available data suggest that students typically develop good relationships with faculty and staff and engage often in dialogue with students of a different race or ethnicity and with students who have very different opinions. On the other hand, the available data also indicate a gap in satisfaction with social life between white and non-white students. Non-white students report lower levels of satisfaction with the quality of their relationships with other students.

[Results from the 2009 Consortium on High Achievement and Success \(CHAS\) Survey](#) also suggest that non-white students are on average less satisfied with course offerings. The creation

of the Cultural Education Center and the creation of the position of Chief Diversity Officer have been two institutional responses to these concerns.

The data available from the [HERI](#) and [COACHE](#) surveys indicate a large majority of Hamilton faculty members are satisfied with the level of autonomy and independence they enjoy, and cite academic freedom among the best aspects of working at Hamilton College. On the other hand, approximately 31% of respondents to the 2007-08 HERI Survey find “very descriptive” of Hamilton the statement that “Faculty are typically at odds with campus administration.” This response is larger than for comparable institutions.

Responses to the [2005-2006 Hamilton College Community Opinion Survey](#), completed in January 2006, indicated that some employees felt less valued than other members of the campus community. Out of 705 possible participants, encompassing all categories of employees, 32% responded. To the question, "I feel like a valued member of the campus community," on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the average for Maintenance and Operations personnel was 2.87; for staff, 3.32; for faculty members, 3.81, and for administrators, 3.92.

Fair policies and practices

Integrity requires that institutions ensure the availability, clarity, and transparency of their policies and practices. We document the policies that govern student conduct and policies, expectations of performance and evaluation, and practices for grievance and dispute resolution procedures for employees.

Students

All policies governing student conduct both academically and socially are outlined in the Hamilton College [Student Handbook](#). In addition to policies governing student behavior, the handbook also outlines the process by which students are held accountable for alleged violations.

When inappropriate behavior is addressed, both the Judicial Board and Honor Court have procedures that require students (peers) to take part in the adjudication process. A brief account along with any assigned sanction is published at the end of each semester (no names are included).

Four campus boards are trained individually and specifically to investigate and/or adjudicate allegations of misconduct. Each board is made up of student, faculty, and staff members.

- Allegations of academic dishonesty are investigated and, if necessary, adjudicated through the College's [Honor Court procedures](#).
- Allegations of violation of the College's Code of Student Conduct are investigated and adjudicated according to the [Judicial Procedures outlined in the Student Handbook](#).
- Allegations of harassment and/or sexual misconduct are investigated and adjudicated by the [Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Board](#).
- Allegations that fit the criteria of a hate crime/incident or bias crime/incident are investigated by the [Bias Incident Response Team](#).

To ensure fairness in all processes, a separate [Appeal Board](#) exists, also composed of student and staff members.

Between the Fall of 2004 and Spring of 2009, there have been 123 reported cases of Honor Code violations. In eight cases, the individuals were not found responsible. In the same period, there have been 15 appeals cases—in 14 of these cases, the Board upheld the original decision.

Employees

Hamilton College recognizes that problems, complaints, or grievances arise on occasion, and may affect working conditions and job satisfaction. There are various methods available to resolve a problem, complaint, or grievance:

Grievance Procedure. The grievance procedure (from [Staff Handbook](#), p. 29) fosters a climate in which the problems or complaints of individuals can be given fair consideration.

1. An employee should attempt to resolve the problem or complaint informally with his or her immediate supervisor. If the nature of the complaint clearly prevents the employee from discussing the problem with his or her immediate supervisor, the department head or supervisory officer should be consulted.
2. Should good-faith efforts to resolve the complaint within the department be unsuccessful, the employee should direct the complaint to Human Resources. At the discretion of the employee, Human Resources will review the complaint in an objective, confidential manner and attempt to mediate the situation.
3. If mediation is unsuccessful and the employee wishes to continue the grievance, the documented complaint will be reviewed by the Grievance Advisory Committee. The Grievance Advisory Committee shall report its findings and recommendations upon completion of its review to the Vice President, Administration and Finance.

Ethics Point. Hamilton College contracts with a hotline firm, Ethics Point. This hotline service provides employees with a method for raising concerns. Complaints may be filed by phone or through the website, and may be made anonymously. A [link to the Ethics Point reporting system](#) is located on the Human Resources web page.

The union contract outlines the specific steps that a union member would need to follow to grieve a concern. In addition, the College's ombudsperson provides another avenue for employees to raise their concerns.

After the Strategic Planning Subcommittee on Ethics and Academic Freedom, in its [Summer 2008 report](#), mentioned the lack of a Staff Grievance Advisory Committee (as described in the Staff Handbook), the staff felt that such a committee should be created and members appointed. As a result, the College appointed four staff members and one faculty person to this committee.

Regarding the communication to employees of expectations of performance and evaluation, the HR office communicates to senior staff a list of employees who are due for their annual performance evaluation, a template of the self-evaluation, and a template of the supervisor evaluation. The communication and review documents contain a description that summarizes expectations and a recommended timeline for completion. The goals of the review provide the framework for consideration of any promotional opportunities. Completed reviews require signatures and must be sent to Human Resources for the employee's file. As reviews are submitted to Human Resources, the office determines which reviews are still outstanding, and follows-up with departments to review the College timeline requirements.

[The 2005-2006 Hamilton College Community Opinion Survey](#) does provide some insights into the functioning of this process. One of the questions was, "I receive adequate and timely feedback regarding my performance." On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the best, the average for Maintenance and Operations personnel was 3.13; for staff, 3.78; and for administrators, 3.88. When averaged against all the responses, this item was the fifth lowest score of the 12 questions asked for M & O, the fourth lowest for staff members, and the third lowest for

administrators. These results seem to identify some concerns with the performance review process. On the positive side, the average scores for the survey item “I know what is expected of me at work” are high across these three groups: 4.07 for M & O employees, 4.23 for staff, and 4.32 for administrators.

Regarding goals and expectations for faculty members, the [Faculty Handbook](#) outlines the criteria for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion, and indicates the principles for the evaluation of teaching, scholarship, and service.

The [Dean’s Guidelines for Department Chairs](#) also provides information on faculty personnel procedures (including hiring) and details the [faculty annual review process](#) through which department chairs review tenure-track and tenured faculty members on a calendar-year basis. Furthermore, departments have developed specific [tenure and promotion guidelines](#). The Committee on Appointments reviews these department-specific guidelines for consistency.

Results from the 2008-09 COACHE survey indicate that tenure practices and clarity of tenure expectations have improved from the 2005-06 academic year, after a new annual review process was put in place. The responses compare favorably to those in the peer-comparison group (Amherst, Bates, Bowdoin, Colgate, and Wellesley). Similarly, data from the HERI Faculty survey show that while in the 2004-05 academic year, 65% of respondents agreed or somewhat agreed that “the criteria for advancement and promotion decisions are clear,” the proportion in the 2007-08 academic year is 88.4%.

Strengths and challenges

In its [2008 report](#), the Strategic Planning Subcommittee on Ethics and Academic Freedom commented on the need to solve technical flaws in the Honor Court Constitution. The

Student body has recently approved changes to the constitution that have also been ratified by the Faculty.

Regarding faculty, the evidence suggests that clarity of tenure expectations has been improving. On the other hand, data from the 2005-06 Hamilton College Community Opinion Survey suggest there are some concerns with the performance review process among M&O personnel, staff, and administrators.

Institutional transparency and truthful representation

Hamilton is committed to honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements and recruiting, and admissions materials and practices. Our statistics, policies, and descriptive materials are distributed broadly to prospective students, peer institutions, ranking organizations, education groups, counselors, and the media. We maintain an acute focus on consistent, comprehensive, and verifiable messaging and statistics in all our materials and announcements.

In order to facilitate the availability of information about the institution, Hamilton reports a wide range of data both internally and externally. The [Common Data Set](#) (CDS) is a compilation of data across the institution and is publicly available through the Institutional Research website. The CDS is also sent to guidebooks and other external agencies requesting data. [Hamilton Facts](#), also available on the IR website and accessible to all, is a summary of key indicators derived from the College's [Dashboard of Strategic Indicators](#). In addition, the career center publishes an [annual summary](#) of placement statistics for the preceding year's graduates.

Hamilton reports required material changes to the New York State Education Department. Information on these requirements can be found at the following websites:

- Instructions and Forms: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/aipr/register.html>

- Policy Information: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/lrp/home.html>
- NYS Accreditation info:
<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/accred/accredinfo.htm>
- Inventory of Registered Programs: <http://www.nysed.gov/heds/irpsl1.html>

Hamilton also provides a list of registered programs to the Veteran's Administration each year. The VA makes a site visit and reviews our records (if any) of VA benefit recipients. They receive a copy of our catalogue and the Dean of Faculty signs a statement that the list of programs we provide is accurate.

Internally, the Dashboard is produced for trustees and senior officers of the College. The College's Planning Notebook is an internal fact book accessible to faculty and staff across campus. It contains data covering all aspects of the institution, and includes comparative peer data.

The College also makes a great deal of assessment research findings accessible, both internally and externally. Reports from the [Mellon Project for the Assessment of Liberal Arts](#) are made available to the general public, and various reports from the [Office of Institutional Research](#) are accessible to the campus community.

Regarding course information, the [College Catalogue](#) is an open website. The on-line catalogue course descriptions are linked through WebAdvisor schedules. Students searching for a description of a course for which they want to register will always be directed to the most current course description. When a new Catalogue is created, an archived, unchanged, version is placed on the Catalogue web page. Users can access the current on-line catalogue, which is most up to date for new course descriptions or other changes with immediate effect.

Each Hamilton academic department submits its proposed schedule of courses for the term. The department reviews the needs of students with declared or planned majors to ensure that appropriate courses and spaces are offered. For those departments that provide service courses to students in majors of other departments, the faculty work with their colleagues to be sure that enough spaces or sections are available based on the department's and general student interest. Once all of the proposed schedules are submitted, the Registrar's Office compiles the schedules and checks to be sure the correct courses are being offered and enough spaces are planned. When necessary, the Registrar's Office and the departments will work on the schedule until enough seats are offered. Hamilton has not had any problems with students who have attended four continuous years of full-time study not being able to graduate due to course offerings.

New academic programs and substantive changes to existing programs have to be approved by the Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) and the faculty as a whole. As stated in the *Faculty Handbook*, "The Committee [CAP] shall review educational policies and requirements for the baccalaureate degree and recommend to the Faculty changes to the curriculum; formulate procedures to carry out educational policies voted by the Faculty; oversee and notify the Faculty regarding the establishment, modification, or abolition of courses and concentration requirements; and advise the President and make recommendations to the Faculty regarding the establishment, modification, or abolition of programs and departments."

In addition to sources previously listed, additional public sources of information include:

- Institution research office
 - http://www.hamilton.edu/college/institutional_research/

- Admission office
 - “Just the Facts” brochure and other admission materials
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/admission/index.html>
 - <https://my.hamilton.edu/journals>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/admission/tenthings.html?action=curriculum>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/admission/studentbody.html>
 - Online College Catalog
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/applications/catalogue/index.cfm>
 - Presentations to high school students
 - Guidance counselor newsletter
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/admission/counselors/>
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/admission/counselors/welcome.html>
 - E-news to prospective students
 - Admission radio broadcast/podcasts
- Career center: outcomes brochure
 - <http://my.hamilton.edu/college/career/2009/index.html?>

Conclusions

Hamilton College is in compliance with Standard 6. Ethical considerations pervade policy development and decision making across campus, and the College’s commitment to academic freedom supports a tradition of institutional reflection and self-criticism. Most importantly, Hamilton endeavors to nurture a campus environment that exemplifies what is expected of its students, including justice, equity, and respect for diversity and human dignity.

Recommendations

1. Conduct exit interviews with departing employees. Currently, these interviews take place for faculty but not for other categories of employees.
2. Administer a follow-up to the 2005-06 Hamilton College Community Opinion Survey to examine current levels of satisfaction and concerns with the performance review process among employees (in particular, M&O, staff, and administrators).
3. Develop a single handbook for administrators, staff, and M&O.

CHAPTER 6: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT (STANDARD 7)

Introduction

This chapter addresses Standard 7, which requires that “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.” We first address the fundamental elements of institutional assessment and then provide the answers to three research questions: (1) How effective is Hamilton in assessing its diversity efforts? (2) How effective are we in bringing together assessment data to inform College decision making? (3) How effective are we in making connections among assessment outcomes, planning, and budget allocations?

Fundamental elements of institutional assessment

Documented, organized and sustained assessment process

The senior staff is ultimately responsible for monitoring the achievement of institutional goals and for aligning the work of the divisions of the College⁴ with these goals. They are informed by reports from the [Office of Institutional Research](#) (OIR), the work of institutional committees and task forces, and studies by various consultants. The OIR provides the essential support for institutional assessment efforts, including participation in annual national and consortium surveys, undertaking institutional studies, and analysis of comparative data from local studies, and national and peer consortia.

The 2002 and 2009 Strategic Plans set overall institutional goals and objectives for the subsequent five-year periods. Faculty committees serve to advise senior staff on matters of budget, staffing, and policy. In recent years, the [Campus Planning Committee](#) (CPC) has also

⁴ Administration and Finance, Admission and Financial Aid, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Communications and Development, Information Technology Services and Office of the President

served in an advisory capacity to the president on matters of institutional importance, including changing national demographics, student retention, and the optimal size of the student body/college. The CPC issues regular updates on its work to the entire community. To supplement the work of internal committees, Hamilton regularly contracts with [consultants](#) to provide comparative data and insights.

A variety of assessment instruments are used throughout the seven divisions to monitor success, but the format and intensity of their use varies across divisions and across programs within divisions. Also, the method of assessment is not commonly identified at the time the goals are set, even though a variety of assessment instruments are regularly available. Goals in the division of Admission and Financial Aid, Administration and Finance, Communications and Development, and Information Technology Services are more naturally expressed in quantitative terms. In Student Life, Academic Affairs, and the President's Office, the goals require a greater mixture of quantitative and qualitative assessments, particularly related to student and faculty success. Nevertheless, there is evidence of the application of assessment that is useful, cost-effective, and accurate in all divisions to inform decision making, planning, and resource allocation.⁵

Since 1999, the [Hamilton Project for the Assessment of Liberal Arts](#), funded by the Mellon Foundation, has studied the effectiveness of Hamilton's focus on improving student writing, as well as other aspects of the student experience including dorm life, friends, relationships, advising, classes, majors, professors, activities, junior year abroad, sports, and a wide range of other activities. The Mellon Project has carried out longitudinal studies with both qualitative and quantitative components, highlighted by a five-year [study](#) of over 1,000 samples of student writing.

⁵ See answers to research questions (2) and (3) below

Assessment instruments used by the Office of Admission and Financial Aid have resulted in a variety of service efficiencies and resource reallocations. Included are: the elimination of the fall open house, off-campus receptions, printed applications, and letters mailed to waitlisted and denied students. In addition, Admission regularly tracks standardized test scores, the rank-in-class of entering students, number of students in various racial/ethnic categories, the number of students who are first generation to college, and the rigor of high school programs, as a way to monitor institutional goals related to student quality and diversity. A detailed two-year financial analysis and pilot project informed Hamilton's decision to move to a need-blind admission policy.

The division of Student Affairs commonly uses surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs, and to inform decision making and resource allocation related to the strategic goal of encouraging and supporting student personal development and responsibility. For example, based on comparative senior survey data from the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS), the decision was made to put more time and resources into working with students on career-related experiences (CREs). The HEDS data, along with more recent data from [CIRP's College Senior Survey](#), indicated that Hamilton students had far fewer internship experiences than their graduating peers. More time and resources, including endowed funds, were directed into our CRE activities, and we have thus seen a steady increase in the percentage of seniors who report having had a CRE while at Hamilton.

There are a number of efforts underway to ensure that Hamilton has programs and services that foster our strategic commitment to inclusiveness. The creation of Community Forums, held throughout the academic year, offers opportunities to the entire community for discussion on topics of community interest, including dissemination of assessment results such

as the CHAS Campus Climate Survey. [The Equity Scorecard](#) is used to track differences in academic performance, participation, and satisfaction of minority students versus non-minority students.

In the division of Administration and Finance, periodic surveys of non-faculty employees by Hamilton's Office of Human Resources indicated the desire to be involved in the decision making process and to improve intra-campus communications. One of the goals in the [2009 Strategic Plan](#) is to "remove barriers...that discourage full participation in the life and workings of the College, particularly for non-salaried employees" (p.11). A task force was charged with creating an organization that would provide a forum for discussion and communication among non-faculty employees. The recommendations of the task force were implemented for Fall 2010.

Sustainability is a strategic goal that is tracked by the division of Administration and Finance. Using a consulting service provided by Sightlines, Hamilton has been able to track closely the [maintenance](#) and [energy characteristics](#) of its buildings compared with those of peer institutions. The resulting data have enabled Hamilton to demonstrate the value of recent building renovations and to identify opportunities to reduce its carbon footprint.

Evidence that assessment results are shared

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) maintains a web site that provides institutional and comparative data to all members of the Hamilton community, and periodically reports at faculty meetings on the analysis of various surveys related to the academic program. In addition, [key assessment reports are shared with appropriate decision-makers as they become available](#) and presentations of results are regularly made to the campus community. For example, the annual senior survey and the Consortium for High Achievement and Success (CHAS) survey have been used to track satisfaction of students with social life on campus. [Results of the CHAS](#)

[survey](#) were presented to the community in April, 2010 and made available to the entire campus on the OIR web site. The CHAS survey compares Hamilton student satisfaction data with that of peers, both for white and non-white groups. The overall difference between satisfaction with the academic and social lives on campus, and the consistent differences between majority and minority students on this measure, have informed decision making and supported the creation of the Cultural Education Center in Fall of 2010, as well as the new Sadove Student Center in the renovated ELS building, which opened in Fall 2010.

A variety of annual assessments have enabled Information Technology Services to reduce its non-salary operating budgets by over 5% per year for the last two years while maintaining service quality. [Annual collection of data from incoming students about the technology they bring to campus](#), coupled with monitoring of usage of campus technologies (e.g., use of wired connections and telephone service in residence halls, use of public computing labs) informed decisions and provided an early indicator of changes in usage. Almost 98% of Hamilton students now bring wireless laptops and cell phones to campus. System logs indicate that only 10–20% of the wired connections in residence halls are being used and there are few requests for telephone services. The results of these analyses are regularly shared with Student Assembly and with the Committee on Information Technology, who provide further advice in the decision making process. As a result, our replacement strategy for network electronics and for the way we provide telephone services to students have both been changed to gain efficiencies while maintaining essential services.

Written institutional plans

In the last decade, Hamilton has created two strategic plans that have guided all aspects of college operations. The recent [2009 Strategic Plan](#) was created through a process utilizing

campus-wide task forces that were informed by student satisfaction surveys, and demographic and other studies. Each of the goals in the Strategic Plan is then a result of a variety of assessments that have taken place over the last decade. Various other divisional plans exist, related to space needs of programs and departments, [technology directions](#), and overall [use of campus facilities and land](#).

In summary, Hamilton divisions commonly use assessment instruments to improve programs, achieve efficiencies and demonstrate progress on institutional goals. While Hamilton is not fully proactive about formally identifying assessment measures at the time of goal-setting, there is substantial evidence that assessments are being regularly used in all divisions of the College.

Assessing diversity efforts

General

Hamilton's goals with respect to diversity are most heavily focused on improving racial/ethnic and socio-economic representation among students and employees. This is best described in the wording of the [Strategic Plan](#): "we seek to achieve a demographic mirroring the coming generation of college-bound students" and "to increase the number of students and employees of color by making access to Hamilton a strategic imperative throughout the College" (p. 6). There are no numerical goals associated with Hamilton's diversity efforts. Student achievement, retention, and satisfaction are tracked by Institutional Research and reported to senior staff and the general campus community. The goal is that these measures be equivalent for majority and minority students.

Oversight of Hamilton's diversity efforts ultimately rests with the senior staff. [The Diversity Coordinating Council \(DCC\)](#) brings together people who are involved in ongoing

diversity initiatives throughout the College. The DCC coordinates and disseminates communication about inclusivity and makes recommendations to the senior staff. While the DCC recognizes that inclusiveness is a strategic goal for Hamilton, members of the DCC want more explicit measurable objectives developed that address identified diversity issues. The co-chairs of the DCC, the Chief Diversity Officer (formerly Associate Dean of Faculty for Diversity Initiatives⁶) and the Associate Dean of Students for Diversity and Accessibility, report regularly to the senior staff, who are ultimately charged with responsibility for decision making with respect to diversity.

Student recruitment

Hamilton's diversity efforts begin with recruitment. While there are no specific numerical diversity targets the ultimate goal is to be as diverse as the college-going population without compromising student quality. The Admissions Office uses a variety of strategies to recruit an increasingly diverse student body and annually assesses the effectiveness of these strategies, both in terms of the numbers of entering students and their success at Hamilton. Strategies include focusing on geographic, socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial diversity, and attracting students who are first generation to college. Hamilton's association with the [Posse Foundation](#) brings one student cohort (ten students) to campus each year from the Boston area. After initial problems with the Posse program, the partnership was reviewed and modified. Part-time coaches were no longer used as mentors, and Posse students were no longer included in the summer opportunity

⁶ In April 2010, President Stewart announced that she would "elevate the position of Associate Dean of Faculty for Diversity Initiatives to a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) reporting directly to the president. The position will be filled by a tenured faculty member who will continue to work closely with the Dean of Faculty in faculty searches and will assume other responsibilities currently held by the Associate Dean. The CDO will be a member of the senior staff. The position also will coordinate initiatives across campus focused on diversity." – E-mail communication from President Stewart, April 28, 2010

program. The revised program has been successful and has resulted in Hamilton adding a second Posse from Miami in Fall 2010.

The assessment tools used to determine success of these efforts include: [comparing our numbers to peers](#), [longitudinal analysis of our own numbers](#), [testing how well we are serving diverse students once they are at Hamilton](#), and [retention/performance of particular diverse student cohorts \(e.g., HEOP/Scholars Program, Posse students\)](#). Recently, a task force has been created to review the needs of our most financially challenged students and develop ways to meet these needs better. An example of a challenge identified by surveying students was the need to accelerate the process of making funding for books available for these students. Through coordination between Admission and the Business Office, changes were made to accomplish this.

The [HEOP/Scholars Program](#) seeks annually to enroll fourteen economically disadvantaged students from New York State and as many other disadvantaged students who would benefit from the program as deemed appropriate by the Admission Office. Both Posse and HEOP/Scholars programs have been successful at not only attracting diverse students who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to attend Hamilton, but supporting and serving those students so that they can be successful once they arrive on campus.

Over the last several years we have been tracking the [progress](#) of students who are the first members of their families to enter a four-year college. We currently estimate that 15% of the members of the class of 2014 are first generation to college (meaning neither parent has a Bachelors degree). To begin the process of creating a support structure for such students, we have created a [web site](#) where current faculty and staff who were the first in their families to go

to college share their stories. We plan to build a support network of such people as resources for our undergraduates.

We also changed our Diversity Overnight Program completely, based on the feedback we received from evaluations. This included reducing the social programming component ("planned fun") and giving the students more time to explore Hamilton with their host, e.g., attending classes.

Faculty recruitment

The College formally expresses its commitment to diversity in its [affirmative action policy](#). While there are no specific numerical diversity targets related to faculty recruitment, the strategic goal is for the racial/ethnic diversity of the Hamilton faculty to reflect the diversity of the national professoriate. Notable [progress](#) has been made in recent years, and a variety of assessment mechanisms are used to track the effectiveness of faculty recruitment efforts. Among the strategies used by Hamilton to improve the diversity of faculty hires is to assure that each search creates a pool of applicants the diversity of which reflects that of the available candidates in that field nationally, as indicated in the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#). Comparison with applicant pool diversity of previous searches in a department, tracked by applicant self-reporting of race/ethnicity, provides an indication of whether targeted recruitment is required to build a satisfactorily diverse pool. To this end, the Chief Diversity Officer meets with each search team to develop recruitment strategies to build a diverse applicant pool; deadline extension and supplementary recruitment strategies can be applied to reach this objective. The Chief Diversity Officer continues to meet with search committees to ensure all candidates are considered thoroughly. Annual comparison of Hamilton faculty race/ethnicity with that of our NESCAC peer institutions provides assessment against external measures, and is reported annually in the

[Faculty Affirmative Action Report](#). To enhance progress towards the strategic goal of increasing faculty diversity, “opportunity” hires,⁷ outside normal search procedures, are occasionally made.

Non-Faculty employee recruitment

There are no specific numerical goals for non-faculty recruitment; we seek to increase the diversity of the applicant pool and of successful candidates. The College’s commitment is expressed in the affirmative action policy.

For non-exempt (hourly) positions, which are recruited locally, outreach to local organizations (e.g., the Utica Refugee Center, Women’s Employment Resource Center) is the major strategy. Applicant pools tend to be large. For exempt positions, outreach to professional organizations and agencies has been the strategy for recruiting regionally and nationally.

To assess progress, Hamilton tracks applicants’ self-reported race-ethnicity. However, a low percentage of applicants currently provide that information. The Office of Human Resources tracks progress in applications, and the Office of Institutional Research, in the Planning Notebook, reports annually on the race and ethnicity of employees. As a result of these assessments, more effort is being made in recruiting non-exempt positions. For salaried positions, application deadlines have been extended if the pool of candidates is not representative of the national or regional pool.

Student satisfaction

The satisfaction and success of diverse students are assessed relative to majority students and comparable data from peer schools. The major goals in this area are that satisfaction for diverse students should be equal to that of majority students. There are no specific targets for

⁷ If a strong minority candidate is identified who would be qualified for a position at a level higher than being advertised, or in some cases in a related department, the search committee has the flexibility to recommend that candidate for appointment to the Dean of Faculty.

these satisfaction measures. A variety of strategies are used to achieve this goal, including: providing special support through programs such as the HEOP/Scholars and Posse programs, establishing a Cultural Education Center, conducting teaching workshops for faculty (particularly focusing on the experiences of diverse students in the classroom), and developing a bias-incident reporting process to increase campus transparency.

Assessment mechanisms that are used to track student satisfaction include the annual [senior survey](#), the [CHAS survey](#), the [Equity Scorecard](#), and one-on-one surveys of students in the HEOP/Scholars Program. The resulting data are reviewed by various administrators, committees, and senior staff.

Student retention

The major goal in this area is that retention rates for minority students be equal to that of majority students. Several strategies are used to achieve this goal, including providing special support provided through programs such as HEOP/Scholars and Posse programs, and making available writing tutors through the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. We assess these strategies through data reported in the [Planning Notebook](#), the CHAS survey, the Equity Scorecard, a New York State survey completed by HEOP/Scholars Program students and one-on-one meetings with students in the program. We have no special strategies for international students beyond providing support through the ESOL program. Data resulting from these assessment efforts are reviewed by various administrators and committees and are presented to the senior staff.

Student achievement

The primary goal in this area is that academic achievement for minority students be equal to that of majority students. The ESOL Program focuses on students who grew up speaking a

language other than English in the home. Most of the participants are international students. Representatives from the HEOP/Scholars Program participate on campus committees such as the Diversity Coordinating Council and others, to assist in making issues known and understood. This provides an opportunity for coordinating programs targeted at diverse student achievement. Assessment is accomplished, in part, through [analyses done by Institutional Research](#) that compare achievement of majority students with minority students not participating in HEOP/Scholars Program and minority students participating in these programs.

In addition, the HEOP/Scholars Program does ongoing assessment of program participants throughout their tenure, both to assist the students appropriately and to report to government agencies. Assessments have resulted in grant proposals, for example, supporting pedagogy workshops for faculty on meeting the needs of a diverse student body.

Summary

In general, Hamilton is effective in assessing its diversity efforts. The degree to which assessment results drive change varies somewhat by area, with those responsible for admission, faculty recruitment, and student retention demonstrating both success and substantial evidence of the use of assessment to improve programs. Hamilton has been less successful in demonstrating improvement in the disparity between student satisfaction for majority and minority student populations. While there are effective assessment instruments for measuring the disparity, strategies for eliminating it are more varied, and demonstrating the link between strategy and success is difficult.

Using assessment data to inform college decision making

There is ample evidence that assessment data are used throughout the divisions of the College to inform institutional decisions. Examples are provided below for each of the divisions.

Academic Affairs

In order more effectively to tie assessment data to decision making, the Office of Institutional Research was transferred from the division of Administration and Finance to the Dean of Faculty in 2007. The Assistant Dean of Institutional Research now meets weekly with other deans to align the data collection efforts with questions facing the academic program.

For example, the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education ([COACHE survey in 2006](#)) showed dissatisfaction among junior faculty with their understanding of expectations for reappointment and tenure. As a result, the Dean of Faculty requested from each department more explicit guidelines for [tenure and promotion](#). These were reviewed by the Committee on Appointments for consistency with general College criteria (described in the *Faculty Handbook*). Furthermore, in response to the COACHE survey, annual review discussions between chairs and individual faculty members now require explicit review of progress in fulfilling tenure and promotion criteria; the [timeline for annual reports](#) was also moved up by a semester (now due February 1, reviewing previous calendar year) so that the chairs' reviews (now due April 1) could contribute more immediately to salary merit determinations. In [2009](#), the COACHE survey was administered again, and results showed [marked improvement](#) in satisfaction with the clarity of tenure policies.

Student evaluations of teaching play an important role in reappointment, tenure, and promotion decisions. Piloted by senior faculty in Fall 2007 and adopted for all faculty members in Fall 2008, teaching evaluations are now administered online. With the incentive of earlier course grade release, response rates to date are higher than with paper form administration. The Office of Institutional Research is now conducting preliminary analysis of gender and race/ethnicity patterns in responses, in order to inform departments and the Committee on

Appointments about interpreting quantitative evaluation questions in making personnel decisions. Independent of this, the Faculty reviewed the questions asked in the evaluations in 2009 and 2010, and revised evaluation forms were adopted for the 2010-11 academic year.

The [Wabash Study results](#) indicated that first-year students noted a lack of coherence and rigor in their first-year courses. This has led to a renewed discussion of first-year seminars.

Over the last decade a variety of [committees](#) and [task forces](#) have made recommendations to address concerns expressed by minority students. [The National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#), [the senior survey](#), and the [Consortium on High Achievement and Success \(CHAS\) survey](#) were among the assessment resources utilized by these groups. Among decisions informed by these assessments was appointment of a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) in July 2010 and the creation of the CEC in Fall 2010.

Facilities

In 2004, Hamilton commissioned a study of campus housing. An inventory of housing stock was prepared and was compared to other schools. A student satisfaction survey was also conducted. One finding that informed our decision making was that, among our room offerings, we have more than enough doubles and not enough singles, suites, or apartments. These latter kinds of student housing were included in subsequent planning for renovations of Skenandoa, Kirkland, and Bundy residence halls.

We contract with Sightlines for regular review of the condition of our facilities. Their analysis indicated that the funding devoted to plant renewal was inadequate. In 2001, for example, the annual budget for renewal and replacement was \$750,000; we have since increased that budget to \$3.5 million per year. This annual funding, combined with one-time gifts from donors and new bond funding for new buildings, has allowed us to avoid deferred plant

maintenance and actually lower the average age of our buildings. Our next challenge is to increase further the R&R budget to avoid reliance on one-time funding. The annual Sightlines evaluation keeps our target before us and tracks our progress.

Student life

The Strategic Plan indicates that we will assess how students are welcomed into the College community. We annually [survey students – both those who participate in the pre-orientation programs](#) and those who do not - about their experiences during regular orientation. We also [survey parents](#) about our parents programming when they deliver their children to campus. Among our findings was that parents of students who participated in pre-orientation programs often did not return for regular orientation. As a result, the programming for parents is offered twice, to assure that all parents have the associated benefits. Additionally, orientation leaders and resident advisors are formally debriefed after the orientation program. Given the positive relationship between participation in pre-orientation programs and retention we track participation rates for pre-orientation programs and have undertaken initiatives to increase that participation (e.g., providing subsidies for students to attend and doing more advance promotion of the programs).

Beyond orientation, the Strategic Plan focuses on assessing how students become acclimated to the college life. Student [retention rates](#) are used as an assessment measure of positive acclimation to life at Hamilton.

Pilot projects serve to test new approaches to integrating academic and residential life. Hamilton has been piloting the Residential Engagement in Academic Life (REAL) program. This program for first-year students combines living in Wertimer House with taking some common courses (taught in that building). Data collected from these students is used to compare

their academic success with that of students living in other residence halls. This pilot project provides a useful insight into how a special program for first-year students might work to integrate academic and residential components.

The Dean of Students' division meets weekly to track individual students who are experiencing both academic and non-academic difficulties. This weekly sharing of information serves to provide an early warning system to help maximize student success.

There are a number of efforts underway to ensure that Hamilton has programs and services that foster inclusiveness. Community Forums, held throughout the academic year, offer a variety of discussion topics of interest to the entire community. The [Equity Scorecard](#) is used to track differences in participation and satisfaction rates between minority race/ethnicity students and those in the majority. The previously referenced survey conducted by CHAS serves to check the pulse of the campus climate for students of color.

Assessment of the availability of *ad hoc* volunteer and service-learning programs led to the creation of the COOP (Community Outreach and Opportunity Program) to coordinate Hamilton's support of enthusiastic student volunteerism. For better integration of the academic program with volunteerism and service-learning, the Levitt Center was reorganized and now provides closer coordination with the COOP. Ultimately, we want to increase the number of credit-bearing courses with a service component, the participation of students in service trips, and interest in international service.

Admission

The area of admission is consistently informed by data and assessment. A strong partnership among Admission, Information Technology Services (ITS), and Institutional Research has allowed Hamilton to track consistent data on performance, retention, and student

satisfaction and to use those data to inform programming and selection. If something isn't going well in one area or for one population, the admission process is adjusted.

The Admission Office considered dropping Winter Counselor Weekend but our research indicated that attracting well informed counselors to campus is an advantage, and the event was therefore retained. We now hold two Diversity Overnight events instead of one, based on data that indicated our yield on these events was high. We have added Posse Miami to our Posse Boston group, based on [data](#) that showed the strong performance and retention of students in our opportunity programs. We continue the January admission program, based on [data](#) showing that retention of January admits is strong and that their performance, while weaker in their first year than Fall admits, catches up by their second year.

Information Technology Services (ITS)

ITS regularly tracks utilization of College facilities and [surveys incoming students](#) to determine the technology they are bringing to campus. These assessments support the ITS [mission](#) of providing excellent service and infrastructure. As a result of this data tracking, we substantially reduced telephone services to students (long-distance, phone lines, and voice-mail), and refocused our efforts on providing wireless services (phone and data) rather than the wired equivalents. This reduced the replacement and administrative costs related to providing the services.

Advisory groups and pilot projects also serve as input to the decision making process. The primary advisory group is the Committee on Information Technology. In 2009 ITS undertook pilot projects to test the feasibility of switching our e-mail and calendaring environment to Google Apps for Education, and implementing a print management system to conserve printing resources and promote sustainability. These projects involved wide community

participation as well as the creation of task forces. These successful activities led to the decision to implement both of these initiatives starting in Fall 2009.

Summary

Decision-makers in all Hamilton divisions use various assessments on a periodic basis to inform their decisions. Surveys, sustained data collection/analysis, contracted services, task forces, pilot projects, and advisory groups all serve as instruments to inform College initiatives.

Connecting assessment outcomes, planning, and budget allocations

General

A variety of assessment instruments are maintained by the Office of Institutional Research and are [distributed](#) to decision-makers. These instruments [directly relate to sixteen of the twenty-seven action areas identified in Hamilton's Strategic Plan](#). Typically, goals are set without explicit mention of which assessment instruments will be used to measure progress on achieving those goals. This section describes examples from across the College where assessment is being linked to planning and budget allocation.

Admission

A major goal for Admission is to maintain or increase the [quality and diversity](#) of entering classes and have them be successful at Hamilton. The [assessment measures](#) that are used to determine progress in these areas include: standardized test scores, the rank-in-class of entering students, the number of students in racial/ethnic categories, and the number of students who are first generation to attend college. Admission also tracks the rigor of the high school programs from which our students come. We have determined that the best overall predictor of

success at Hamilton is the applicant rating which students are assigned by members of the selection committee during the application process.

In addition to the input indicators of quality, the Admission Office tracks [retention of first-year students](#) and [graduation rates](#), with particular attention to [assessing the relationship](#) between pre-college preparation and Hamilton success. The office annually reviews the records of students who are not successful at Hamilton, to determine if there were possible indicators that were missed in the admission process. Diverse students are compared with others to assure that they are achieving at comparable rates. Students in the Opportunity Programs and Posse are also [compared](#) with diverse populations of students who do not have access to these support structures. Proactively, students who might have particular challenges are “flagged” for discussion by members of Student Affairs to assure that their special needs are identified. Annual meetings between the Admission and Student Affairs Offices assure that student progress is assessed.

The variety of assessment instruments used by Admission has resulted in changes to the way resources have been allocated. One of the fundamental assessment questions for admission is “what could we stop doing without hurting the outcome?” Examples of such actions, based on assessment research, were the elimination of the Fall Open House, off-campus receptions, printed applications, and printed letters to waitlisted students and students who were not admitted. Now, all students are notified electronically of their admission decision and only accepted students receive printed materials. This action was piloted with international students and early decision applications; after a determination that this was not viewed negatively, it was extended to all students.

Over the last two years, the Office of Admission conducted a pilot project to gauge the potential financial impact of becoming need-blind. That analysis indicated that it would require about an additional \$2 million/year to finance the policy fully. Partly as a result of this analysis, the Hamilton Board of Trustees approved a need-blind policy in March of 2010.

Student life

One of the priorities of the Strategic Plan is to provide “student services that encourage and support personal development and responsibility” (p. 3). One strategy used to achieve this is to make rules clear, and processes and consequences transparent. An example of this approach was the development of the “[points system](#),” which associates a certain number of points with each instance of student misbehavior. The system was developed by Student Assembly in collaboration with the Dean of Students Office, and arose from concerns expressed by students about inconsistency and a lack of transparency in the judicial system. The effectiveness of the system is monitored by tracking student damage, alcohol-related incidents, and the number of repeat offenses; by these measures, the system has been effective.

Career Services, which plays an important role in student life on campus, was moved from the Division of Student Life to Communication and Development in the Fall of 2010 in order to take full advantage of the Hamilton alumni network. Career Services strives to encourage students to engage with career planning early in their college careers and to provide students with tools that will help them be successful in their careers. The primary assessment tool is the annual “[Career Outcomes Report](#),” which gives an early measure of alumni success in the information it provides about employment and graduate and school enrollment among recent graduates.

One of the best examples of assessment-informed changes Career Services have recently made was to invest more resources into working with students on career-related experiences (CRE). Using the [HEDS senior survey data](#), Career Services recognized that Hamilton students had fewer internship experiences than their peers at similar institutions. As a result, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of seniors who have had an internship at college.

Career Services offers workshops on various topics throughout the academic year — typically, job search programs and graduate school sessions in the Fall, followed by CRE- or internship-related workshops in the Spring semester. However, in the past five years student attendance at workshops declines sharply. In an effort to get the message out to students in a media format that they would access more regularly, resources were reallocated to produce a series of 25 [audio podcasts](#); for example, the job search workshop was divided into a multi-part podcast series, a two-part podcast on applying to law school was produced, and alumni contributed profiles on their professional field or employer.

Career Services increasingly offers more resources to students online, in an effort to reduce the demand for individual counselor time. For example, two interactive online products, [Optimal Resume and Optimal Interview](#), allow students to gain expertise in resume-writing and interviewing, before meeting a counselor. The resume-writing module is being heavily used, especially by first-year students, and they are strongly encouraged to bring their resume draft (done on the Optimal product) to be reviewed by a student Peer Counselor prior to a Career Services staff appointment. This relatively new protocol is working well, and may be required next year, freeing up valuable, but limited, counselor time.

Developing leadership skills among students is the focus of biannual workshops for students, provided in addition to specialized training for leaders of major programs such as

Adirondack Adventure, Orientation, Alternative Spring Break, and the Residence Hall Advisor program. Assessment measures include the growth and participation in student organizations and the number of student-organized events. While there are no numerical targets for student involvement, the data are reviewed each year. Student leadership staff regularly survey students to inform changes in planning and budgeting. For example, students who completed the [Hamilton Association for Volunteering and Charity \(HAVOC\) surveys](#) indicated a need for more direction and information from their site coordinators. As a result, our planning efforts this year have focused on increased communication between the HAVOC e-board, the site coordinators, and COOP staff. COOP also added a mandatory training session in September, with all site coordinators and e-board members in attendance, and changed the e-board make-up to ensure that all sites were represented by “team leaders” on the e-board. “Hamilton Serves!” surveys community partners and first-year participants about their volunteer experience. These assessments tell us which sites work, which don't, and which activities have the most impact on both the off-campus agency and the student. Using this information, we eliminate sites that haven't worked as well and add sites that we hope will increase students' understanding of the importance of engagement in the community outside of Hamilton.

From [surveys](#) of students participating in Alternate Spring Break (ASB), we learned that, although students had fun, worked hard, and were safe, there wasn't a great deal of significance associated by students with most of the experiences. We also learned that leadership was uneven; some leaders really took charge, providing ample information leading up to the trips and facilitating reflection activities while on the trip, while other were capable but less engaged. These assessments influenced our decision to establish a stronger and more sustained leadership

training program for ASB, which we believe has both strengthened the program for participants and provided deeper, more rewarding leadership opportunities for our student leaders.

The new COOP Service Internship (CSI) program uses assessments that are focused on one-on-one conversation rather than surveys. The group is small enough (8 student leaders, 8 community partners) to allow student, community partner, and COOP staff member to meet at mid-year and discuss the internship; student training can then be provided to address specific site needs.

An overarching goal of student life is to help students take increasing responsibility for their personal and career development. The process begins early, with a letter to parents of incoming students. This letter, from the Dean of Students, suggests to parents the importance of letting their children work through their problems at Hamilton themselves, rather than the parents interceding on their behalf. The letter states “As a parent, I know how strong the temptation is to fix the problem myself. Like you, I have had to learn to resist that temptation. . . .success and competence are achieved through my child’s hard work—not mine.” Over the years, this approach has resulted in a decrease in the number of parent calls, and an improvement in the nature and tone of the calls that have been received.

The Orientation program for new students takes place during the three days prior to the beginning of classes. In addition, pre-orientation activities (Adirondack Adventure and Utica Service Experience programs) have expanded substantially after the [Mellon study](#) found that, among first-year students, early development of friendships was an important factor in first-year retention and student success. The orientation program has seen changes in the last decade with increased time for academic advising, a stronger academic focus (e.g., classes now begin on

Thursday rather than the following Monday), and a shortened orientation period (more information materials are made online).

Academic program

The Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) is the major faculty advisory group for resource allocation connected with the academic program, and most significantly, the allocation of faculty positions when they become available. In large part, the work of the committee is to respond to proposals from academic departments for new faculty positions. [The factors](#) that are considered in position allocations include curricular merit, including long-term curricular planning, contribution to the college-wide curriculum, the nature of the concentration, and the assessment of student outcomes; and long-term personnel planning, including leaves, retirements, and grant-funded positions. The recommendations (to the Dean of Faculty) are also informed by data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, which include [majors/faculty FTE](#), [enrollment/ faculty FTE](#), and program [comparison with peer institutions](#). The committee also creates task forces to study specific issues (e.g., advising, diversity) on which recommendations regarding resource allocation may also be based.

Beyond the work of the CAP, an [Assessment Advisory Group \(AAG\)](#) was formed in 2009 to focus on broad assessment issues pertaining to the academic program. The AAG participates in, and advises on, analysis of academic program data, and members are kept abreast of current activities through [quarterly updates](#). A recent example of AAG member activity is a study of the relationship between student classroom diversity (student enrollment) and student-reported views on diversity issues, which was based on the first-year Wabash Study data. Other members of the AAG have participated in the alumni interview process (under the auspices of the Mellon Project) and have provided feedback on various ongoing assessment activities.

Communications and Development

The division of Communications and Development (C&D) uses Hamilton's Strategic Plan as a guideline for fundraising priorities, and assessment of quantitative data guides their work directly. Assessment is particularly immediate in the world of development since progress on fundraising priorities, once set, is measured in dollars. C&D tends to rely on internal measures rather than external ones, since Hamilton's fundraising goals are based on internal needs evaluated by trustees and senior officers. External markers, however, help determine if efforts are on track with peer institutions, and these comparisons are used as a bellwether for development program effectiveness. External and internal measures are particularly vital for Hamilton's Annual Fund, which uses a series of markers to assess the strength of alumni and parent giving, as well as gifts from foundations and corporations, in a biweekly, year-to-date comparison. Volunteer outreach, solicitation messages, and staff deployment are aligned according to our most critical needs as identified in the biweekly review. Benchmarking with peers takes place at regular, but less frequent, intervals, to gauge whether internal experience is consistent with trends in a peer group of about 40 schools.

External review has led to the creation of programs that have proven successful elsewhere, including the creation of Hamilton Alumni Leadership Training (HALT), a program for self-selected seniors that teaches them about college governance and how they can contribute as alumni to volunteer management programs. This includes a robust online volunteer site modeled after systems at Wesleyan and Amherst, and which has been improved upon regularly, based on activity and outcomes. The HALT program has enabled C&D to increase the number of alumni volunteers, particularly among recent graduates, and enhance the quality and timeliness of their work.

Assessment of regional alumni events in the late 1990's identified the need to connect alumni with Hamilton's academic program rather than promoting purely social interaction. Also, with rising costs for postage and growing demand for more events, the Alumni Relations office needed to manage resources in new ways. Alumni events now focus more on academics, incorporating faculty members when they are available and drawing on expertise from within the alumni community. Events are also increasingly planned and paid for by alumni volunteers in the regions. In the vast majority of cases, invitations to events are sent by email, to reduce costs of printing and postage. Feedback on the events is positive, with an increase in both the number of events and alumni attendance.

Information Technology Services

The mission of Information Technology Services (ITS) is to provide excellent services and infrastructure in support of Hamilton's programs. ITS monitors how technology is used by faculty, staff, and students in order to make decisions that affect planning and resource allocation; the changing nature of technology provides continuing opportunities to reevaluate our approaches to delivering technology support. A variety of recent assessments and the resulting changes in strategy have enabled ITS to reduce its non-salary operating budgets by over 5% per year for the last two years.

Annually, ITS [collects data](#) from incoming students about the technology they bring to campus. This informs trends and provides an early indicator of changes in usage that can affect services. For example, almost all students now bring wireless laptops to campus, and 50% of new students are bringing smart phones. The former development has resulted in changes in the information we provide, and the procedures we use to provide access to electronic resources; the latter has resulted in a strategic change to focus on providing mobile applications to access

institutional information. Ongoing studies of the use of wired versus wireless connections in residence halls has led to a significant reallocation of resources away from replacement of wired electronics to upgrading the wireless infrastructure; similarly, studies revealing the reduction in dorm room telephone usage has led to a significant reduction in the provision of those services. These fundamental changes have resulted in saving/reallocation of almost \$50,000 per year.

Early experimentation with the virtualization of servers has led to a change of strategy resulting in substantial annual savings and better services. Most recently, an assessment of our e-mail and calendaring environment, together with a related pilot project, resulted in a [transition to Google Apps for Education](#), improving functionality and reducing hardware, software, and personnel costs. Ongoing assessments of our service strategies have resulted in a new approach to providing help desk services and event support. These changes have resulted in a 33% reduction in our use of student help, while we have maintained the quality of our services as measured by monthly surveys of our clients. Finally, Hamilton annually participates in the [EDUCAUSE Core Data Survey](#) and [the ECAR survey](#) of Students and Information Technology. These surveys provide both longitudinal and peer data that help us compare our efforts with those of similar institutions. These comparisons are used to track both professional and student staffing levels.

Conclusions

Hamilton is fully in compliance with Standard 7. Institutional effectiveness is continually measured across campus as well as within divisions and units. Moreover, the assessment of institutional effectiveness is useful, systematic, and planned. The College takes assessment seriously, looks for creative ways to assess processes and services, and bases decisions on critical review of assessment outcomes.

Recommendations

1. While assessment results are used by decision-makers across campus, specific assessment measures should be more routinely outlined at the beginning of a policy or program implementation.
2. Document the link between strategy and outcomes in regard to overcoming differences in satisfaction between majority and minority students.

CHAPTER 7: STUDENT ADMISSIONS, RETENTION, AND SUPPORT SERVICES

(STANDARDS 8 AND 9)

Introduction

As changes develop in the United States economy and among our potential applicants, the relevance of a liberal arts education is a question of concern on Hamilton's campus and throughout academia. Thus, this chapter begins by addressing a series of questions about how we assess the success of Hamilton's mission and its liberal arts curriculum, in the context of admitting and retaining students. We then outline the programs and policies in place to recruit and retain highly qualified students, with special attention given to efforts to recruit and retain students with diverse backgrounds.

Alignment of admissions and support services with mission

On the Hamilton website, we delineate ambitious purposes and [goals](#) for Hamilton's educational mission. At Hamilton, we strive to teach students the analytic, creative, and critical skills necessary to succeed in a variety of educational experiences and post-graduate careers. Through our open curriculum, adopted for the class of 2005, Hamilton strongly emphasizes self-direction, or the individualized development of a student's intellectual and personal growth.

Our success is measured in various ways. For example, data from the Career Center permit assessment of student preparation for success after graduation. The Career Center polls students about post-graduation employment and continued education one year after they have graduated; in the [survey of the Class of 2008](#), there were 341 respondents, of whom 265 were employed, 67 were accepted into advanced or post-baccalaureate studies, and 9 had received graduate fellowships. Thus, 92% of respondents had successfully taken the next step in

furthering their education or becoming gainfully employed within a year of graduation. This one measure of success shows that graduate programs and employers alike consider the knowledge gained through a Hamilton education as relevant and competitive. The College also gains rich student outcomes information through other assessment practices such as the [Mellon Assessment Project](#) and the [Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education](#), which are discussed in Chapter 9.

Hamilton College seeks not only to encourage study of a broad range of disciplines, but also to cultivate skills in written and oral communication. Of 265 employed [respondents from the Class of 2008](#), 49% entered fields such as education, finance, management, law, marketing and sales, government, health care, and consulting, where significant written and oral communication skills are required. Sixty-seven graduates reported being accepted into a post-baccalaureate program; of these, 52% entered programs in law, sciences and mathematics, health care, social sciences, communications, humanities, arts, and business, programs for which written and oral communication skills are critical to acceptance.

Additionally, [satisfaction indicators](#) from our annual senior survey offer important data regarding how well our students consider themselves served by a Hamilton liberal arts education. Between 2000 and 2008, a large majority of Hamilton students reported that they would attend the school again, given the opportunity. For nearly every year, over 60% of graduating seniors report that their writing skills greatly improved while at Hamilton, although less than half report that their oral communication skills greatly improved. Given Hamilton's emphasis on writing, these are positive results; given our emphasis on oral communication skills, we need to do better. Most importantly, each year, over 89% of students report satisfaction with their undergraduate

education (a high of 95% in 2008). At the end of their four years here, students feel they have been well served.

Relevance of curriculum

One important statistic that indicates whether our curriculum is relevant and attractive is the number of applications received each year. [Hamilton's Ten Year Admission Trends](#) shows that since 2000, the number of total applications has consistently increased, while we have become increasingly selective in whom we admit. These data indicate that our curriculum remains relevant and attractive.

However, none of this matters if those students aren't retained. Retention is improving; one important statistic is that [freshmen retention](#) has increased from 91% to 96% in the past five years. Later in this chapter, we speak specifically to the matter of recruitment, admission, and support of students who differ from our historically traditional student body in terms of ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, and geographic background.

We often test our “messaging” to ensure that it is accurate and relevant and reaches relevant off-campus communities. The [Admitted Student Questionnaire](#) (ASQ) surveys admitted students, both enrolling and non-enrolling, and compares Hamilton to our peers in several ways. In the ASQ administered in 2008, students described the following categories as “very important,” and ranked Hamilton higher than its peer institutions: Flexibility of Curriculum, Personal Attention, Access to Faculty, Academic Facilities, and Campus Attractiveness. Characteristics that the admitted students described as “very important” but for which Hamilton ranked lower than its peers include Availability of Majors, Quality of Social Life, Surroundings, Off-Campus Opportunities, and Academic Reputation. The most frequent images associated with Hamilton include Isolated, Selective, Intellectual, Friendly, Close-Knit, and Challenging.

As part of a 2005 Market Research Study, students were asked to identify how important certain factors were in their college selection process

(<http://www.hamilton.edu/magazine/2006/fall/rightfit.html>). The factors and results were as follows:

- Hamilton's Open Curriculum
 - Current (75%), Enrolling (70%), Non-Enrolling Admits (58%)
- Study Abroad Opportunities
 - Current (53%), Enrolling (67%), Non-Enrolling Admits (52%)
- Writing Emphasis at Hamilton
 - Current (46%), Enrolling (64%), Non-Enrolling Admits (44%)
- Research Opportunities
 - Current (36%), Enrolling (52%), Non-Enrolling Admits (41%)
- Oral Presentation Skills
 - Current (26%), Enrolling (58%), Non-Enrolling Admits (33%)

Data such as these help us understand whether Hamilton's offerings are relevant and communicated well to our prospective students. The examples above indicate that the open curriculum is of great value to admitted and enrolling students. In the next section, we address how our advising system works in encouraging students to benefit fully from a liberal arts education.

Advising under the open curriculum

[Senior Survey data](#) indicate that students are increasingly satisfied with pre-concentration advising, while satisfaction with advising within the concentration is declining. At least two

strategic planning subcommittees identified concerns with how well our current advising system ensures that students achieve disciplinary breadth ([Academic Programs Subcommittee Report](#) and [Student Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Report](#)). As noted in the Academic Programs report, the open curriculum is a “student-centered curriculum that entrusts students with the freedom and responsibility for shaping their own educational experiences” (p. 2). Since the implementation of the open curriculum, [most students continue to take at least one course in the four broad academic divisions](#): arts, humanities, social science/history, and science/math. But the number of students taking two or more courses in each of the four areas has declined, particularly in the arts, and in science and math.

Given these concerns, an Advising Task Force was formed in February 2009 and charged with identifying weaknesses in our advising program and suggesting ways to improve those weaknesses. The [report](#) suggests four primary actions, including: 1) placing greater emphasis on student responsibility in the selection of courses, 2) implementing a stronger orientation program for faculty advisors (and the possibility of appointing a set of core advisors), 3) redefining advising as a teaching responsibility rather than a service responsibility, and 4) continuing to assess our advising program.

Education for self-direction and support services

Encouraging personal responsibility and civic engagement

One goal of Hamilton College’s open curriculum is to encourage and develop student responsibility, as described on our [website](#): “A Hamilton education prepares students to make choices and to accept the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic world of intellect and diversity.”

Students develop the capacity to govern themselves by following the Student Code of

Conduct, described in the [Student Handbook](#). The Guiding Principles of the Code include honesty, respect for others, respect for property, freedom of expression, and freedom of assembly. The Code also outlines conduct that is prohibited, judicial procedures and the points system, the Honor Code, the Honor Court Constitution, and Residential Life policies and procedures. With this information, students are able to make informed decisions in and out of the classroom. The Student Assembly is [contemplating the creation of a social honor code](#) to augment the academic honor code and further promote student responsibility on campus, but these discussions have just been initiated.

The College's [Strategic Plan of 2009](#) stresses increased student membership and participation in committees on campus: "Committees at all levels and across all divisions will be evaluated to ensure transparency, inclusiveness, and representation from the widest possible cross-section of College constituencies, including students and non-faculty employees. We consider the opportunity for students to participate in College governance to be an important aspect of co-curricular education at Hamilton." Examples of committees on which students have begun to serve include the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid, and the Faculty Committee on Budget and Finance.

Hamilton College facilitates the development of civic engagement along multiple avenues. Orientation now includes "Hamilton Serves!"; each incoming student participates in a service project for a portion of the day. This also serves as a way to advertise the [COOP \(Community Outreach and Opportunity Project\)](#), where many of our service learning and volunteer activities are administratively housed. The COOP's primary goal is to involve students in the local community. Activities include tutoring for institutions in nearby Utica and Rome (ABC Tutoring), an Alternative (service-based) Spring Break, internships in non-profit

organizations as part of work study (CSI Internships), a student-led volunteer program for partnerships with community organizations (Hamilton Association for Volunteering, Outreach, and Charity), and an Urban Service Experience, an alternative to the pre-Orientation Adirondack Adventure.

The [Levitt Center's Office for Serving Learning and Community Based Research](#) facilitates student involvement in the community as well. The Bonner Leaders Program, also administered through the Levitt Center, involves students in building civic engagement through community partnerships by working ten hours per week in a local community agency. Another program offers Hamilton students the opportunity to become [Levitt Scholars](#); after taking an oral communications course, these students speak about their research off-campus, developing their own oral communication skills as they educate high school students and others about college life and student research.

Awareness of support services on campus

There are several mechanisms through which students are made aware of the support services on campus. Prior to arrival on campus, all first-year and transfer students are required to participate in the online Campus Life Tour, which covers many policies, procedures, and campus offices (in order to complete the tour, a student must view each page). The pages include topics such as: orientation, student activities, the Career Center, multicultural programs, international student services, disability services, financial aid, study abroad, campus safety, student health services, the Counseling Center, the Chaplaincy, the COOP, the Library, and Residential Life (which includes a housing questionnaire).

In addition, the [Student Handbook](#) is available online. This document includes many policies and procedures to help inform students and ensure their success, and offers information

on campus offices and their guidelines. The “Other Policies and Procedures” section includes information on campus safety, library services, Information Technology Services, facility reservations, health services, and disability support services, among others. The “Academic Policies and Regulations” section provides information such as that concerning off-campus study, leave of absence, and academic standing.

All students are required to attend Orientation at the start of their career at Hamilton College. One of the purposes of this mandatory program is to help students become familiar with the support services available, and to provide information on the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Students offices, orientation leaders and resident advisors (RAs), the Honor Code, the judicial points system, “First Floor Meetings” (wherein RAs outline the function of offices such as Campus Safety, the Counseling Center, Hamilton College Emergency Medical Services, Student Health Services, and Residential Life), the Registrar’s Office, the Fitness Center, and the Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Board.

Retention of students

Factors that impact student success and retention

Over the past several years, the Office of Admission and Financial Aid has worked closely with the Office of Institutional Research to examine factors that influence student success and retention. A [2004 study](#) identified geographic origin as the strongest predictor of attrition; the same study found that those students least susceptible to attrition included recruited athletes and participants in the Adirondack Adventure pre-orientation program (described below). In 2006, the Office of Institutional Research [examined data](#) from the CIRP Freshman survey (1999–2003 cohorts), which also indicated that geographic origin was the strongest predictor of attrition. Many respondents to the [Senior Survey administered in 2008](#) believed that the campus should be

more accessible to students of color, students with international backgrounds, and to students coming from the South, the Midwest, and the West.

A [2006 study](#), undertaken by an independent research firm, identified academically strong students who had permanently withdrawn from Hamilton and explored their reasons for leaving. While the students were satisfied with their courses and professors, they viewed some of their experiences outside of the classroom negatively; in particular, these students cited a lack of diversity among their fellow students, too much apathy within the student body, and disappointment with their social life. The authors of this report note that the findings are similar to [research they undertook in 2003](#).

Finally, the Office of Institutional Research initiated an [analysis of retention rates](#) during 2001–2005, focusing on how race/ethnicity had impacted student retention. The data show that the graduation rate over the six years was highest for white students, at just over 85%, and was ~80% for black and Hispanic students. The freshman retention rate for Hispanic students was nearly 95%, just under that for white students, but was significantly lower for black students (just over 85%). While graduation rates equalized across the groups over the six-year period, the college did not do as well in retaining black students as it did in retaining members of other groups, after the freshman year.

Efforts to increase retention include responding to student needs in a number of ways. Administrators from the Division of Student Life gather weekly for a meeting to discuss students facing challenges and struggling personally or academically, thereby reducing the likelihood that any students will “slip through the cracks.” Some of the more common factors discussed include transition struggles that encompass domestic and international issues, difficulties at home, the death of a loved one, alcohol and substance abuse, time management, first generation issues, and

challenges associated with a disability. These issues may manifest themselves in poor class attendance, underperformance in coursework, homesickness, policy violations, and inquiries about withdrawal and transfer, among others. This meeting allows those who oversee various support functions within Student Life to compare notes and become aware of students in crisis. Those attending these meetings include the Dean of Students, Associate Dean of Students for Academics, Associate Dean of Students for Off-Campus Study and International Student Advisor, Associate Dean of Students for Diversity and Accessibility, Assistant Dean of Students, Assistant Dean of Students for Campus Life/Director of Student Activities, Director of Campus Safety, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services, Director of Residential Life, and Director of Student Health Services. Depending on the need, information and additional support can be provided by the directors of Opportunity Programs, Athletics, English for Speakers of Other Languages, and the Quantitative Literacy Center.

Integration into the campus community

At over two decades old, Adirondack Adventure (AA) is a pre-orientation program offered to incoming first year and transfer students. The program is voluntary and can accommodate approximately half of the class; each year, more students are interested in the program than can be accommodated. The program consists of large-group activities and multiple small-group trips in the Adirondack region, during the week immediately preceding orientation

A [2006 study](#) compared participants in the program with waitlisted non-participants who came to Hamilton in 2002. The study found that the GPA of AA participants and waitlisted AA students was identical. However, the retention of AA participants was higher than waitlisted non-participants, demonstrating the positive impact this program has on student retention, and thus overall student success. In addition, a [focus group](#) of former AA participants was brought together

to discuss their experiences. These seniors reflected positively on their experiences with AA and spoke to the comfort provided by this shared experience.

All students are required to attend the Orientation Program at the start of their career at Hamilton. Orientation is approximately four days long, and takes students through a series of events, shared experiences, and activities that help them become acclimated and acquainted with members of their class, and that prepare them for success on our campus. The topics and sessions related to support services during orientation include those concerning the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Students offices, orientation leaders and RAs, the Honor Code, Campus Safety, the Counseling Center, Student Health Services, their academic advisor, the Registrar's Office, the Fitness Center, "Sex Signals" (in which the Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Board are discussed), and alcohol education. When surveyed in 2009 about their experience during Orientation, over 92% agreed or strongly agreed that the materials received during Orientation were helpful, and over 86% agreed or strongly agreed that their orientation leader was knowledgeable, indicating some success of the Orientation Program in communicating information useful in the integration of new students in the community.

Another important mechanism for dealing with student needs is the Resident Advisor Training Program. [Resident Advisors](#) outline the services available to students in the Office of Residential Life in their first residence-hall meeting, and communicate weekly with their supervisors to ascertain what special needs and challenges face students.

The Office of Student Life hosts an Organizations Fair at which all [student organizations](#) at Hamilton College are invited to offer information about their activities and programming. The office also disseminates information about student organizations via email and conducts "Basic Training," leadership training for officers of all student organizations.

Two other crucial means of ascertaining and responding to the needs of our students are the HEOP and Posse programs. The administrators of these opportunity programs monitor students' progress and are available to students, playing a key role in providing students with information and assistance in accessing other campus resources and programs.

In addition to the data gathered by the Office of Student Life, as described above, other evidence indicates that our retention efforts have been fruitful. The Mellon Assessment Study has identified the formation of close ties with a small group of friends as one of the most significant factors in first-year student integration into, and happiness with, life at Hamilton. [The "First Year" report of the Mellon Project](#) identifies orientation programs (especially the pre-orientation program, Adirondack Adventure), dorm life, and extracurricular activities (especially athletics) as the most important venues through which first-year students are integrated into campus life.

Admitting, retaining, and serving diverse students

Hamilton has increased the diversity of its student body over the past ten years. The Admission Office has focused on recruiting increasing numbers of students who identify as students of color, who are from geographically different regions of the country, who are the first-generation in their family to attend college, and who are socioeconomically diverse. In the most recent admitted class of students (Class of 2014), 22% are students of color from the United States. In addition, 15% of the Class of 2014 represents the first generation in which a family member attends college. Overall, 49 states and 36 countries are represented by our student body (<http://www.hamilton.edu/facts/profile>).

Diversity programs and their objectives

At <http://www.hamilton.edu/diversity/>, one finds an array of links to information on campus resources, initiatives, academics, local resources (especially in Utica, the nearest city), and student groups for diverse student populations. The [Higher Education Opportunity Program \(HEOP\)](#), developed by the State of New York, is an academic program housed in the Dean of Faculty Office that provides opportunities to high school graduates who “because of academic and economic circumstances, would otherwise be unable to attend a postsecondary educational institution.” The majority of those in the program are students of color. HEOP offers a free, intensive summer program that consists of 12–14 New York State HEOP students along with additional non-HEOP-eligible students, where they engage in academic and personal development to prepare for life as a Hamilton College student. This very structured summer program makes available with peer tutors, faculty mentors, and individualized assessment.

The [Posse Foundation](#) “identifies public high school students with extraordinary academic and leadership potential who may be overlooked by traditional college selection processes.” Hamilton has had a Posse cohort from Boston for ten years, the members of which receive four-year, full-tuition scholarships from the college. These programs contribute to the increasing ethnic and socio-economic diversity of the college.

A recent [college-issued report](#) shows that student retention rates after the first year are highest for those who are not students of color and who are not in opportunity programs and lowest for students of color who are not in opportunity programs. Students of color who are in either HEOP or Posse have retention rates of 93.1% and 92.2%, respectively, over the period 2002–2006.

In response to the shifting economy, the College's [web site](#) has been revamped in an effort to anticipate questions about financial aid. Most significantly, Hamilton College is now "need-blind" in its admissions, starting with the Class of 2014. It fulfills a priority identified in the college's Strategic Plan: to ensure that Hamilton remains accessible to a traditional college-age population that will be more racially, socioeconomically and geographically diverse.

Support services for diverse student population

The College has consciously broadened the resources available to meet the needs of underrepresented students (<http://www.hamilton.edu/diversity/resources.html>). In 2007, the college created a new position, the Associate Dean of Faculty for Diversity Initiatives. It evolved in 2010 into a position at the senior officer level, reporting to the president, and now titled "Chief Diversity Officer"; the holder is responsible for facilitating diversity initiatives across the campus, and advises on faculty recruitment and curricular innovation. In 2008, the President created the [Diversity Coordinating Council](#), which brings together faculty, administrators, and students who are engaged in campus initiatives centered on diversity. The Council provides a forum for collaboration, shares information about events and activities, and assesses campus climate. Key issues, concerns, and ideas are shared with the president's cabinet, which has ultimate responsibility for advancing the College's diversity efforts. In the spring of 2009, a student-led initiative eventually resulted in the establishment of a Cultural Education Center (CEC). It responds to the emphasis in our Strategic Plan on fostering a diverse campus community. According to its [website](#), "The CEC's mission is to promote diversity awareness and foster intercultural dialogue. We are here to help make Hamilton College a welcoming, inclusive environment for faculty, staff, and students." The allocation of space for the CEC, examined in

the [CEC Task Force Report](#), has been completed and renovation of a college building is almost complete.

There is evidence that our efforts to foster a positive climate for diverse students, as well as increasing their presence on campus, have been effective. The [results of the 2008 senior survey](#) show that “satisfaction with ethnic/racial diversity” on campus went from 40% in 2004 to 60% in 2008. The same surveys show that satisfaction with the climate for minority students peaked in 2007 at just below 60%. Despite the slight decline in 2008, there has been a tremendous improvement over this time period. Students also offered concrete suggestions in the commentary section of the surveys; in the [survey from 2005](#), students claimed that increasing student diversity would improve social and cultural life on campus, while others suggested that Hamilton College hire more professors of color.

Although the College does not have a specialized program for students with disabilities, including those with visual and hearing impairments, physical disabilities and mobility or health impairments, learning differences, and psychological disorders, the Associate Dean of Students for Diversity and Accessibility coordinates individualized accommodations and support services for any student who has a documented need. Students seeking special arrangements due to a disability are required to provide the College with a recent evaluation conducted by a specialist in the appropriate field. Using this information, in consultation with the individual students, their professors and, if necessary, other qualified experts, the Associate Dean helps students develop a system of support services that are appropriate to their needs, such as the implementation of academic accommodations, referrals for counseling and academic assistance, soliciting faculty for academic progress reports, and regular meetings with each student. Among students with disabilities, the total retention rate between the Fall of 1998 and the Fall of 2008 is 90.3%. The

graduation rate for those students identified as disabled from 2002 to 2009 ranges from 80% to 100%; in 2009, 96.4% of seniors identified as disabled graduated from Hamilton ([Hamilton College Students with Disabilities Data](#)).

Most recently, the Associate Dean of Students for Diversity and Accessibility has led the charge to create a program for first-generation college students called “First in the Family.” During the 2009-10 academic year, a [“First in Family” web page](#) was created that contains inspirational reflections from first-generation faculty, administrators, and students. In addition to serving as reassuring narratives, these stories identify people willing to serve as resources and mentors for the College’s newest “first-gen” students. Other events that have taken place or are planned include faculty, administrator, and student gatherings, and small-group mentoring occasions. It is anticipated that the program will be integrated into the multicultural peer-mentoring project for first-year students, which will be piloted during the 2010-11 academic year.

The Rainbow Alliance is a student club that provides support for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and queer members of the Hamilton community. Hamilton College also offers LGBTQ Safe Zone training for campus groups and individuals. Safe Zone introduces trainees to basic and complex terminology of the LGBTQ community, lays out a framework for discussion of key issues, and provides a forum in which to talk about them.

Each year during Resident Advisor training, the Office of Residential Life spends time focusing specifically on supporting diverse students on campus. These sessions range from general presentations related to terminology and language to strategies for facilitating conversation among all students about diversity. This year, a new activity provided an opportunity for experiential learning through an exaggerated lens, based on socio-economic

status, gender, nationality, and sexual orientation. Additionally, role-play scenarios were added, where the Residential Advisors were expected to help an actor work through commonly faced issues related to diversity and identity.

At Hamilton, every room on campus is the same cost, both during the academic year and the summer. This system, especially for summer housing, is an intentional way to ensure that all students, regardless of socio-economic status, have equal opportunity to live in any location and style of room. Our medical pre-assign process ensures that students who qualify receive housing that meets their needs.

Facilitating dialogue and inclusivity

As our community grows more diverse, we have placed increasing emphasis on creating dialogue and debate among our various constituencies—faculty, staff, administration, students, and alumni—that is respectful, productive, and educational. Issues of diversity and access figure prominently in the [Strategic Plan](#). Indeed, the Strategic Plan stresses the link between “Engagement with the World,” one of the four defining core values or themes of the plan (“An education centered on self-direction, self-governance, and thoughtful argument makes for an effective engagement with the world”), and “Diversity and Access,” an action area within this theme. For action items to bring about “an effective engagement with the world,” the Strategic Plan suggests that Hamilton College: “Meet the demonstrated financial need of every student,” “Become need-blind in admission,” and “Increase the percentage of students and employees of color.” With the incorporation of these recommendations in the key document outlining the future of the college, it is clear that the college has made inclusivity one of its primary objectives. We have already implemented a need-blind policy and we continue to show progress in recruiting students and faculty of color.

We can also report that a new program intended to facilitate dialog and debate and to enhance inclusivity is on the horizon. With a diverse group of new students entering Hamilton College each year, many individuals share the same questions, concerns, and anxieties. The transition to college can be especially challenging for first-generation, historically underrepresented, and international students. The first-year multicultural peer mentoring project (MP²) at Hamilton College, which is being piloted during the 2010-11 academic year, can help new students face challenges and fears about college life and can present opportunities for them to get the support they need to overcome obstacles. The peer-mentoring project consists of a group of students who assist and support one another, and study and learn together. It will be a way for students to meet other students, form study groups, share knowledge and information, make connections with experienced students and professional staff members, succeed academically, and make friends. MP² will be a year-long mentoring program designed to bring together first-year students from a variety of backgrounds. Offerings will include study sessions and tutorials, educational activities, field trips and community activities, career and leadership development workshops, and formal and informal gatherings.

Balancing budget challenges with priorities of admission and financial aid

Admission and Financial Aid annually updates its Critical Few Objectives (CFOs) -- the strategic priorities that inform the operation of the division -- to reflect the shifting demographics of our prospective pool of students and the goals of the college, both for the short and long term. The Dean of Admission and Financial Aid works with the Faculty Committee on Admission and Financial Aid as well as the Trustee Committee on Financial Aid to study and outline the challenges and needs that relate to shifting demographics and a difficult economy. Such conversations have led to an increase in the college's discount rate and the elimination of merit

scholarships, both of which have allowed Hamilton to allocate more resources to need-based financial aid. The college made clear its commitment to being a school of opportunity by announcing in December 2009 its decision to become need blind by the end of the academic year. The college admitted its first need-blind class of the new era in August 2010, and will see its first need-blind class graduate in 2014.

Athletics

Hamilton sponsors 28 intercollegiate varsity teams, 14 for men and 14 for women. In any given season, 35–40% of the student body participates in a varsity sport. Hamilton competes at the NCAA Division III level and its teams are members of the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) and the Liberty League. NESCAC members include Amherst, Bates, Bowdoin, Colby, Connecticut College, Middlebury, Trinity, Tufts, Wesleyan, and Williams; members of the Liberty League include Clarkson, Hobart and William Smith, Rensselaer, the University of Rochester, St. Lawrence, Skidmore, Union, and Vassar. In 2011-12, Hamilton will become a full-play member of NESCAC and will no longer compete in the Liberty League. Hamilton is also a member of the Eastern College Athletic Conference and the New York State Women's Collegiate Athletic Association.

The mission of the Physical Education Department and Athletics is to make a maximum contribution to the liberal arts education of each student. The Department members believe that all phases of physical education (instructional classes, intramural sports, club sports, intercollegiate athletics, and recreational activities) are integral parts of the total educational process. Department policies reflect the educational philosophy, mission, and ideals of the college, and department members are committed to the intellectual, physical, and personal

development of all students. As stated in the Strategic Plan, the athletics program is an important component of the academic program and helps promote education for self-direction.

Hamilton is continually assessing the role athletics play at the institution. Beyond the NCAA Self-Study, which outlines the overall compliance of the College with NCAA standards, the College has undertaken several research and data-collection projects in order to understand better the impact athletics has at Hamilton. First, admission and academic outcomes data are regularly reported to NESCAC, which monitors and regulates the recruitment of student-athletes. Second, Hamilton participates in the [College Sports Project](#), a Mellon-funded research initiative to learn about the role of athletics at Division III institutions. Third, a variety of data, including participation and financial data from the [Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act \(EADA\) Report](#) and [Graduation Rate Report](#), are regularly reported to the NCAA for compliance purposes. Fourth, [internal studies](#) have been conducted by the Office of Institutional Research on an *ad hoc* basis on academic outcomes for student-athletes, which have helped the College assess whether the Athletics Department is abiding by its mission.

Additional compliance documentation

In addition to the findings reported in this chapter, we possess or demonstrate the following fundamental elements under Standards 8 and 9 with the information published on the websites listed below:

- Accurate and comprehensive information and advice regarding financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, and refunds:
 - <https://my.hamilton.edu/admission/finaid/>

- Published and implemented policies and procedures regarding transfer credit and credit for extra-institutional college level learning:
 - <http://www.hamilton.edu/applications/catalogue/advancedplacement.html>
 - <https://my.hamilton.edu/admission/ApplicationProcess/transferfaqs.html>
 - <https://my.hamilton.edu/applications/catalogue/regulations.html>
 - <https://my.hamilton.edu/academics/transferecredits.html>

- Reasonable procedures, widely disseminated, for equitably addressing student complaints or grievances:
 - http://www.hamilton.edu/college/student_handbook/

- Published and implemented policies for the release of student information:
 - <https://my.hamilton.edu/applications/catalogue/ferpa.html>

Conclusions

Hamilton is in compliance with Standards 8 and 9. The College's admissions and student support policies and programs are aligned with its mission, and student outcomes, including retention and satisfaction, are continually assessed to ensure that they are effective. Moreover, accurate and comprehensive information regarding academic programs, learning outcomes, and services is easily available to prospective and current students. The College also demonstrates that it places a high priority on the recruitment and retention of diverse student populations.

Recommendations

1. Monitor and assess the success of the new Cultural Education Center in promoting diversity awareness and intercultural dialogue.

2. Conduct further research to help understand and improve overall student of color satisfaction and retention. An example might be an ethnographic or qualitative study based on the findings of the CHAS Climate Survey, where areas of concern could be probed and contextual factors uncovered.

CHAPTER 8: FACULTY (STANDARD 10)

Introduction

This chapter examines how the college assures the quality of its teaching professionals in all areas of instruction. According to the 2009-10 Common Data Set, Hamilton employs 219 full-time and part-time instructional faculty members, of whom 193 possess a doctorate or other terminal degree in their field. For this report, departments from traditional academic divisions (Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts, Sciences, Physical Education and Athletics), ancillary academic programs (Critical Languages and Education Studies), academic support centers (Writing, Oral Communication, Quantitative Literacy, and English for Speakers of Other Languages), and study abroad programs were reviewed. To inform our deliberations, we interviewed department chairs and center directors and reviewed relevant documentation and assessment results. Most departments are broadly satisfied with current methods of assessing faculty. Departments use both formal (course evaluation forms, annual review process) and informal (classroom observations) methods. The ongoing process of developing written tenure and promotion standards for all departments is helping to clarify those standards considerably. Several areas for improvement are noted, especially in the way departments monitor non-tenured/ tenure track faculty, such as one-year leave replacement visitors and adjunct faculty.

Annual review processes and evaluation of teaching

Department chairs are generally satisfied with the [annual review process](#), with some divisional variations. The individual annual review process was introduced in 2007; in this process, each faculty member writes a self-assessment of her/his teaching, research, and service activities for the previous calendar year. The department chair then reviews the assessment, adds his/her own comments, and the faculty member reviews those comments and signs off on the

review. The form includes notes on progress toward tenure for tenure-track assistant professors, and toward promotion for associate professors. The completed form is then reviewed by the Dean of Faculty, in part for the purpose of setting salary levels for the following fiscal year.

Several chairs noted that the new process has improved communication between the chair and individual members. In the Arts, some department chairs dislike the annual review because they feel it puts too much emphasis on the role of the chair. Specifically, “[The report] assumes the chair knows about your subfield... It is a big expectation from year to year; assessment could be wildly different depending on the position of the chair. On quality of teaching, [it] depends if the chair takes the time to visit the classroom.” Science chairs said that the annual review provides a good opportunity for guidance of untenured faculty, although one Science department is less satisfied with the review process because it believes the review puts too much weight on professional activities. Social science department chairs consider the annual review to be an adequate and mostly effective tool for evaluating the teaching and research of faculty members. Of the Humanities chairs who responded, most were satisfied with the annual review process; one chair commented: “Certainly I think the annual report system beats what was in place before, which was, basically, nothing (and sometimes worse than nothing: gossip).”

All of the departments use periodic (once or twice a semester) classroom visits of junior members by senior members to evaluate their teaching, and more informal practices such as reviewing syllabi and meeting individually with junior faculty members to discuss pedagogy and classroom issues. A few departments have a regular [procedure for classroom visits](#), however, and two departments rely partly on feedback from students in evaluating classroom performance. Most Arts department chairs preferred classroom visits (and student course evaluations) to the annual review, although they agreed these methods are far from perfect. Science departments

have varying standards for classroom visits, ranging up to two week-long visits per semester. Humanities departments also conduct class visitations, except in cases where all department members are tenured.

Beginning in Fall 2008, the College moved from handwritten student course evaluation forms to the same forms online. While the change has been too recent to draw more than general impressions, it does seem that students are inclined to write in more detail than in the past (also more legibly), to be more thoughtful in their comments, and based on three semesters of data, to respond at a greater rate. Physically, faculty who are reviewing candidates for tenure and promotion can read the more recent forms on their own computers, rather than, for example, in a common basement file room. During the 2009-10 academic year, the Committee on Appointments [revised the content of the evaluation forms](#) to make the questions clearer and more focused. Those revisions were approved by the faculty in May 2010, and went into effect in academic year 2010-11. Department chairs uniformly report that the online course evaluations are a useful tool for assessing teaching.

The Physical Education Department, whose faculty members are not eligible for tenure, uses a separate reappointment and promotion process, and different course evaluation form, because their teaching practices and conditions are quite different from those of faculty members from academic departments. Members of the Physical Education Department work through minor and major reappointments at two or four-year intervals, depending on rank within the Department. A minor reappointment is completed using information gathered primarily from within the institution and from former students, while a major reappointment involves soliciting information from a variety of external sources, principally senior Physical Education professors and coaches at peer institutions, to be reviewed along with the internal information. The amount

of time between reappointments for members of the department is contingent upon one's rank: an instructor every year, an assistant professor every two years, and associate and full professors every four years. A member of the Physical Education faculty also works through a recommended promotional sequence; no more than three years as an instructor (while completing the master's degree, considered the terminal degree in Physical Education), followed by promotion to and three consecutive two-year appointments as assistant professor, followed by promotion to and two consecutive four-year appointments as associate professor, followed finally by promotion to professor with reappointment every fourth year. All promotions to associate professor and professor, and alternating reappointments as professor, are major reappointments.

The Physical Education Department uses the same annual review process as the rest of the faculty, and is generally satisfied with it. The department introduced new online course evaluation forms in 2009-10, and has found them to be a very useful tool. They are also working on implementing departmental peer review evaluations, with a structure for providing feedback and review of both teaching and coaching. This feedback will also be used when considering reappointment or promotion.

These review processes are used only for greater-than-half-time faculty who are employed for longer than one year. When it comes to adjunct faculty and one-year leave replacements, there is no system for providing feedback prior to course evaluations at the end of the semester. New procedures could include classroom visits early in the first semester, consultation over syllabi before classes begin, and mandatory mid-semester evaluations.

Of the academic support centers—Writing Center, Oral Communication Center, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and the Quantitative Literacy Center—the Directors

of the first three teach a partial load related to the respective center's work. Similarly, two ancillary academic programs, Critical Languages and Education Studies, are also directed by administrators, one of whom also teaches a partial load (neither program has permanent faculty positions). As administrators, the teaching of all these directors is evaluated through the annual [employee performance process](#) developed and administered by Human Resources at Hamilton. This process entails an employee self-assessment of job performance and goals, followed by a written response from the immediate supervisor and acknowledgement by the employee, much like the faculty annual review system. These directors report to, and their teaching is reviewed by, the Associate Dean of Faculty.

Employees in Informational Technology Services (ITS) and the Library regularly teach students how to use a variety of computer and film technologies, and library research techniques (information literacy). Because they are classified as administrators and staff rather than faculty, they are also evaluated through the annual employee performance process through Human Resources. In addition to the yearly formal evaluations, sections within ITS conduct periodic informal performance evaluations in the form of routine meetings with supervisors, assessment surveys of students, coaching sessions, and casual conversations with faculty about services provided. The librarians last conducted a survey of faculty and students in 2005; the library staff deemed this survey flawed and the results not useful. The library is working on a plan to develop new, systematic surveying to be conducted in the near future.

Research and career development support

Since the college's 2006 Middle States periodic review report, the funds made available for junior faculty research support have increased substantially. Tenure-track colleagues at the beginning of their teaching career normally teach four courses instead of five during their first

year, and receive generous start-up funds for research. After budgetary pull-back during 2009-10, the college has resumed funding travel to two professional conferences annually, with presentation required at the second. Many departments indicated that the support has helped “for the long-term and for retention,” although some felt that the increased levels of funding are too recent to determine the impact on junior professors’ careers. There are some indications that the program may be exacerbating older tensions between generations of faculty:

“Senior faculty who arrived at Hamilton under the 3–3 load, when expectations for publication or creative work were extremely low and when a hierarchical distribution of power was very much the norm... tend to over-mentor junior faculty in terms of teaching, advocating an extremely time- and labor-intensive model of ‘good’ teaching; have quite high expectations in terms of departmental and college service; and almost no advice to offer at all regarding strategies for maintaining a vital research and publication agenda. This sends a message to junior faculty about what aspects of their performance their senior colleagues (who will, after all, be evaluating them for tenure) most value; and it’s not a good thing that research and publication come up last. I think this is a problem; I’m not sure what to do about it.” (Comments from a senior faculty member.)

This apparent tension between older and younger generations of faculty has existed for some time, and varies greatly from department to department. It may resolve itself through generational turnover, but it is a problem that should be monitored a little more closely than has been done in the past because it is, fundamentally, about the mission of the College.

Physical Education faculty members and selected Academic Affairs administrators and staff (e.g., academic support and ancillary program directors; Library personnel; head coaches in Athletics who do not teach and thus are not members of the faculty) are eligible for professional

development funding for conference travel and workshops on the same terms as academic faculty members.

Criteria for review of teaching, scholarship, and service

In 2006-07, the Dean of Faculty began a process whereby each department developed written criteria for tenure and promotion specific to their disciplines. This process addressed a finding in the [2001 Middle States review](#) and the [2005-06 COACHE survey](#) of tenure-track faculty, expressed in the latter as a lack of clarity in tenure practices compared to peer institutions and evident in informal discussions with junior faculty members. Criteria for tenure (and promotion) only existed in generalized statements in the *Faculty Handbook*; details on how to meet those criteria were informal, varied across departments, and were communicated inconsistently to candidates. The new guidelines explicitly state what each department regards as meeting the general *Faculty Handbook* criteria for effective teaching, scholarship, and service, and how that effectiveness is to be measured. They also include disciplinary specifics relating to the criteria for promotion from associate to full professor. For example, the Economics Department standards state that an effective teacher “is a clear and organized communicator; is able to engage students in learning; is knowledgeable about the field of study; challenges students intellectually; makes thoughtful use of appropriate pedagogy; is helpful to students within class; is helpful to students outside of class.” The Government Department adds “evidence of high standards” to this list, but no department explicitly requires a review of grades given as part of evaluating teaching. For promotion, the Biology Department looks for continued curricular development, demonstrated leadership, flexibility in what is taught, and continued successful supervision of senior research projects. The criteria described in the *Faculty Handbook* are then assessed through student evaluations, the examination of syllabi and

assignments, classroom observation, and solicited student letters through the lens of these departmental guidelines.

Regarding research, the new standards must, of course, reflect the variance among disciplines. The Theatre Department guidelines require that professional recognition of performance be demonstrated through published reviews of creative work, employment by off-campus theatre companies, “honors and accolades,” and invitations to teach master classes. Anthropology states that the value of scholarship “is not readily measured in numbers of publications. Books and/or research monographs in particular...should be regarded as indicating a significant achievement. Publication of an article in a top-tier journal also is...regarded as a high achievement for a given year.” Physics requires that candidates for promotion continue to produce articles based on research conducted after tenure.

The service criterion in the *Faculty Handbook* is much easier to apply consistently across departments. Tenure-track faculty are encouraged to serve on committees that will not draw them away significantly from their research, while tenured associate professors are expected to provide significant committee and departmental service as they prepare for promotion.

Chapter VII of the [Faculty Handbook](#), “Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion in the Department of Physical Education,” is slated for full review in the next year or two, after the recently-hired Associate Athletics Director has had time to develop an understanding of the department. Items needing revision or clarification include the types of positions offered, the conditions for appointment, and the ranks within the department. The Athletic Director and other senior members of the department will be working closely with the Dean of Faculty Office and the appropriate faculty committees to revise the relevant sections of the handbook. The suggested changes to Chapter VII will be put before the faculty for approval as is required practice.

The process of developing department-specific guidelines for meeting the College's tenure and promotion criteria has been constructive and thought-provoking for faculty, but it proceeded at a rather slow pace. Departments submitted draft standards to the Committee on Appointments beginning in 2009; the COA read and commented on the drafts to ensure consistency with general College criteria and as much equivalency across departments as feasible. At time of writing, four departments have yet to finalize their guidelines. Results from the 2008-09 administration of the COACHE Tenure-Track Survey showed [marked improvement](#) in clarity of tenure practices and expectations, with both measures substantially higher than for peer institutions. This is an excellent example of how assessment informed practice, which in turn was assessed to measure success.

Hiring and supporting a diverse faculty

The faculty recruitment process was discussed in Chapter 6, and is described in detail in the [Dean's Guidelines for Department Chairs](#) handbook, and so is only summarized here. Throughout the process, assessment of the success of each stage is conducted. Search Authorization, which includes criteria for the position, advertisement text and placement, and search committee composition, are approved by the Dean of Faculty. The Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) (formerly Associate Dean for Diversity Initiatives) consults with departments on recruitment strategy; this is evaluated by comparison of applicant pool diversity with previous departmental searches and current [Survey of Earned Doctorate](#) data, assessed by the Affirmative Action Officer (Associate Dean of Faculty). CDO also consults with departments, as a non-voting member of all search committees, at applicant evaluation stages (files, interviews, finalist presentations) to ensure that thorough consideration is given to each candidate.

Once an offer is made, departments discuss a retention plan with the CDO that delineates the steps they will take to mentor the new colleague and facilitate his or her successful integration into the life of the department and the College. These can include establishing a regular schedule of class visitations and social meetings with colleagues, senior faculty, and mentors.

A mentoring program for junior faculty is administered by the Associate Dean of Faculty, which consists of a senior faculty member outside of the department, but typically in a cognate field. The mentor will not participate in personnel decisions regarding the junior member, and thus can be a helpful, confidential resource for information about the college. In 2009-10, the CDO (ADDI) established a Faculty of Color Alliance, which provides a venue for social and professional interaction at Hamilton. The college [recognizes same-sex domestic partnerships](#) and provides the full array of benefits, including health insurance coverage (considered additional taxable income by the IRS) and parental leave.

The [2009-10 Affirmative Action Report](#), provided data that 18% of the college's full-time faculty are faculty of color, ranking us third among NESCAC institutions, behind Tufts and Amherst. Among tenure-track members, the percentage of faculty of color has increased from ~40% to ~50% over the last two years. Overall, the Hamilton faculty lags ~4% behind the national percentage of doctorates of color, as indicated in the latest [Survey of Earned Doctorates \(NORC, 2007\)](#), although the distribution of faculty of color is skewed heavily toward the humanities at Hamilton. A ten-year analysis of retention of faculty of color indicates similar retention levels to other faculty, although higher losses are noted for Hispanic faculty members, where the proportion of Hispanic departures among all faculty were somewhat higher than the corresponding proportion of hires (24% vs. 14%, n= 5 and 11, respectively).

Over the last 10 years, women constitute over 50% of faculty hires (and thus the assistant professor rank), while the associate professor rank (now 45%) is steadily increasing as these cohorts move through the tenure process. The percentage of women in the professor rank is increasing more slowly, and is currently at 31%. These percentages rank high among NESCAC peers for assistant professors, low for associates, and are at average for full professors. Female faculty members are retained at a slightly lower rate than males at Hamilton, and data indicate that women are slightly longer on the tenure track on average.

Percentages for both women and faculty of color largely reflect the rank and age structure of the faculty at Hamilton (and peer institutions). Over the next 10 years, approximately 70 Hamilton faculty members will reach the age of 65, and recruitment for those positions will be from an applicant pool considerably more diverse, in sex and race/ethnicity, than previously recruited. Given Hamilton's strong hiring processes, with assessment of recruitment strategies and applicant pools, and success in the recruitment of women and faculty of color, we can anticipate considerable diversification of the Hamilton faculty over the next decade.

Conclusions

Hamilton is in compliance with Standard 10. There have been substantial improvements in the ways the college assesses the quality of its teaching professionals since the previous Middle States re-accreditation process. The annual review process and the revised methods of course evaluation for both academic and physical education faculty have made assessment more regular, more comprehensive, and more specific. The introduction of an annual review process for most non-faculty support personnel has also clarified job expectations. There are still needed improvements in the system, however, particularly in procedures for assessing one-year visiting faculty and adjuncts. The development of departmental guidelines for tenure and promotion has

clarified what the departmental voting members expect of their faculty. The college has traditionally been generous in support of research and professional development activities, and has notably increased its support in the last several years. Lastly, increasing the diversity of the faculty has been successful and remains an ongoing endeavor, but the college has made serious efforts not only to recruit more diverse faculty, but also to provide better support for them after hire.

Recommendations

1. Implement a process to evaluate regularly the teaching of information literacy among the library staff.
2. Develop a system to assess the performance of one-year visitors and adjuncts early in their first term.
3. Complete the development of departmental promotion and tenure guidelines.

**CHAPTER 9: EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS, GENERAL EDUCATION, RELATED
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
(STANDARDS 11, 12, 13, AND 14)**

Introduction

This chapter outlines the Hamilton College academic program, which is a comprehensive and coherent liberal arts program highlighted by 40 concentrations and 37 minors, an open curriculum with no disciplinary course distribution requirements outside of the concentration, writing and quantitative literacy requirements across the curriculum, and a mandatory senior capstone in every concentration.

Hamilton's educational goals and the direct outcomes of the curriculum—student learning—are assessed across campus. Throughout this chapter references to a wide range of assessment activities provide evidence of student outcomes and demonstrate the College's efforts to evaluate and improve its academic program through empirical analysis. Where outcomes are not up to Hamilton's standards, critical review and recommendations for improvement are provided.

General education

The open curriculum

In 2001, the Hamilton College faculty voted to end distribution requirements and instituted an open curriculum (OC), which emphasizes student responsibility and freedom in curricular design and course selection. The OC was not without structure; effective with the Class of 2005, students were required to complete certain competencies (writing and quantitative literacy) and an interdisciplinary sophomore seminar originally viewed as a “capstone” of their first two years or general education component. The structure of concentrations remained unchanged with their specific course requirements and the mandatory senior program.

The structure of the requirements for the OC has evolved over the decade as a result of ongoing curricular assessment and resource constraints. A major development was the elimination of the sophomore seminar requirement effective with the Class of 2010. The ambitious design of these seminars was fraught with logistical challenges, not least in terms of variety and frequency of course offerings, that could not be overcome satisfactorily. This in turn led to student and faculty frustrations with the program, which was eventually discontinued after faculty discussion and vote. While the College managed to make available a sufficient number of seats in sophomore seminars, only students with an early registration time had any chance of getting into the seminar of their choice. It was impossible for instructors to deliver on the promise of the program with students who were often in their course to fulfill the requirement and not through interest in the subject matter. Based on data from both the [Mellon Assessment Project](#) and the [senior survey](#), dropping this requirement was an example of responsiveness to assessment results, although many of the faculty regret the elimination of sophomore seminars. A few of the more successful courses (Seminar on the Adirondacks, Food for Thought) have been retained as College seminars.

The one other substantive change made to our general education requirements since the last Middle States Report is the replacement of the Quantitative Literacy Requirement with a Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning requirement (discussed below), which became effective for the class matriculating in Fall 2010.

The Hamilton faculty is supportive of the move to an OC and, while there are certainly improvements to be made, there does not seem to be any strong sentiment to implement a new philosophy of general education. As there has not been a faculty vote on the OC for many years we were not sure of the current overall faculty support for the curriculum; therefore, in the spring

of 2010 a [faculty survey on the OC](#) was administered to assay opinion on the effectiveness of the OC, and the advising system which serves it, in accomplishing Hamilton's mission. Most of the 97 respondents either agreed (44) or somewhat agreed (41) that the OC supports Hamilton College's mission⁸ and most (68) felt adequately prepared to advise students within the OC.

In this survey, the most commonly cited reasons for support of the OC are that students take responsibility and ownership of their curricular choices, that students have the flexibility and freedom to explore their interests, and that this curriculum attracts smart, motivated and creative students. A recent Teagle Foundation OC study concluded that institutions with such a curriculum shared a set of core values and assumptions rather than a particular set of curricular structures, and it appears that the Hamilton Faculty, according to our internal survey, have the same opinion. However, the internal survey also brings to light faculty concerns about the OC, and suggests areas for further study and improvement; general concerns include students lacking a common experience and intellectual community, and avoidance of areas they find hard or dislike.

With nearly ten years of experience and data to consider, the College is now engaged in a comprehensive institutional level assessment of the OC funded by The Mellon Foundation. Initiated in spring 2009, four faculty members have been chosen as "curricular leaders" in four areas: 1. Advising and Curriculum (Todd Franklin, Philosophy); 2. Performance and Creativity (Heather Buchman, Music); 3. Quantitative Reasoning (Sally Cockburn, Math); and 4. Writing and Research (Alfred Kelly, History). Hamilton College adopted the OC at a very different time from other schools (e.g., Brown, 1969; Amherst, 1971) and our Mellon group is therefore asked:

⁸ *That mission, according to the survey, is "to provide an educational experience that emphasizes academic excellence and the development of human beings...A Hamilton education prepares students to make choices and to accept the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic world of intellect and diversity. It will be the foundation on which they build a lifetime of personal and professional achievement and satisfaction."

“1. To more fully understand the open curriculum at Hamilton College in comparison with other liberal arts schools where some form of the open curriculum model has had a chance to mature, and 2. To assist the Hamilton faculty in taking on our open curriculum as an intellectual project, and in moving it to the next level (Open Curriculum 2.0) based on Hamilton’s nine years of experience with this model and on other schools’ experience.” This group has spent a year gathering information both at Hamilton and in campus visits to Brown University and Amherst College, both of which have long experiences with versions of an OC. The Leaders have identified several areas of focus including mission statement and goals, advising, structural barriers to upperclassmen, and student research, as outlined in their [first year report](#). Several of these areas of focus are the topics of other chapters in this Self-Study report. Nevertheless, advising is extremely pertinent to our discussion of general education.

In order for all students to achieve their goals and pursue their interests while fulfilling the requirements of a Hamilton College degree, and to become exemplars of the College’s mission, it is important that students carefully plan their course of study. Students are advised through their Hamilton College career by faculty in a two-tiered process. Initially, students are advised by a member of the pre-concentration advising corps; then, once a student declares a concentration, he/she is assigned a new advisor within the chosen discipline for “expert” advising in the major. It is the first advisor who has the responsibility of helping a student to articulate his/her “plan for a liberal education,” which must include the completion of required competencies, preparation to declare a concentration, and the fulfillment of other goals as required (for example, completion of a set of pre-professional requirements or completion of requirements for study abroad). At the present time, there is only some basic formal training of advisors. Experienced faculty are guided by a statement titled “Breadth in the Liberal Arts,”

published in the [Pre-Concentration Advisor Manual](#), where specific objectives to guide the design of a course of study are suggested. Additionally, the Dean of Students and Dean of Faculty Offices co-host an orientation meeting for advisors before first-year advising in August, where the specifics of changing course offerings, departmental recommendations, etc. are shared. Thus the “nuts and bolts” of advising are disseminated to faculty each year, and most members responded in the [faculty OC survey](#) that they did feel adequately prepared to advise students within the OC (yes, 69%; somewhat, 24%).

Within our current system of advisor training, there are some areas for improvement. One is in the training of new faculty members to be effective advisors; while new faculty members do not advise first-year students, there is little training to prepare them for when they become pre-concentration advisors in their second year. Aspects of new faculty orientation do address issues related to Hamilton’s educational values and the open curriculum, but this is mainly through presentations by the Directors of support centers and programs, highlighting the services available for both faculty and students (i.e., Quantitative Literacy Center, Writing Center, ITS Support Services, Library Public Services, Opportunity Programs, English for Speakers of Other Languages, and the administrators responsible for other diversity programs). Follow-up meetings are held in the early Fall semester to address Honor Code issues and teaching evaluations. At present, discussion of the broader philosophies of curricular design within the College mission only occurs at faculty meetings, usually in regard to a particular change or motion under consideration, or at community meetings (often poorly attended, especially by junior faculty) called by a committee considering some aspect of curricular reform. Thus, there are limited venues for development of a shared faculty advising vision.

Finally, while many faculty members may believe they are competent advisors within the OC, several groups reporting on the advising system have identified weaknesses in the advising system (i.e., [Advising Task Force Report](#), [Mellon Curricular Report](#), [internal course breadth analysis](#)). In [a comparison](#) of the general education programs at 10 schools with open curricula, as part of the Mellon Assessment Project, Hamilton was one of three that did not have “intensive advising tools” and, after visiting Brown University, our Mellon Curricular Group characterized our advising system as “relatively thin.” They state, in their First Year Report, that:

Drawing upon insights gleaned from Brown, the next phase of the Mellon project with respect to advising will focus on making the Hamilton advising (system) much more purposeful in relation to a set of liberal learning goals, improving the ways in which advising is staffed and coordinated, and improving the ways in which our online system facilitates both the bureaucratic and substantive dimensions of the advising process.

However, even comprehensive faculty “vision” and stellar advising may not lead to a desired outcome if there are insufficient resources to enact the “ideal” general education for each student. It is interesting to consider how much change there can be in student course selection, and the scope of direction provided by advising, without changes in curricular resource allocation. For example, it seems that, in practice, students’ course choices are often driven by practicalities like course availability, perceived workload, faculty reputation, scheduling, and registration time, rather than higher-order considerations of intellectual growth and individualized curricular challenge ([Patterns of Course Selection Report](#)). As stated in the [Mellon Curricular Leaders report](#), “One challenge that seems particular to Hamilton (in comparison to Brown and Amherst) is the lack of availability of courses open to juniors and

seniors that allow them to explore fields outside their concentration... Hamilton has relatively few open enrollment/ no prerequisite courses and as a result, there is a relatively high level of student frustration due to the ways in which limited access constrains student choice.” Expanding the discussion about, and commitment to, the OC at the department level will be necessary to develop a curriculum that fully supports all the goals of an “OC 2.0.”

Competencies and student learning

Underpinning liberal arts curricula is the development of basic competencies in thought, expression, and praxis that provide the student with intellectual dexterity that aids the lifelong goal of becoming a liberally educated individual. The OC presents special challenges when it comes to the assessment of such competencies (e.g., critical thinking, oral communication and writing, quantitative and scientific reasoning, information literacy, and an interdisciplinary perspective). The assessment of these competencies is primarily *embedded* in the coursework that constitutes an individual student’s curriculum. With no specific courses required of an individual student, outside of the concentration, it is difficult to specify precisely the point at which (or whether) an individual student has achieved some benchmark level of competence in these areas. Nonetheless, direct and indirect measurements of these competencies occur throughout the curriculum and in summative and comparative assessments of Hamilton students’ learning.

Writing, quantitative, and oral communication skills. Writing is considered one of Hamilton’s strengths by external reviewers, with the ten-year Mellon Assessment Project at Hamilton having attracted national attention to the quality of the College’s Writing Program by providing [direct evidence of significant improvement in writing ability](#) effected by the Program. The Writing Program is built on three supporting structures: (1) a requirement that each student

pass three courses designated as “writing-intensive” (a “W” course), which are offered across the curriculum; (2) a set of guidelines (for faculty) that govern the structure and expectations of all writing-intensive courses, vetted by the Committee on Academic Policy (CAP); and (3) a campus Writing Center that offers peer-tutoring in writing to any student, in any course on campus. To say that each student is *required* to take three writing-intensive courses is not to suggest that students do not take more than three, or more importantly, that students do not take courses which are at least as writing-intensive as “W” courses. For example, a course that requires extensive writing and attention to the craft of writing may not have the “W” designation because it doesn’t follow the guidelines governing “W” courses.

Consistent with the results found in the Mellon Assessment Project, the [HEDS 2008 Senior Survey Summary Report](#) suggests that over 60% of Hamilton College seniors felt that their writing skills were greatly enhanced while at Hamilton, a statistic consistently greater than for students in our peer institutions. [NSSE 2008 results](#) similarly show both first-year students and seniors at Hamilton indicating significantly greater attribution to Hamilton for their developing the ability to “write clearly and effectively” than peer-group students attribute to their institutions.

In addition to the writing requirement at Hamilton, the only other foundational requirement has been the Quantitative Literacy requirement, newly designed and renamed the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning requirement (QSR), which became effective with the class matriculating in Fall 2010.

Since the mid-1980s, and up until the establishment of the OC, a quantitative literacy requirement worked in tandem with a divisional requirement that students take two science/math courses. The quantitative literacy requirement continued after divisional requirements were

eliminated, but the sense of the Faculty was that it was a weak requirement. The requirement could be fulfilled in a number of ways, the weakest of which was to pass an exam at first-year orientation, an exam which barely tested skills beyond a good middle-school mathematics preparation. The other two ways of fulfilling the requirement were to (1) take a course, vetted by the Quantitative Literacy Committee, that had significant quantitative expectations, or (2) complete an 8-session non-credit-bearing tutorial offered through the Quantitative Skills Center, the support mechanism for the requirement and quantitative tutorial services in general.

Over the past several years, the faculty became increasingly dissatisfied with the level of knowledge this requirement validates, and that concern was underscored during an external review of the Mathematics Department which included a review of the Quantitative Literacy requirement, where the review team reported that the requirement seemed conspicuously weak for a school of Hamilton's caliber. Further evidence of the need to strengthen the requirement is found in an [enrollment comparison for science/math courses](#) for the classes of 2004 and 2008 (an indication of the movement away from quantitative courses after removal of divisional requirements). Whereas virtually 100% of the class of 2004 took at least two courses among the science/math departments, 11% of the class of 2008 took no course in these departments. In the spring of 2009, the Committee on Academic Policy, with the assistance of the Quantitative Literacy Committee, brought a motion to the faculty aimed at strengthening the requirement. A one-course requirement was passed by the faculty at that time, and it is referred to now as the "QSR requirement," mentioned above

Passing the new QSR one-course requirement was a serious advance in Quantitative Literacy efforts at Hamilton for a very important reason: it led to the delineation of the course characteristics that would meet our vision of a requirement appropriate for a liberal arts college,

while crossing divisional boundaries to establish campus-wide responsibility for the requirement. A course designated as satisfying the QSR requirement must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. **Statistical Analysis.** The use of statistical analysis to describe data and to make inferences.
2. **Mathematical Representation.** The use of mathematical models such as those based on graphs, equations, and geometric objects to represent patterns, relationships, and forms.
3. **Logic and Symbolic Reasoning.** The use of formal logic or symbolic reasoning such as in the following examples: the proper construction a computer program or formal proof; the analysis of language in linguistics; or the study of music theory.

In addition, a QSR course includes four or more graded assignments (tests, quizzes, problem sets, labs, oral presentations, exhibits) in at least one of the three categories described above. Completion of this work is necessary for a passing grade in the course, but need not be the only graded work in the course.

It is interesting to note that the [NSSE 2008 survey results](#) show that, in response to the question regarding a student's experience at Hamilton in contributing to knowledge or skill in "analyzing quantitative problems," Hamilton College seniors were not differentiable from the peer group—not the case for other basic competencies, such as writing and oral communication. A positive result, however, is found in the faculty [survey](#) on the open curriculum in the Spring of 2010, where roughly 63% claim to teach or evaluate quantitative/symbolic reasoning in some or all of their courses. It may be that students underestimate the extent to which they must exercise

quantitative reasoning in the curriculum. We expect that the new requirement will increase all students' understanding of quantitative/symbolic methods of representation and analysis, as well as capitalize on existing practice and interest among faculty members to develop quantitative/symbolic approaches in fields traditionally considered non-quantitative. Finally, the Quantitative Literacy Committee, which, along with Committee on Academic Policy (CAP) bears oversight responsibilities for this requirement, looks enthusiastically towards an assessment of this requirement, after a specified five-year period, to make an informed evaluation of its success, document changes in student learning that are evident, and enact corollary modifications that are warranted.

Like writing-intensive and QSR courses, we find courses embedding practice and instruction in oral communication skills throughout the curriculum and, as the [college catalog](#) reminds us, “An emphasis on writing and speaking—long-standing Hamilton traditions—remains at the heart of the curriculum.” Unlike the case with writing and quantitative skills, there is no specific curricular requirement in oral communication. Nonetheless, the College is clear about its expectations in this respect; again from the catalog: “The College requires effective use of public and academic discourse as defined and appraised by the faculty and the College community.”

A review of Senior Program syllabi across departments and programs demonstrates that students cannot escape at least one course with a major emphasis on the public presentation of their work. Furthermore, syllabi of courses at all levels of the curriculum suggest that it is common for a significant portion of the final grade to be dependent on presentation, class contribution, class discussion, or other vehicles designed to practice and exhibit students' oral communication skills.

According to the [Mellon Assessment Project](#), “Students’ confidence in their speaking skills, through experience and familiarity, grows over time, and seems to be a large part of how students progress up the learning curve of oral communication.... Most of the improvements students reported did not come from their taking Oral Communications classes (because most hadn’t), but instead come from their experiences leading discussions or giving presentations in class (which most students reported they had had). For most students, these experiences were few in number, but significantly bettered their confidence, comfort, and communication abilities in front of groups.”

In a survey of faculty conducted as part of the Mellon assessment study, “what constituted an oral communication assignment was broadly defined...to include activities as diverse as required participation in class discussion, role plays, oral readings, as well as more formal presentations.” In their responses to that survey, “instructors report[ed] teaching a variety of skills, but most of those skills are related to content (e.g., organization, topic selection, developing ideas) rather than to presentation skills (e.g., using AV equipment, using language, using voice and body effectively). For example, only 16% of the students received instruction on effective use of voice and body, whereas 37 percent received instruction on organization of a presentation.”

In the absence of a clearly articulated shared conception of what competencies comprise the standards for oral communication, in 2008 the Oral Communication Center surveyed faculty on a number of questions, one of which asked them to select from a list of 17 skills those that they believed students needed in order to be successful in their classes. By far the greatest degree of agreement— 70–88% of respondents—focused on eight practices, listed below in order:

1. Organizing a spoken message for clarity, unity, coherence, and effect (88%).

2. Engaging the attention and interest of the immediate audience.
3. Explaining ideas and concepts so that the audience understands them.
4. Managing nervousness associated with speaking in public.
5. Formulating an appropriate and clear thesis or communication objective.
6. Using voice and body to engage audience attention and convey meaning.
7. Using language that is appropriate, accurate, and clear.
8. Listening courteously and critically (70%).

It is heartening to note that in the [survey of faculty on the OC](#), 93% responded that they teach and/or evaluate oral communication in some or all of their courses.

In the [NSSE 2008 survey](#), in response to the question, “In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you made a class contribution?,” Hamilton first-years and seniors reported significantly greater frequency than their comparison group, with the seniors mean score corresponding to the characteristic “often.” In response to the question, “To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in speaking clearly and effectively?,” Hamilton first-years and seniors evaluated their growth significantly higher than did their comparison group, with the means for both Hamilton classes averaging between the characteristics “quite a bit” and “very much,” with the latter being the top of the scale. In the [Senior Survey of 2008](#), the percentage of respondents who felt their communication skills were greatly enhanced through their years at Hamilton was roughly 10% higher than the comparison group of other liberal arts colleges.

Support for writing, quantitative and oral communication skills. Centers for assisting students in writing, quantitative, and oral communication skills provide support for courses across the curriculum that require these three competencies. The Writing Center depends

primarily on individual writing conferences using peer tutors, skilled in writing across the curriculum. (Writing conferences may or may not be part of the requirements of any given course.) In addition, web- and in-center resources have been developed to deal with issues that students face routinely in their writing and, if necessary, faculty consultation is also available.

The peer writing tutors complete reports for every writing conference they hold, and reports are kept throughout each student's four years. In academic year 2009-10, almost 2,600 conference reports were filed. These reports are important for tracking individual student progress over time, informing the tutoring staff of an individual student's specific writing strengths and limitations, and identifying trends in overall student writing needs. Over their four years, 94% of Hamilton students will have at least one writing conference.

Each semester, selected students are asked to assess their writing conferences. The Director of the Writing Center meets with individual writing tutors to discuss the feedback—what they are doing well and how they might modify their tutoring practices. Larger scale evaluations of the Center's work are conducted periodically. For example, in 2009 and 2010 the Center conducted an [all-student writing survey](#) on the writing experience at Hamilton and a [faculty writing survey](#) on the challenges of incorporating writing into their classes. Results of such surveys are used by the faculty Writing Advisory Committee to identify topics for faculty workshops. For example, the workshop in January 2010 focused on writing in larger classes (as opposed to writing-intensive classes which have enrollment limits of 20) and the April 2010 workshop focused on student feedback on writing.

Each year, as a result of surveys, workshops, and experiences in the Center, the Director adds to the already large set of instructional materials written for the students and available in the Writing Center or on the Center's website. For example, this past year, with the assistance of the

writing tutors, the Director wrote “Developing Your Thesis” and “Revision Strategies,” arising in large measure from needs identified by tutors’ conference reports and students’ assessment of their writing conferences.

According to the [2010 Mellon Curricular Leaders’ first-year report](#), the energies of the Leaders during this past year were largely directed towards gathering information on the curricular and para-curricular practices at elite schools with open curricula. Though much can be gleaned from their visits and fact-finding, one observation in this context was that Hamilton’s writing program was more impressive than other top schools in the group, and that the writing requirement and the Writing Center were responsible for that favorable comparison.

The Quantitative Literacy Center relies on a drop-in peer tutoring model, utilizing the expertise of student tutors who have been highly successful in their own quantitative work in courses across the curriculum. As in the Writing Center, each tutorial visit is documented by the tutor who met with the student, and these reports are used to inform the development of materials, tutor-training, and sometimes used by the Director to inform faculty of specific issues that have led several students from the same class to visit the Center. During the 2009-10 academic year 1,029 visits to the Center were documented. The feedback from the Director of the Quantitative Literacy Center is also used by the oversight committee, the Faculty Quantitative Literacy Committee, to inform decisions regarding the administration of the Center and the logistics of the curricular requirement. Future resources and space for the Center will need to be addressed due to the new QSR requirement.

The Oral Communication Center offers courses in developing communication skills, discipline specific workshops, and tutorial sessions utilizing the facilities of the Oral Communications Lab. In recent years, the Center has been conducting between 300 and 400

tutorial conferences per year, and has provided instruction and/or intensive out-of-class support for several courses per year. A Faculty Speaking Advisory Committee has recently been appointed to serve the Center and Director in developing support services across the curriculum.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages program (ESOL) supports the adjustment of non-native English-speaking (NNS) students and addresses related performance issues in reading, writing, and speaking. Hamilton does not require English language or writing placement tests for ESOL students. Rather, first-year students are given the choice of enrolling in mainstream writing-intensive classes, written argument classes, or the specialized ESOL composition class. The advantage of the ESOL class is that it is prescriptive and student centered, so as to support comprehensive success for NNS students across the disciplines of a liberal arts education.

The ESOL program's composition practices relate to the linguistic problems characteristic of speakers whose primary language has not been Standard English. The curriculum emphasizes three central areas believed to assist NNS students' learning: a respect for their differences, an inclusive (not marginalized) learning environment, and a fair linguistic and cognitive evaluation process. Since 2005, thirty to forty students graduate each year who have been directly involved in the ESOL program.

In addition to the four centers described above, the Peer Tutoring Program provides academic support for students who need ongoing tutorial support from a dedicated tutor who meets with the student on a regular basis, for part or all of the semester. During the past academic year, arrangements were made for a total of 78 students in 19 different disciplines who availed themselves of this opportunity. The Director of the Peer Tutoring Program is also the Director of the Quantitative Literacy Center and uses the same feedback mechanism (tutor report

for each tutorial session) in both programs. Feedback from the tutorial reports is used in training tutors and assessing student development relative to the coursework in which the student is being tutored.

Information literacy. We define information literacy to include students' skills in finding, evaluating, and effectively using information sources for assignments and multimodal projects such as research papers, posters, presentations, podcasts, blogs, and video projects. Data from the NSSE and EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR) Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology focus on students' perceptions of their information literacy and technological competencies. The [2008 ECAR Study](#) reports that 93.4 % of students use the college library web site weekly and "79.5% of students give themselves glowing marks for their ability to 'use the Internet effectively and efficiently to search for information,' with almost half rating themselves as 'very skilled' and another third rating themselves as 'experts.'" Half of the respondents reported that they are "very skilled" or "expert" at "evaluating the reliability and credibility of online sources of information" or "understanding the ethical and legal issues surrounding the access and use of digital information."

Data from the [2008 NSSE survey on information literacy](#) indicate that while Hamilton is matching our peer institutions in teaching information literacy skills to seniors, we are lagging behind our peers in teaching information literacy skills to first-year students. At Hamilton, fewer first-year students ask a librarian for help with their research, go to the campus library to do academic research, or participate in online library tutorials than first-year students at peer colleges. The most statistically significant gap, however, is that fewer first-year students report participating in an instructional session led by a librarian at Hamilton than at our peer schools. According to the NSSE data, Hamilton College Library services are not reaching enough first-

year students, despite an active information literacy program, reference desk, and research assistance and library liaison programs. Hamilton's lack of a first-year curricular program makes it especially challenging for the library to reach first-year students.

In an effort to reach more students with information literacy instruction, reference librarians have been contacting academic departments in Fall 2010 to set up meetings to discuss information research objectives in their respective majors. Ultimately, it is the goal of the reference librarians to work more closely with faculty members to help students learn research skills within the disciplines and integrate information literacy into the Hamilton College curriculum.

The Hamilton College Library is beginning the process of gathering performance data on students' information literacy skills, instead of relying on student perceptions of their own skills as found in ECAR and NSSE surveys. In Fall 2010, the [Research Practices Survey](#), a standardized information literacy skills test, was administered to all first-year students. We will follow up with these students partway through their Hamilton career and again at graduation. We would also like to survey incoming classes in future years. We will use the information we gain from the Research Practices Survey to inform the growth of our information literacy program at Hamilton. Standardized testing of information literacy skills will enable faculty and librarians to assess students' level of research skills as they enter Hamilton and at various points in their academic careers, including at graduation. The Research Practices Survey is also used by a number of our peer institutions, so we will have access to comparative data about students' information literacy skills.

Other competencies—scientific reasoning, technical and critical thinking. Hamilton College has no science requirement. An [OIR analysis of course breadth](#) by *Phi Beta Kappa*

divisions determined that whereas 90.7% of the class of 2004 took at least one science course, that percent dropped to 74% for the class of 2008, the first class to graduate under the OC. Those percentages excluded courses in Mathematics and Computer Science, which had counted toward the science distribution requirement in the previous curriculum. If these two departments are included, the percentage for the class of 2004 is essentially 100% (two courses from the science/math “division” were required), but drops to 87% for the class of 2008. Under either interpretation it appears that, under the OC model, some significant proportion of students are declining to take science and math department offerings.

However, in the [faculty survey on the OC](#), 50% responded that they taught and evaluated scientific literacy. It should also be considered that courses other than those in science/math cover scientific reasoning. For example, the Economic Statistics course, data analysis courses in Government and Sociology, and the Philosophy of Science course all contribute to a student’s understanding of science, its conduct, purposes, and limits. Indeed, the experience of generating a research question, designing a study, producing and analyzing data, and interpreting results is a clear representation of the scientific method, but many courses in which this process is the *modus operandi* are not considered science courses *per se*. We might note here that, even in the past distributional structure, the two-course science/math requirement did not stipulate that students take a course with a laboratory component. Finally, it is not clear that completing a single introductory or non-major course in a science department is necessarily a demonstration of being a competent scientific thinker. Many of our students also demonstrate adequate levels of scientific reasoning though means such as AP testing.

Regarding technical competencies, [NSSE 2008 survey results](#) suggest that Hamilton first-years and seniors use electronic media to discuss or complete an assignment significantly more

often than do students in the comparison institutional group. Similarly, Hamilton students' ratings of the extent to which the College contributed to their knowledge and skills in using computing and information technology were significantly higher than those of students in the comparison group; the average rating of both first-year and seniors corresponded to the scale characteristic "quite a bit." Finally, both first-years' and seniors' average ratings of the extent to which Hamilton emphasized the use of computers in academic work fell between the scale characteristics "quite a bit" and "very much." These ratings, though greater than those of students at peer institutions, achieved significance only for the first-year students.

We think of critical thinking skills as metaskills which support inquiry and analysis across intellectual domains. Although the faculty has not delineated a common set of criteria definitive of critical thinking, a perusal of syllabi for courses throughout the curriculum suggests that students regularly experience and are evaluated on those capacities generally accepted as indicative of critical thinking:

- To discern and articulate problems;
- To marshal evidence in support of one's assertions/decisions/actions;
- To weigh the quality of available evidence and acknowledge biases in evaluating one's own or another's assertions/decisions/actions;
- To use sound logic in forming and evaluating assertions/decisions/actions;
- To compare, contrast, and, when appropriate, synthesize multiple assertions.

What is quite clear is that students think they are experiencing exercise in critical thinking and faculty think that they are teaching and evaluating it. [In the NSSE 2008 survey](#), 93% of first-year students and 98% of the seniors at Hamilton responded that their experience at

the College contributed to developing critical thinking and analytical abilities “quite a bit” or “very much,” the latter identified by 69% of the first-years and 76% of the seniors. On this item, Hamilton students in both classes were significantly more positive than students in the comparison group. In the [faculty OC survey](#), 100% responded that they taught/evaluated critical thinking in their courses.

Results from the [Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education](#) also provide direct measures of critical thinking outcomes, as well as other competencies. In Fall of 2006, about 70% of first-year students completed a series of tests and questionnaires related to pre-college experiences and learning outcomes, including critical thinking, moral reasoning, and attitudes towards diversity. In spring of 2007 and again in spring of 2010, these students were asked to complete the same battery of surveys and tests. By administering the instruments at the beginning of the first year and near the end of the first and senior years, the researchers were able to develop measures of change in skills over the first year of college and over their entire college career. While Hamilton students improved on all scales over the first year, the difference was not significant from the eleven other liberal arts colleges in the study. The four-year results are still being analyzed.

Interdisciplinarity and cultural diversity. It is extremely difficult to measure student achievement of interdisciplinarity directly. The college had a Sophomore Seminar program in which students were required to take one course that was designed as team-taught and interdisciplinary. That program ended after five years and was generally viewed as unsuccessful, as discussed earlier. The Mellon Assessment Project’s [study of interdisciplinarity](#), however, also suggests that students were confused in the Sophomore Seminar courses when academic content was derived from two or more disciplines and/or by the interaction of the faculty directing the

course, and also that most students chose their sophomore seminar (when they had a choice) based on their concentration: they sought a seminar that would count towards their concentration. Since that program ended, Hamilton has no formal structure in the curriculum where interdisciplinarity is deliberately required. However, there are other ways in which students experience designed interdisciplinary subjects, perhaps most conspicuously by taking courses in areas that are, by their nature, interdisciplinary, such as Africana Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies, Biochemistry, Neuroscience, Environmental Studies, Public Policy, etc.

While recognizing that interdisciplinarity is not achieved by simply sampling department or division offerings, it seems reasonable that, in the absence of individual courses that are structured to evince a true interdisciplinary perspective, or clearer measures of interdisciplinary thinking, breadth in course selection is a reasonable proxy for assessing the likelihood of such a perspective, and certainly a necessary condition for developing such a perspective. [Many assessment reports](#) have been generated at Hamilton concerning course selection, all available on the Institutional Research Office's website. In the class of 2008, virtually all students took at least one course in the humanities and social sciences, and over 85% did so in the humanities; 78% took at least one course in the arts and 87% did so in science/math.

The [data for Phi Beta Kappa \(PBK\) divisions](#) show that 69% take at least one foreign language course. (For the PBK divisions, foreign language is separated from the humanities, and math/computer science is separated from science, making 6 divisions—the two others being social sciences and the arts.) [Using the PBK classification scheme](#), 30% of students take at least one course in 4 of the 6 divisions, 45% in 5, and 18% in all six. Far fewer take at least one course at the 200 level: 95% do in social science and 86% in the humanities, but only 59% in Art, 52% in science, 31% in language, and 23% in math/computer science. Students take about half of all

their courses in the division of their major, though social science majors concentrate a bit more heavily, with nearly 60% of their courses within that division. ([Patterns of Student Course Selection Report](#)).

[Enrollment data at the department level](#) show that, on average, Hamilton students took courses across 11.6 different departments over their four years. Approximately six of these were “visited” during the students’ first year, another 3 departments added in their second year, and a total of roughly 3 additional departments in their final two years. Clearly, exposure to disciplines starts out quite broadly but students try far fewer new departments after they declare concentrations. Just over 80% of the members of the class of 2009 took courses in between 9 and 14 departments, with a mode of 13.

The Mellon Assessment Project suggests that the students who regularly commented on making interdisciplinary connections were double majors, particularly those whose two majors were relatively closely related. For the class of 2009, only 18% were double majors, and only 27% of those (24 students in a class of 472) were double majors within one division, i.e., in relatively closely related disciplines. Double majors were heavily concentrated in Economics, Math, and foreign languages. Far more students had a major and minor: 45% in the class of 2009, and 34% of these had a minor in the same division as their major (72 students in the class of 472), creating more opportunity for interdisciplinary experiences and awareness for these students.

Overall conclusions from these data depend on institutional standards for interdisciplinarity (i.e., breadth, applying cross-disciplinary methodology, etc.). A vast majority of students study broadly enough to make true intellectual interdisciplinarity possible. However, no more than half of the student body takes 200-level courses in areas outside of the humanities

and social sciences, and even by including double majors, the proportion of students who gain a deeper interdisciplinary perspective from studying in more than one field in some depth is somewhat limited.

Cultural diversity is as difficult to assess as interdisciplinarity, but more direct data are available for assessment. The measures come in two forms: data generated by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) on students' selection of relevant courses, and data from various studies or student surveys of relevant satisfaction and behaviors.

The [College's Purposes and Goals, in the College catalogue](#), states that "Hamilton also emphasizes cultural analysis, including the study of non-western traditions and of diversity in the United States." To assess the extent to which students fulfill this, the OIR coded all Hamilton courses, based on title and description, with significant (more than a passing mention) content in either "study of non-western traditions" or "diversity in the United States," and then examined enrollments in those courses for the class of 2009 ([working group table](#)).

With regard to resource allocation, the college offers a relatively wide array of relevant courses. Eighteen departments or programs offer at least one course on US diversity, and 19 do so for non-western traditions; the vast majority of these departments are in the humanities and social sciences, with some in the arts (mainly Art History and Music). Most heavily represented are the interdisciplinary Africana Studies and Women's Studies departments and foreign language departments. The greater number of courses on non-western traditions is largely accounted for by foreign language departments and Comparative Literature. The fact that there are more courses in non-western traditions than in US diversity, but fewer students taking them, suggests that the former does not have serious resource constraints. Enrollment data for Fall 2009 show that the "cultural diversity" courses (both US and "non-Western traditions" used in

this study) had an average enrollment of 14 (48% of the seats full) versus the college average for that semester of 18 (67% of the seats full), suggesting that lack of course capacity is not a hindrance to students taking these courses. (This doesn't take into consideration other possible constraints such as time slot, department, or pre-requisites.)

The data show that a strong majority—between two-thirds and three-quarters—of all students take at least one course in each of the diversity areas. A little under half take two, and a quarter to a third take three. However, a total of 108 students in the class of 2009 took no course on diversity in the US and 148 took no course on non-Western traditions. Forty-five students, just under 10% of the class, took no course in either area. In summary, given this definition of “cultural diversity,” a vast majority of our students get a minimal exposure of at least one course (either US or non-western), a strong majority get exposure to both areas, about half get a second course in each area, and smaller minorities go in greater depth or are not exposed to this area at all. Lack of courses does not seem to be a serious constraint to students taking more diversity courses.

The [NSSE 2008 survey](#), comparing Hamilton and a group of peers, posed a series of questions to first-year students and seniors regarding their experiences with diversity in and outside the classroom. In many areas, there is no statistically significant difference between Hamilton and our peer group of similar colleges. Exceptions include the following: (1) First-years (but not seniors) report statistically significantly fewer experiences of including diverse perspectives in the classroom and seniors (but not first-years) report statistically significantly fewer “serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity.” Hamilton students report that the College encourages contact among students of different backgrounds to a much lesser (statistically significant) degree than the comparison group attributes to their institutions,

and that their experience at Hamilton has contributed less to their “understanding of people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds” than students at the peer institutions report. These were among the most negative relative findings for Hamilton compared to our peer group in the NSSE study overall. Interestingly, [in the faculty OC survey](#), 82% of respondents claim that they “address issues that raise students awareness of cultural diversity” in their courses, with 40% saying that it is a primary focus of the course. Eighty-four percent of the respondents claim that they “address issues that raise students awareness of intellectual diversity” in their courses, with 33% of the respondents saying that it is a primary focus.

The HEDS [2008 Senior Survey](#) suggested that Hamilton students are less likely than their peers at similar institutions (10% vs. 16%) to participate in “racial/cultural awareness” activities, but generally are more satisfied (% “satisfied” or “very satisfied”) with “ethnic/racial diversity” on campus (60% vs. 49%, respectively) and the “climate for minority students on campus” (54% vs. 48% respectively). These data are for all Hamilton students, and have not been disaggregated by race or ethnicity. The survey also invited open-ended comments from students, with concern about diversity and campus climate emerging as one of the more common responses. Also, in a recent analysis using [Wabash Study](#) data from the first year of the study, Professors Julio Videras and Steve Wu of Economics found a positive correlation between enrollments of diverse students in courses taken and attitudes towards diversity. The study will be extended to include four-year data when it is available.

Concentration goals and the senior program

While the design and implementation of general education is the responsibility of the whole faculty, or its elected representatives, the design of a concentration is clearly within the purview of a department or program, with oversight from the Committee on Academic Policy.

Academic departments at Hamilton have clearly delineated goals for student concentrators, the senior program, and the contribution to the general curriculum at the College. However, one area for improvement is the consistency with which goals are communicated both within and beyond the department. While each department has a goals statement on its website, other forms of communication vary. Some departments regularly hold open houses for first-year students interested in taking their courses, others have student handbooks available to anyone interested in the department's curriculum, but the accessibility of information in still other departments is sparse and ad hoc.

In most departments, student course selection within the major is guided by a faculty adviser who helps the student design the best possible plan for his/her major and general education through the junior and senior years. Perhaps a more coherent and cohesive model is presented by the Religious Studies Department in which the whole department meets with a concentrator to discuss his/her study plan and proposed course. This is a faculty-intensive approach and would probably not be possible in large departments with many majors. However, there are clear advantages to this system, whereby students receive an array of faculty advice.

Individual departments and programs at Hamilton use a number of products and practices in evaluating whether the learning objectives of the concentration have been met. Some of these include (but are not limited to) senior projects and honors theses, oral presentations, artistic performances, and written examinations. Representative course syllabi, grading practices, and examples of good and poor work (previously graded by faculty) have been assembled, and the following paragraphs highlight a few examples from their review.

The Art Department identifies several types of learning experiences that help achieve the objectives of the concentration. As their mission statement describes, "Our art program is

concerned with the creation of visual incidents, and the dialogue surrounding the communication and placement of a visual object or experience in both a contemporary and historical context.” In order to achieve this, the department offers an annual visiting artist series (3–5 artists), full faculty critiques, and a multidisciplinary studio environment. The Communications Department’s description of its curriculum states that “the study of communication moves beyond public speaking to include digital technology and visual rhetoric, group process, and conflict mediation.” For example, students in the “Communication, Language, and Culture” course are required to complete a group presentation on the relationship between a particular culture’s language and other message systems in society. In a course titled “Persuasion,” students create a final project that “persuades a target audience to adapt, maintain, or discontinue a behavior or attitude.” All students enrolled in “Conflict Mediation” participate in a hypothetical scenario that requires them to negotiate and resolve disputes of various kinds. The Women’s Studies Department delineates several objectives for its concentrators, including the ability to “learn how to identify, read closely, and critically analyze the scholarship that constitutes feminist studies of women and gender”; “learn to link the theory, practice, and politics of feminist knowledge production with analysis of different modes of inquiry”; and “learn to recognize and analyze the interconnections of gender to other social categories such as ability, age, class, ethnicity, nation, race, and sexual orientation.” Student concentrators in the Chemistry Department are expected not only to “learn basic laboratory techniques and basic operation of standard analytical equipment,” but also to “develop critical thinking, problem solving, and collaborative skills”; “improve ability to communicate scientific ideas, verbally and in writing”; and “appreciate the role that chemistry plays in society and its contributions to associated scientific disciplines.” These types of skills are developed and assessed throughout courses in the

concentration. However, for each department, the primary demonstration of a student's mastery of all the different concentration goals (see the 14 goals for neuroscience concentrators) is the senior program/project.

A common theme across departments and programs is that the senior program provides a culmination of the Hamilton experience through a particular project. The guidelines and expectations vary from one department to another, but some common concentration goals include the synthesis of critical and analytical thinking, the mastery of specific skills, and the production of original ideas composed in a final project. The Theater Department's description of its senior program states that each student "produces a senior project in which he or she not only directs and, where appropriate, acts in or writes a one-act play, but produces a major scholarly paper based on this experience." Senior projects in Economics "will require students to: 1) use methods common to the economics discipline (e.g., case studies, theoretical modeling, or regression analysis); 2) incorporate findings from economics journal articles; and 3) present their results in a paper and an oral presentation." In German, the Senior Program "is a culminating intellectual experience in which students draw on and integrate the knowledge, research and language skills gained in the first three years. The core of the program is the senior project, a research paper of approximately 30 pages that can be written in either German or English, but must incorporate German language sources." Nearly all of the departments and programs require a public presentation of the final senior project.

The academic departments at Hamilton are clear in communicating the learning objectives of the senior program and the concentration requirements. For example, the Government Department describes the senior project as being "more than just a long paper. It is a theoretically informed analysis of a political or policy question. It should focus on asking and

answering a specific research question. The thesis should use relevant theoretical and empirical literature in political science and public policy to present multiple hypotheses—plausible alternative answers to the question. It should then examine as much relevant evidence as possible to present a convincing argument for which a hypothesis(es) provides the most convincing answer to the research question.” In another example, the Women’s Studies Department tells students that their thesis will be evaluated by assessing the following:

1. Positioning of project in a framework of women’s studies.
2. Synthesis of past and current scholarship in women’s studies and other relevant disciplines.
3. Originality and creativity.
4. Thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the work.
5. Written presentation of the work.
6. Oral presentation of the work.

While many departments describe common themes and goals for the Senior Program, there is less standardization across the College in evaluating actual student achievement in the senior project. In most departments, the final product (typically a long paper and an oral presentation) is graded by one faculty member, although some departments use other mechanisms for evaluation. For example, the Senior Program in Art is highlighted by a public exhibition in the Emerson Gallery. Faculty members and seniors gather and critique each piece, all faculty members submit a grade for each student, and the final grade is the average.

Most departments do not have explicit rubrics by which they assess student learning in the Senior Program, but some utilize rubrics for assessing certain aspects of a project. For example, the Chemistry Department uses a self-assessment rubric pre- and post- senior research,

in order to assess students' competence in a variety of scientific research skills. This rubric outlines the level of student autonomy is evaluated for: the ability to be critical, determined, curious, organized, persuasive, and creative. Other, more traditional, types of grading may also be used to assess progress towards the concentration goals. While Hamilton does administer a general exit survey to all seniors, most departments do not regularly administer an exit survey to their senior concentrators. Department exit surveys allow questions to be tailored to student experiences within the concentration.

Off-campus programs

Hamilton College runs or co-sponsors four academic programs abroad, in China, France, India, and Spain, and three domestic programs, in New York City, Washington, D.C., and at the New England Center for Children, near Boston. Directorship and management of these programs resides within the relevant language/area studies department for the China, France, and Spain programs. Administrative support personnel for each of the programs report to the Associate Dean of Faculty and support the respective program directors. Faculty members within the Asian Studies program periodically direct the India program, which rotates with other institutions through a consortial arrangement; administrative support personnel for the India program reports to the Associate Dean of Students for Off-Campus Study, who also provides support for students participating on non-Hamilton study abroad programs.

For the 2010-11 academic year, Hamilton has engaged the services of The Forum on Education Abroad, a consultant group that works with colleges to initiate strategic planning around off-campus study. Rather than just reviewing Hamilton's study-abroad programs, this process will examine how Hamilton organizes off-campus study on a broader level (e.g., with reporting structures divided between Dean of Faculty and Dean of Students offices), how

responsibilities are divided amongst administrators currently at Hamilton (e.g., roles of Associate Dean of Faculty, Associate Dean of Students for Off-Campus Study, and program-specific administrators), and if there are resource needs or possibilities for consolidation that can be identified. An initial self-study (completed in December) was led by the Associate Dean of Students for Off-Campus Study and a team of faculty and administrators involved with study abroad, with participation and input from all of Hamilton's programs and the Dean of Faculty office. A visit from the consultative team will take place during the Spring semester. Ultimately, the objective is to better serve students interested in study abroad. The College will also welcome advice on procedures for the development of new programs proposed by the Faculty, and for enhancing the College's compliance with the Forum's Code of Ethics and Standards of Good Practice.

Associated Colleges in China

The [ACC](#) Intensive Language and Culture Program in Beijing is a summer, fall, and spring intensive Chinese language program administered by Hamilton College and hosted by Minzu University of China (MUC) in Beijing. The curriculum, designed and supervised by experienced American college professors, emphasizes individualized instruction in Chinese with a high level of participation and interaction. The curriculum is designed so that the material taught in the classroom can be used outside of the classroom. Students are encouraged to interact with local Chinese citizens in order to increase their understanding of Chinese culture and society, and to practice the language skills learned in the classroom. The Program places significant emphasis on assessment practices, both in measuring student outcomes and evaluating the overall program. The ACC has systematically implemented multiple types of assessment instruments to monitor participants' progress at all stages, including entrance/exit proficiency

exams, the ACTFL oral-proficiency test, task-based performance and diagnostic testing, and student portfolios. The ACC is the only program in China that has developed this kind of sophisticated and effective assessment system. ACC's success in helping participants achieve an advanced level of competence in Mandarin is partly due to our effective assessment systems.

Hamilton College Junior Year in France

Hamilton's [Program in Paris](#) provides a curriculum that includes courses taught both in-house and at various higher education institutions in Paris that specialize in a variety of disciplines (Sorbonne Nouvelle, Institut d'Études Politiques, Institut Catholique, Ecole de Louvre, Paris VI). There are two main examination periods, one at the end of the first semester (late December-early January) and one in mid-late May. In addition, shorter examinations, papers, and reports are scheduled during the year. The examinations are given either by the professor of the institutes and schools, or by professors appointed by the director of the HCJYF. While all Hamilton in-house courses are at least two-and-a-half hours per week, there are courses in the French university system that meet for only two hours per week while others require three to five contact hours per week; furthermore, some courses require a tutorial. The Hamilton credit recommended for each course depends on contact hours and the nature of the work required following the ECTS (European Credit Transcript System), the goal of which is to systematize course credits throughout the European university system and to guarantee accuracy and fairness in credit recommendations.

Academic Year in Spain

The Hispanic Studies Department at Hamilton, in cooperation with faculty members from Williams and Swarthmore Colleges, has offered an [academic program in Madrid](#) for 37 years. Courses, which are in Spanish, are taught by faculty of Spanish universities or by other

authorities in literature, history, and the arts. All classes at the Center are small (16 or fewer students). Students also have the opportunity to enroll directly in the Madrid University system. For full-year students there are two final examination periods, one at the end of the first term in December and one in May at the end of the academic year. In addition, shorter examinations, papers and reports may be scheduled during the year. The Program recently received a [favorable evaluation](#) from the Association of American Programs in Spain (APUNE/AAPS).

New York State Independent College Consortium for Study in India

Four colleges—Colgate University, Hamilton College, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and St. Lawrence University—form the [Consortium](#). Under the supervision of the Program Director, students undertake an intensive, five-week course in Hindi language at the Landour Language School, and then spend several weeks observing and experiencing the culture, history, and society of India. The program comes to its conclusion in Delhi, with approximately two weeks for carrying out fieldwork.

New York City Program

The Program combines internship activities with academic experiences. There is an overall unifying theme of “perspectives on globalization,” and each semester a Hamilton faculty member from a different discipline is selected to become Director. The Program is structured so that participants spend four days a week as unpaid interns in a firm or organization (1 course credit), attend weekly seminars for three hours one morning and one evening (2 credits), and do an independent project (1 credit). Normally, either the independent project, or a seminar, or both may receive concentration credit in the discipline or program of the director.

Washington, D.C. Program

Like the New York Program, the [Washington Program](#) is an integration of internship and academic experience. The Program is part of Hamilton's Government Department, and the curriculum is made up of a seminar class, an internship, an intern participant/observation class, and a term paper.

New England Center for Children

Hamilton and the New England Center for Children jointly sponsor a semester-long [child psychology/ education program](#) at the latter's Southborough, Mass., facility. Hamilton students interested in applied psychology and education can gain practical experience in special education and its applications, working intensively with children diagnosed with autism and other developmental disorders.

Assessment of student learning

Throughout this chapter and in many parts of the entire report, findings from various assessment activities and projects are cited to demonstrate both the actual learning that goes on at Hamilton and the College's commitment to understanding the effectiveness of both the teaching and the learning that occur. First and foremost, assessment of student learning occurs on a daily basis with the close and personal contact between our faculty and students. Through classroom instruction, advising, and mentoring, our faculty members are continually evaluating the intellectual and personal growth of our students. A wide-range of assessment activities at the department, program, and campus levels serve both to measure and to improve our academic programs. The following descriptions provide an overview of those activities. An [assessment matrix](#) has also been developed to provide a concise summary of learning assessment activities by departments and across campus.

Course-level assessment

At the course level, the [course evaluation](#) system provides a ubiquitous assessment and improvement process. Since the evaluations went online in 2008, faculty members have had instant access to student feedback at the end of each semester. Course evaluation results are also used by department chairs, the Dean of Faculty, and the Committee on Appointments to evaluate teaching. Informal mid-term student evaluations of course quality are not uncommon, especially among newly offered courses, providing feedback to instructors that allow adjustment and enhanced progress toward course objectives. For all pre-tenure faculty members, class visits from senior faculty members occur throughout the pre-tenure years. While providing a supplementary record of teaching effectiveness, the primary objective is developmental, creating a time and space for discussions on teaching and learning in particular courses, and advice for improvement to teaching development in faculty members. To complement this, the Dean of Faculty Office provides funds on request to individual faculty members for curricular innovation, typically to enhance particular courses with specialized materials or activities not anticipated in departmental operating budgets; this avenue impacts many courses across the curriculum annually.

Individual departments also conduct their own assessment projects to inform and improve components of their curriculum. For example, the Biology Department revised its introductory course sequence and syllabi for 2007-08 based on pre- and post-course analyses of student feedback and review of recent innovations reported in the literature and conducted in other Hamilton departments. For many years, the department offered a two-course introductory sequence, the first focused on organismal biology and the second on molecular biology, biochemistry, and genetics. Several years ago, an experimental alternative was initiated: a one-

semester advanced course directed at students with AP Biology from high school and other students with particular experience and interest in biology. This course retained the traditional three-meeting (MWF) weekly schedule and team-taught approach, but had a number of innovations for the department at this level: a thematic approach [e.g. “The Green Revolution”, “Bug’s R Us”, and “Sensing and Signaling”], which varied every two to four years, an integration of organismal and molecular approaches, and "special" class meetings on Fridays such as small-group discussions, on-campus field work, in-class experiments, and other non-lecture learning activities.

Anecdotally, students in this course were more engaged and better prepared for advancing further into the Biology curriculum than those who completed the traditional two-course sequence. Additionally, more students from the innovative, one-semester course continued in the Biology curriculum and became majors, compared to those who completed the traditional course sequence. In order to assess whether the benefits of the innovative course were due to pre-course student preparation or to the format innovations, a series of [pre-](#)and [post-course surveys](#) and exit surveys were completed; these surveys polled details of student experience in biology, pre-course career interests, and in-depth post-course analysis of their engagement and interest generated by the course. The surveys indicated that the benefits of the one-semester course innovations were relatively independent of student pre-course preparation, and certain innovations—the integration of molecular and organismal topics, the varying teaching modes of the Friday sessions, and the smaller class size which accommodated the latter—were particularly noted as contributing to engagement and student retention. These results led, through departmental retreat discussions, to a reconfiguration of the traditional introductory courses: while the two-semester sequence was retained, syllabi were reconfigured,

teaching modes varied weekly, and more teaching resources were dedicated to introductory biology to effect smaller class sizes. The results have been marked, with stronger student evaluations of the introductory sequence and a significant increase in Biology majors in recent years. The department continues to monitor progress by means of annual pre- and post-course surveys.

Department-level assessment

As described earlier in this chapter, the [senior program](#), which is required in every concentration, is a direct measure of what students have learned through the curriculum of the concentration, and measures other general education outcomes as well. The capstone course, or project, is a culminating experience in which students are expected to integrate, extend, critique, and apply knowledge gained in the concentration. General education themes commonly evaluated in the senior capstones include writing, oral communication, and critical thinking.

Every department and program undertakes a full [periodic program review](#) every [five to ten years](#), “to assess its strengths and weaknesses, and to provide opportunities for strategic planning.” For these reviews, each department is required to complete a self-study report outlining its goals (such as student outcomes for concentrators and non-concentrators, and scholarly activity for faculty members) and plans for curriculum, personnel, and facilities to meet those goals. Department members may visit other institutions to explore best practices, or may conduct research through survey or other data-collecting mechanisms, supported by the Dean of Faculty. The self-study is typically subject to review externally by a group of visiting experts in the discipline, and internally by the Committee on Academic Policy and Dean of Faculty.

French, Hispanic Studies, and Chinese (East Asian Languages and Literature) administer an externally measured test of language proficiency as part of their concentration requirements,

which is a direct measure of the student's ability to communicate in the respective language. The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) consists of a thirty-minute oral interview administered by an outside evaluator from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and takes place on campus during the senior year. The vast majority of Hamilton French and Hispanic Studies students test at least at the Intermediate High level, with most of them reaching Advanced, Advanced Mid, or even Advanced High proficiency. In 2009-10 no Chinese concentrators finished below the Advanced level.

Other forms of assessment at the department level include exit surveys and formal or informal interviews of graduating seniors (e.g., Art, Communication, Math, Physics, Psychology Departments), and portfolio review (Art).

Campus-level assessment

At Hamilton, assessment results are used extensively to inform campus-wide curricular decision-making for the improvement of teaching and learning. Many examples have been cited earlier in this report, such as the elimination of the Sophomore Seminar Program (based on data from the Mellon Assessment Project and the senior survey), and the modification and strengthening of the Quantitative Literacy requirement, based on the results of an external department and program review. Additionally, through extensive formative assessment and evaluation, the Writing and Oral Communication Centers have improved their support of the Faculty's pedagogical aspirations for teaching writing and speaking across the curriculum.

Hamilton has become a leader among liberal arts institutions in assessment through its Mellon Assessment Project and participation in national initiatives such as The Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education and the Teagle-funded Assessing Undergraduate Outcomes

within Disciplinary Contexts project. A description of these projects and other significant activities follows.

The Mellon Project for the Assessment of Liberal Arts. Beginning in 1999, with major funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Hamilton College has undertaken a series of research initiatives in the assessment of liberal arts education. The research has been conducted by a part-time Director, Project Assistant, a number of faculty working groups, scores of student research assistants, and several outside consultants. Daniel F. Chambliss, the Eugene M. Tobin Distinguished Professor of Sociology, has headed the Project since its inception. Some of the reports are topical, addressing specific issues in the student educational experience, while others are comprehensive, covering the range of what we learned about students' experience in college, given in chronological order from the first year, through the senior year, and as alumni. Still others are policy reports consisting of recommendations for faculty and academic readers, based on Project findings.

In 2001, as a central component of the Mellon Assessment Project, a panel of 100 students was randomly selected from the incoming Class of 2005. [Student researchers interviewed panel members](#) throughout their college careers, and continue to interview them as alumni, about curriculum, dorm life, friends, relationships, advising, classes, majors, professors, activities, junior year abroad, sports, and a wide range of other topics. An important part of the Mellon Assessment Project has revolved around [writing at Hamilton College](#). Over five years, more than 1,100 papers were collected from panel members and other samples of students. Outside evaluators—primarily writing center directors—were brought in to read the papers and rate them according to a rubric established by the Hamilton College Writing Center.

Professor Chambliss is writing a book on the results of the Mellon Assessment Project, which will be published by Harvard University Press in 2011.

The Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education. The Wabash Study is led by the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College, in collaboration with research teams from the University of Iowa, the University of Michigan, and Miami University (Ohio). It is a large-scale, longitudinal study investigating critical factors that affect the outcomes of liberal arts education. The research is designed to help colleges and universities improve student learning and enhance the educational impact of their programs. The Wabash Study has two fundamental goals: to learn what teaching practices, programs, and institutional structures support liberal arts education; and to develop methods of assessing liberal arts education.

In order to achieve these goals, the Study is focusing on key liberal arts outcomes, using both quantitative and qualitative research, and examining students as well as institutions. It focuses on the development of six outcomes associated with undergraduate liberal arts education, and the educational conditions and experiences that foster these outcomes. The selected outcomes include: 1. Critical thinking, 2. Need for cognition, 3. Interest in and attitudes about diversity, 4. Leadership, 5. Moral reasoning, and, 6. Well being. The Wabash Study is exploring the extent to which students develop because of their college experiences, the conditions that contribute to this development, and ways that liberal arts institutions can more readily assess and act on this knowledge to enhance their impact.

Forty-nine institutions are participating in the Wabash Study. They include liberal arts colleges, regional universities, research universities, and community colleges. The study sample contains both private and public institutions, as well as religiously-affiliated, single-sex, and minority-identified schools. Participating institutions exhibit a wide range of selectivity, tuition

costs, and geographic variety. The Study began in 2006, when first-year students from 19 institutions, including Hamilton, completed a series of surveys that gathered information about their pre-college experiences and measured liberal arts outcomes. [In spring 2007](#), students from this first cohort returned for follow-up assessments of their college experiences and liberal arts outcomes. In spring, 2010, students from the cohort returned, as seniors, for a final follow-up assessment.

Our Wabash Study results are also being shared, for benchmarking purposes, with participating institutions which are also members of a Teagle-funded assessment consortium. The [Consortium](#), which was originally funded from 2005 through 2008 for the [purpose of exploring value-added assessment](#), was extended through 2010 so institutions can compare four-year Wabash results. Consortium members participating in the first round of the Wabash Study along with Hamilton include Bard College, Connecticut College, Hampshire College, and Hope College.

A Longitudinal Study of Critical Thinking and Postformal Reasoning: Assessing Undergraduate Outcomes Within Disciplinary Contexts (Teagle Foundation). [The objective of this study](#) is to examine the development of undergraduate student outcomes, specifically critical thinking and post-formal reasoning, using a 3-year longitudinal research design and instrumentation developed within two disciplinary frameworks, classics and political science. Essay questions to measure critical thinking are under development by a team of faculty members from each discipline. [They are being administered at two points in time](#) to the same students in order to observe changes in their critical thinking. Together with the principal investigator, faculty members devised a grading schema or scoring rubric for the essays. An

instrument to measure post-formal reasoning (the ability to reason through problems without verifiably correct answers) will also be administered at both times.

Over a dozen colleges and universities are participating, with each asked to encourage participation from both their classics and political science departments. Students in introductory classics and political science classes are being asked to complete the assessment electronically, on their own time. Professors Barbara Gold of the Hamilton Classics Department and David Paris of the Government Department serve on the advisory board of this study.

Mellon Curricular Leaders. Hamilton received a four year grant from the Mellon Foundation to assess and improve the open curriculum. Initiated in spring 2009, four faculty members were chosen as “curricular leaders” in the areas of advising and curriculum, performance and creativity, quantitative reasoning, and writing and research. The Leaders were charged with more fully understanding the open curriculum at Hamilton College in comparison with other liberal arts schools that have had similar curricula for longer periods of time, and to assist the Hamilton faculty to conceptualize and implement improvements. The Leaders’ [first year](#) was spent collecting information within the institution and visiting Amherst College and Brown University, two institutions with mature open curricula. Additional visits are being planned for the second year of the grant.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Hamilton participates in the NSSE approximately every three years. We last participated in 2008, and plan on doing so next in 2011. The [results](#) provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and [what they gain](#) from attending college. Survey items on the NSSE represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are

associated with desired outcomes of college. Many of Hamilton's peers participate, and thus we are able to compare our results to theirs.

Senior Survey. Every spring, Hamilton surveys its graduating seniors to learn about their experiences and satisfaction with their Hamilton education. Through 2008, Hamilton administered the [HEDS Senior Survey](#), and since then has used [CIRP's College Senior Survey](#). Both surveys allow us to compare results to a group of peers. The CIRP senior survey gives us the added advantage of directly comparing results to CIRP's freshman survey, providing longitudinal results over the four years of college.

Assessment Advisory Group. The Assessment Advisory Group (AAG) is made up of five faculty members who provide conceptual and methodological guidance to the Dean of Faculty and Office of Institutional Research on matters related to the assessment of student learning. The AAG was formed in the spring of 2009 to maintain a strong faculty presence in campus-wide assessment activities as the Mellon Assessment Project—a faculty-driven endeavor—begins to wind down.

Conclusions

Hamilton is in compliance with Standards 11, 12, 13, and 14. While a lack of distribution requirements poses certain challenges to ensuring that students achieve disciplinary breadth in their course selection, course requirements in writing and quantitative literacy, the completion of a senior project, and a rigorous cross-campus assessment program, ensure that students are graduating with the general education and disciplinary competencies expected of a Hamilton graduate. Furthermore, the content and rigor of the concentration curricula align closely with the

College's mission, and concentration goals are regularly evaluated and outcomes directly assessed through the senior program.

Recommendations

1. Provide additional training for new faculty members in effective advising. While new faculty members do not advise first-year students, there is little training in advising to prepare them for their second year when they become pre-concentration advisors.
2. Enable further conversation with new faculty members about how the open curriculum might affect their courses, and among the faculty as a whole about how the open curriculum can best be used to meet the mission of the College and the ideal of liberal arts education. These conversations should also cover the role each department plays in the open curriculum.
3. Require departments to have the following documents linked to their websites: a mission statement for the department, goals for the concentration, and requirements for the senior project. This would be beneficial to both prospective and current students in making decisions about course selection and choice of concentration. Likewise, pre-concentration faculty advisors throughout the College would have a better understanding of the concentration goals and requirements of all departments.
4. Facilitate more explicit discussions between students and faculty members about student learning goals. For example, if all or most of the faculty teaching in a concentration met with all new concentrators for the first advising meeting in the spring of sophomore year (as currently happens in some departments at Hamilton), then the faculty members would present a cohesive concentration goals message, and new concentrators would have an opportunity to discuss their own academic goals and

interests. This would allow junior faculty members to hear senior members articulate their understanding and values about student learning in the concentration.

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

In the last ten years, Hamilton has undergone significant change and improvement. A new curriculum challenges students to take more responsibility for their own intellectual and academic development. New infrastructure, including state-of-the-art science and social science facilities, supports contemporary and progressive teaching and research. New faculty members arrive with impressive research credentials and tremendous teaching potential, and senior faculty members, who are among the leaders in their fields, continue to excel both in scholarship and in teaching. We have implemented two five-year strategic plans, and established ourselves as a leader in assessment among liberal arts colleges. We have made enviable progress in diversifying the faculty and student body, and have evaluative processes in place to be confident of continuing to diversify. Regardless of the hard work and success to date, we realize that Hamilton can be even better, and strive to make it so. This Self-Study was an exercise taken on by a large portion of the campus community with a conscientious and forward-looking approach. As you have read, serious thought and reflection went into considering what Hamilton does well and what needs to change. Our findings do not represent just the positive aspects of Hamilton, or those that minimally address the Standards, but also critically consider the imperfections of the College, which we recognize will take institutional discipline and commitment to address.

Within that context, several priority issues have emerged from this Self-Study. First, given the changes in our curriculum, we need to affirm Hamilton's mission statement and ensure that the language of our educational goals is more consciously aligned with that mission. Second, we need to continue to support the open curriculum so that it better serves those goals. Third, we need to continue our strong progress on diversifying Hamilton and making our community welcoming to all of its members. Beyond these priorities, other recommendations put forward by

the Self-Study working groups are under review; it has been an enlightening process. While Hamilton has learned a great deal about itself over the past months, we look forward to learning more from the observations of the visiting team in April 2011.

APPENDIX

Working Group Members

Standard 1: Mission and Goals

Sam Pellman, Professor of Music—Co-Chair

Carole Bellini-Sharp, Professor of Theatre

Allison Eck, Student

Randy Ericson, Couper Librarian

Jonathan Vaughn, Professor of Psychology

Cobus Van der Ven, Student

Jaime Yordan, Trustee

Standards 2 and 3: Planning and Resource Allocation; Institutional Renewal and Resources

Karen Leach, Vice President for Administration and Finance—Co-Chair

Ann Owen, Associate Professor of Economics—Co-Chair

Steve Bellona, Associate Vice President for Facilities and Planning

Bill Brower, Executive Director, Annual Giving and Alumni Relations

Marty Sweeney, Director of Central Administrative Services

Shari Whiting, Controller and Director of Budgets

Standards 4 and 5: Leadership and Governance; Administration

Meredith Bonham, Executive Assistant to the President—Chair

Jenn Andersen, Student

Peter F. Cannavò, Assistant Professor of Government

Jeff Little, Trustee

Ann Riffle, Staff Assistant for Advising

Sharon Rippey, Director, Alumni Relations

Bob Simon, Professor of Philosophy

Standard 6: Integrity

Julio Videras, Associate Professor of Economics—Co-Chair

Marianne Janack, Associate Professor of Philosophy—Co-Chair

Vige Barrie, Director, Media Relations

Jeff Landry, Assistant Dean of Students

Rob Martin, Associate Professor of Government

Jeff McArn, Chaplain

Steve Stemkoski, Director of Human Resources

Standard 7: Institutional Effectiveness

Dave Smallen, Vice President for Information Technology—Co-Chair

Dick Bedient, Professor of Mathematics—Co-Chair

David Bell, Senior Associate Director of the Career Center

Matt Carr, Assistant Director of Institutional Research

John Murphy, Director, Annual Fund Leadership Gifts

Nikki Reynolds, Director of Instructional Technology Support Services

Lora Schilder, Director of Admission

Standards 8 and 9: Student Admission and Retention; Student Support Services

Jenny Irons, Associate Professor of Sociology—Co- Chair (Fall)

Monica Inzer, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid—Co-Chair

Chaise LaDousa, Assistant Professor of Anthropology—Co-Chair (Spring)

Phyllis Breland, Director, Opportunity Programs

Allen Harrison, Associate Dean of Students for Diversity and Accessibility

Travis Hill, Director of Residential Life

Jon Hind, Director of Athletics

Wenxi Li, Student

Standard 10: Faculty

Shoshana Keller, Associate Professor of History—Co-Chair

Gordon Jones, Associate Professor of Physics—Co-Chair

Steve Ellingson, Associate Professor of Sociology

Collette Gilligan, Head Women's Soccer Coach and Associate Professor of Physical Education

Rebecca Murtaugh, Assistant Professor of Art

Krista Siniscarco, Instructional Technology Specialist

Steve Yao,

Associate Dean of the Faculty for Diversity Initiatives and Associate Professor of English

Standards 11, 12, 13, 14: Educational Offerings, General Education,***Related Educational Activities; Assessment of Student Learning***

Jinnie Garrett, Professor of Biology—Co- Chair

Tim Kelly, Associate Professor of Mathematics—Co-Chair

Steve Orvis, Professor of Government—Co-Chair

Carolyn Carpan, Director of Public Services, Burke Library

Carol Drogus,

Associate Dean of Students for Off-Campus Study & International Student Advisor

Kristin Friedel, Registrar

Jim Helmer, Coordinator, Oral Communication Center

Tara McKee, Associate Professor of Psychology

Deborah Pokinski, Associate Professor of Art History

Margie Thickstun, Professor of English

Sharon Williams, Director, Writing Center

Keith Willner, Student

Steve Wu, Associate Professor of Economics

Gary Wyckoff, Associate Professor of Government and Director, Public Policy Program

DOCUMENT AND HYPERLINK INDEX TABLE

Page	Document/Link	Type
	Chapter 1 – Introduction	
2	2001 Accreditation Report	.pdf
2	2002 Strategic Plan	.pdf
2	2009 Strategic Plan	.pdf
4	Mellon Assessment Project	website
7	List of working group members	appendix
	Chapter 2 – Mission and Goals	
8	Purposes and Goals - College Catalogue	website
9	Faculty Handbook	website
9	College Catalogue	.pdf
9	2005 Mellon Assessment Project Annual	.pdf
11	2009 Strategic Plan	.pdf
12	Results of Mission/Goals Survey	.pdf
14	Legacies of Kirkland and Hamilton Colleges	.pdf
15	Faculty publications and projects	.pdf
16	Career Outcomes, Class of 2007	.pdf
16	Career Outcomes, Class of 2008	.pdf
16	2009 CIRP Career Planning data	.pdf
16	2009 CIRP Spirituality/Religiosity data	.pdf
17	Residential Life-Student Life at Hamilton	.pdf
18	Athletics at Hamilton	.pdf
21	2004 Diversity Strategic Plan	website
22	CHAS Campus Climate Survey results	.pdf
23	President's Letter to Community 12/7/08	website
	Chapter 3 – Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Resources	
26	2002 Strategic Plan	.pdf
26	2009 Strategic Plan	.pdf
27	2004 Diversity Strategic Plan	website
27	President's Letter to Community 2/5/09	.pdf
27	Strategic Planning website	website
27	Strategic Plan Subcommittee Final Reports	website
31	Strategic Plan Updates	website
31	Strategic Planning Working Group Survey results	.pdf
32	Performance review process letter	.docx

Page	Document/Link	Type
32	Employee self-report form	.docx
32	Employee evaluation form	.docx
33	Faculty Handbook	website
34	Faculty Affirmative Action Report (comparisons)	.pdf
34	Equity Scorecard	.pdf
34	First-Year Retention rates	.pdf
34	Graduation rates	.pdf
35	Retention analysis	.pdf
35	Admission study (Jensen and Wu)	.pdf
35	Advising Task Force Report	.pdf
36	Need-Blind Policy	website
37	Annual budget proposal	.pdf
37	Budget guidelines	.pdf
37	Budget proposal presentation	.pdf
38	Budget report (end of year)	.pdf
38	Audited financial statement	.pdf
38	NACUBO endowment data	.pdf
38	NACUBO Tuition Discounting Report	.pdf
38	AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey results	.pdf
38	Moody's Financial Ratios Analysis	.pdf
38	Asset Allocation Study	.pdf
39	Asset Allocation presentation	.pdf
40	Faculty allocation proposal (example)	.docx
40	Faculty allocation guidelines	.docx
40	Faculty allocation solicitation from CAP chair	.docx
42	Sightlines facilities report	.pdf
42	Integrated Facilities Plan	.pdf
43	Updated Integrated Facilities Plan	.pdf
	Chapter 4 – Leadership, Governance, and Administration	
45	Faculty Handbook	website
45	College Charter	.pdf
45	Trustee By-Laws	.pdf
45	2009 Strategic Plan	.pdf
45	Trustee Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities	.pdf
46	Board of Trustees website	website
48	Administration Handbook	.pdf
48	IRS Form 990	.pdf

Page	Document/Link	Type
50	Board meeting summary for community	.docx
52	Faculty Red Book	.pdf
55	College organizational chart	.pdf
57	Staff Assembly Mission and Goals	.docx
59	Student Assembly Constitution	.pdf
	Chapter 5 - Integrity	
64	Student Handbook/Code of Student Conduct	.pdf
65	NSSE data related to Standard 6	.pdf
66	Rosenberg withdrawal news story	website
67	Churchill Controversy website	website
67	Academic center governance article	website
67	Inside Higher Ed story on confidentiality	website
67	HERI Faculty Survey data	.pdf
67	2008-09 COACHE Survey results	.pdf
68	Staff Advisory Committee website	website
69	Employee Conflict of Interest Policy	website
69	Copyright information	website
69	Fair use information	website
69	Public domain information	website
69	Media content information	website
69	Compilation of copyright links (be informed)	website
69	Faculty resources on copyright	website
69	Institutional Review Board (IRB)	website
69	CHAS Survey results	.pdf
70	2006 Community Opinion Survey results	.pdf
71	Honor Court procedures	website
71	Judicial procedures	website
71	Harassment Policy	website
71	Bias Incident Response Team	website
71	Appeals Board	website
72	Staff Handbook	.pdf
72	Ethics Point reporting system	website
73	Strategic Planning Report on Ethics/Academic Freedom	.pdf
74	Dean's Guidelines for Department Chairs	.pdf
74	Faculty annual review process	website
74	Tenure and promotion guidelines	website
75	Common Data Set	.pdf

Page	Document/Link	Type
75	Hamilton Facts	.pdf
75	Dashboard of Strategic Indicators	.pdf
75	Career Outcomes, Class of 2009	website
75	NYSED Instructions and Forms (for program changes)	website
76	NYSED Policy Information	website
76	NYSED Accreditation Information	website
76	NYSED Inventory of Registered Programs	website
76	Mellon Assessment Project	website
76	Office of Institutional Research website	website
76	College Catalogue	website
78	Admission Information	website
78	Student journals	website
78	Ten Things About Hamilton	website
78	Student body statistics	website
78	Information for Guidance Counselors	website
	Chapter 6 – Institutional Assessment	
80	Office of Institutional Research website	website
80	Campus Planning Committee Interim report, 2007	website
81	Consultant report (Sightlines)	.pdf
81	Mellon Assessment Project	website
81	A Five-year Study of Student Writing at Hamilton	.pdf
82	2009 CIRP Senior Survey	.pdf
83	Equity Scorecard	.pdf
83	2009 Strategic Plan	.pdf
83	Sightlines ROPA Report	.pdf
83	Sightlines Go-Green Report	.pdf
83	Primary Recipients of Reports list	.pdf
83	CHAS Survey results	.pdf
84	2008 Senior Survey local/technology results	.pdf
85	Information Technology Strategic Plan	.pdf
85	Integrated Facilities Plan	.pdf
85	Diversity Coordinating Council	website
86	Posse Foundation	website
87	Comparative Admission Analysis	.pdf
87	Admission Data and Trends, 2000-2009	.pdf
87	Opportunity Program Student Outcome Analysis	.pdf
87	HEOP/Scholars Program	website

Page	Document/Link	Type
87	Dashboard of Strategic Indicators (progress)	.pdf
87	First in the Family website	website
88	Affirmative Action Policy	website
88	Survey of Earned Doctorates	.pdf
90	Graduation rates (Planning Notebook)	.pdf
92	2005-06 COACHE survey results	.pdf
92	Tenure and promotion guidelines	website
92	Timeline for faculty annual reports	website
93	2008-09 COACHE survey results	.pdf
93	Wabash Study Summary Report	.pdf
93	Cultural Education Center Task Force Report	.pdf
93	National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results	.pdf
93	Senior survey presentation to Trustees	.pdf
94	Adirondack Adventure evaluation form	.docx
94	Parents Survey	.pdf
94	First-year retention rates	.pdf
96	January admit analysis	.pdf
96	Information Technology Services Mission Statement	website
97	OIR data and reports mapped to Strategic Plan action items	.pdf
97	Admission Talking Points (quality and diversity)	.pdf
98	Predicting Retention Report	.pdf
99	Disciplinary point system	website
99	Career Outcomes Report, 2008	.pdf
100	2005 Senior Survey Report	.pdf
100	Career Center audio podcasts	website
100	Optimal Resume	website
101	HAVOC Survey Report	.pdf
101	Alternative Spring Break Survey	.pdf
102	Mellon Study "First-Year" Report	.pdf
103	Faculty allocation guidelines	.pdf
103	Majors per faculty FTE by department	.pdf
103	Enrollment per faculty FTE by department	.pdf
103	Comparative graduates by major	.pdf
103	Assessment Advisory Group charge	.pdf
103	Assessment Advisory Group Quarterly Update	.pdf
106	Transition to Google E-Mail website	website
106	EDUCAUSE Core Data Survey	.pdf
106	ECAR Survey Report	.pdf

Page	Document/Link	Type
	Chapter 7 – Student Admissions, Retention, and Support Services	
108	Purposes and Goals – College Catalogue	website
108	Career Outcomes Report, 2008	.pdf
109	Mellon Assessment Project	website
109	Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education	website
109	Key satisfaction indicators	.pdf
110	Admission Data and Trends, 2000-2009	.pdf
110	First year retention rates	.pdf
110	Admitted Student Questionnaire	.pdf
111	“Finding the Right Fit” - Hamilton Alumni Review	website
111	Advising results from Senior Survey	.pdf
112	Strategic Plan Academic Programs Report	.pdf
112	Strategic Plan Student Recruitment and Retention Report	.pdf
112	Course breadth report	.pdf
112	Advising Task Force Report	.pdf
113	Student Handbook	.pdf
113	Student Assembly minutes – Honor Code	website
113	2009 Strategic Plan	
113	Community Outreach and Opportunity Project (COOP)	website
114	Levitt Center’s Service Learning/Community-Based Research	website
114	Levitt Scholars	website
115	Predicting Retention Report	.pdf
115	2008 Senior Survey Summary Report	.pdf
116	Withdrawn student study – high-performing students (2006)	.pdf
116	Withdrawn student study (2003)	.pdf
116	Students of Color retention rates	.pdf
117	Adirondack Adventure study - 2006	.pdf
117	Adirondack Adventure focus group results	.pdf
118	Resident Advisor Roles and Responsibilities	website
118	Student Organizations	website
119	Mellon Assessment Project “First Year” Report	.pdf
119	Class of 2014 Profile	website
120	Diversity website	website
120	HEOP/Scholars Program	website
120	Posse Foundation	website
120	Opportunity Program Student Outcome Analysis	.pdf
121	Financial aid website	website

Page	Document/Link	Type
121	Diversity Resources	website
121	Diversity Coordinating Council	website
121	Cultural Education Center website	website
122	Cultural Education Center Task Force Report	.pdf
122	2005 Senior Survey Report	.pdf
123	Students with Disabilities data	.pdf
123	First in Family website	website
127	College Sports Project Report	.pdf
127	Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act searchable database	website
127	Athletes and Academic Performance Summary Report (internal)	.pdf
128	Advanced Placement Policies	website
128	Transferring to Hamilton	website
128	Academic Regulations	website
128	Transfer of Credits Policies	website
128	FERPA Notice	website
	Chapter 8 - Faculty	
130	Faculty annual review process	website
131	Classroom visitation policy (Biology)	.pdf
132	Revised teaching evaluation form	.pdf
134	Employee evaluation form	.docx
136	2001 Middle States Team report	.pdf
136	2005-06 COACHE survey results	.pdf
137	Faculty Handbook	website
138	2008-09 COACHE survey results	.pdf
138	Dean's Guidelines for Department Chairs	.pdf
138	Survey of Earned Doctorates	.pdf
139	Faculty Affirmative Action Report	.pdf
139	Domestic Partnership Benefits Policy	website
	Chapter 9 – Educational Offerings, General Educational Activities, and the Assessment of Student Learning	
143	Mellon Assessment Project “Interdisciplinarity” Report	.pdf
143	2005 Senior Survey results of Soph. Seminar question	.pdf
144	Faculty survey on open curriculum results	.pdf
145	Mellon Curricular Leaders’ First Year Report	.pdf
146	Pre-Concentration Advising Manual	.docx

Page	Document/Link	Type
147	Advising Task Force Report	.pdf
147	Course breadth analysis	.pdf
147	Mellon Assessment Project Open Curriculum (Cody) Report	.pdf
147	Mellon Assessment Project Patterns of Course Selection Report	.pdf
148	Mellon Assessment Project Writing Study Report	.pdf
149	2008 Senior Survey Summary Report	.pdf
149	2008 NSSE General Education Report	.pdf
153	Mellon Assessment Project Oral Communication Report	.pdf
155	Student writing center survey results	.pdf
155	Faculty writing center survey results	.pdf
158	ECAR Survey Report	.pdf
158	2008 NSSE Information Literacy Results	.pdf
159	Research Practices Survey Overview	.pdf
161	2008 NSSE Frequency Report	.pdf
162	Wabash Study Summary Report	.pdf
163	IR website – assessment reports	website
163	Course breadth by PBK divisions	.pdf
163	Student course distribution by PBK divisions	.pdf
164	Departmental breadth for Class of 2009	.pdf
165	Diversity course enrollments (working group table)	.pdf
173	Associated Colleges in China program	website
174	Hamilton College Junior Year in France program	website
174	Academic Year in Spain program	website
175	Spain program evaluation report	.pdf
175	Study in India Consortium	website
176	Washington Program	website
176	New England Center for Children program	website
176	Assessment matrix	.pdf
177	Revised teaching evaluation form	.pdf
178	Pre-Biology course survey	.pdf
178	Post-Biology course survey	.pdf
179	College catalogue – senior program	website
179	Department and Program Periodic Review policy	.pdf
179	Department and Program Periodic Review schedule	.pdf
181	Mellon Assessment Project Panel Study Report	.pdf
183	Teagle Value-Added Assessment Consortium	website
183	Teagle Assessment Consortium activity summary for Hamilton	.pdf

Page	Document/Link	Type
183	Teagle Postformal and Critical Thinking Study: Protocol	.pdf
183	Teagle Postformal and Critical Thinking: Prelim. Results	.pdf
185	2010 CIRP Senior Survey Results	.pdf